

Building an Engaged University: The River Building as a Spatial Reflection of Carleton University's Social Mission

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the use of a multifaceted approach to space to identify the similarities and differences between the rhetoric of engagement within the university and the practices on the ground. This research emerges from tensions between shifts in the structure and purpose of the university as a social institution and a growing commitment to engagement evident in the rhetoric of the university. This thesis analyzes Carleton University's proposed commitment to engagement, as presented in its strategic and academic plans, and the conceptions of engagement that are reflected in and supported by the design, mandate, and administration of the River Building. This thesis concludes that only studying the rhetoric of the university does not present an accurate picture of the university and that space can be used to further identify the similarities and differences between this rhetoric and the practices and policies implemented in a particular space of the university.

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Introduction

Were the university to change substantially, the effects would be widely felt [as] in some sense, the university embodies the worldview of society [and], therefore, if the university were to adopt a new way of thinking than the wider society would also.

- Marcus Ford (2002)

I first read this quote by Ford in the early stages of my thesis research and it quickly became the answer I would give to people who asked me why I choose to study the university. I would defend the importance of my research by arguing that the university is an institution that greatly impacts the worldview of society and the ways in which we understand and approach social, political, economic, and environmental issues. Therefore, I would argue that it is important to identify how the university is changing and, as a result, how these worldviews and ways of knowing are shifting.

As I reread Ford's quote after conducting more research, I realize that it does not adequately capture my interest in the university. In this quote Ford is focusing on how wider society is affected by changes that occur in the university; however, to answer whether the university is changing and if it is adopting a new way of thinking, the effects of wider society on the institution also need to be recognized. The image of the university as an Ivory Tower, protected from changes occurring in wider society, is not an accurate depiction of the institution. The university has changed substantially and adopted new ways of thinking in response to broader societal changes, some of which may serve to challenge the notion that a university can act as a cauldron of progressive social change.

Marcus Ford (2002) and Bill Readings (1995) offer an historical account of the university as a social institution. Though this historical analysis is not extensive, it uncovers how the organizational structure and purpose of the institution have transformed

in response to societal pressures. For example, with the rise of neoliberalism and the neoliberal state, two concepts that are unpacked in detail in Chapter 1, a new kind of university was required and there was a shift in the university away from a focus on civic or public benefits, evident in Canada post-World War II, towards a focus on market values and the economic success of individuals. Ford discusses this shift in terms of movement from the “civic” to the “entrepreneurial” university (Ford, 2002). Analyzing this broad shift in the social mission of the university allows for an analysis of changes to different areas of the university, including the dominant philosophy to education, administrative model, and priorities and goals within the university, which are affected by these changes to the university as a social institution.

Though the university has changed in response to societal pressures, how a university is portrayed in its mission statement and strategic plan does not always accurately reflect these changes. There is often a divide between the idea of the university and the reality supported by the policies and practices implemented on the ground. Therefore, though it is important to study, the rhetoric of the university alone is not sufficient in capturing the actual purpose of the university. By studying the rhetoric in conjunction with an analysis of the structures and processes of the university – reflected in the spaces of the institution - it is possible to identify the actual purpose and organizational structure of the university.

In this thesis, I critically analyze the commitment to engagement that is increasingly expressed in university mission statements and strategic plans. Though the civic role of the university is not new, with the shift from the civic to entrepreneurial university, the institution has increasingly leveraged an engagement agenda to defend its

legitimacy and justify rising costs. Universities describe this agenda as a commitment to relating research and teaching more closely to real-world issues, greater collaboration between universities and their larger communities, and a two-way approach to knowledge production. Are there discrepancies between how engagement is described and practiced in the entrepreneurial university, which as a social institution has shifted away from a focus on public benefit towards an emphasis on market value and the economic success of individuals?

To explore these questions, I look specifically at Carleton University, based in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, and its new River Building, which opened in Spring 2012. In Carleton's Strategic Plan and Academic Plan, approved in 2009 and 2010 respectively, and informing the university's decision-making until 2015, "engagement" is outlined as one of the four key goals of the university. In these documents, this commitment to engagement is discussed in terms of a commitment to public service and outreach that contributes to the community, whether local, national, or global. The River Building has been selected as the case study as it includes a conference space, which, throughout the consultation process, was understood by participants to be directly connected to the engagement agenda of the university by providing a space on campus to host academic events and connect with external communities.

To identify if there is a gap between Carleton's declared engagement agenda, as presented in its Strategic Plan and Academic Plan, and the reality of practices on the ground, I use a multifaceted and relational approach to space to analyze the River Building and this conference space. Rather than understanding this building only as an "absolute" (Harvey 2006) or built space, I draw on the work of critical geographers,

including David Harvey, Doreen Massey, and Sharon Zukin, to look at how this space is social in nature. By exploring the River Building as the product and reflection of particular social relations, I am able to begin to analyze what conceptions of engagement are built into and supported by this space and if these ideas of engagement align with the approach outlined in the key documents for the university. Through this analysis, I make use of a spatial analysis, examining the ways in which this framework can help to reveal the similarities and differences between the rhetoric of engagement at Carleton and the reality of practices and priorities implemented in this particular space.

This case study serves as a way to begin testing whether importing a multifaceted and relational approach to space to the study of the university can contribute to the understanding of changes occurring within the institution. Therefore, this focused case study is not intended to be a broader analysis of Carleton as an entrepreneurial or contemporary university or reinforce the breadth of literature on the university as a social institution explored in chapter one. Instead, this case study is intended to serve only as an entry point into exploring the potential use of space to further understand the presence and depth of the changes occurring in the structure and purpose of university that the literature identifies in a particular context.

The arguments of this thesis will be developed over four chapters. In the following section, I provide short outlines of each chapter.

I: Chapter Overview

In chapter one, *A Literature Review: The University as a Social Institution*, I present an overview of existing literature that explores the university as a social

institution. I begin by defining commercialization, which is the most prevalent topic in the study of the university today. I argue that, in order to understand the effects of commercialization, it is necessary to understand how these affect the social mission of the university. I therefore provide an historical account of the university, drawing primarily on the work of Marcus Ford and Bill Readings. In particular, I explore the shift from the “civic” to the “entrepreneurial” or “contemporary university” (Ford 2002; Readings 1995). I then provide an overview of the growing engagement agenda of the university, discussing the relationship between this increased attention to engagement and the changing social mission of the university.

In the second chapter, *A Theoretical Framework: A Social Approach to the Spatial*, I present a theoretical definition of the concept of space in order to set up my empirical analysis. In this chapter, I review the spatial theories formulated by several critical geographers, including Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, and Doreen Massey, each of whom denaturalizes space and presents a relational approach to the spatial. Through this review, and my own integration of their ideas, I articulate how space is no longer perceived as static or natural by critical geographers, but rather intrinsically social. Based on this multifaceted approach of space, I conclude this chapter by emphasizing the importance of thinking of space explicitly and understanding the commercialization of the university as a spatial project.

The methodology and research design used in this thesis is outlined in the third chapter, *Methodological Foundations*. I begin by positioning myself as researcher and situating my personal interest in this research project. The use of an in-depth case study is then discussed, particularly drawing on Brent Flyvbjerg (2001) to challenge

misconceptions of this method. As this project intends to serve only as an initial exploration of how the concept of space is useful for analyzing the intersection between the engagement agenda and the social mission of the entrepreneurial university, one in-depth case study is sufficient to begin to apply or test the usefulness of this theoretical discussion. Furthermore, as discussions around the concept of space are often abstract, a case study allows me to explore how this theory plays out on the ground. I go on to outline the methods used to gather and analyze the evidence for this research, including semi-structured in-depth interviews and primary document analysis. The chapter closes with a discussion of the limitations of this research project.

In the final chapter, *A Case Study: Building Carleton University's Social Mission in Word and Brick*, I present my research findings. This chapter opens with an introduction to Carleton University, focusing specifically on the university's 2009 Strategic Plan and 2010 Academic Plan, which currently inform decision-making and policies at the university. Drawing on the priorities and goals outlined in these documents, I identify the ways in which Carleton reflects certain aspects of the contemporary university and a commitment to engagement. Specifically looking at the newly opened River Building, the chapter shows how using a multifaceted approach to space reveals how this physical space of the university reflects the differences and similarities between the commitments made by Carleton University in the Strategic Plan and Academic Plan and the practices and policies implemented in this particular space.

In the *Conclusion*, I further highlight the potential of using the concept of space to develop a deeper understanding of the extent and impact of current changes occurring within the university, particularly in relation to the conceptions of engagement within the

university. In particular, this chapter moves the discussion beyond the specific case of Carleton University and the River Building in order to show how the spatial analysis of the university can help to not only identify discrepancies and similarities between proposed priorities and visions of the institution and the reality, but can also provide productive focal points for campus-based resistance to the commercialization agenda.

1 A Literature Review: The University as a Social Institution

Introduction: Why the University?

This chapter focuses on existing scholarship that explores the university as a social institution. There is a great deal of work done on higher education more broadly; however, this literature is not the focus of this project. Though higher education is an important component of the functioning of the university, it is only one part of the institution. In this research project, I am focusing on the intersection between commercialization and the social mission of the university, which moves beyond the educational and degree granting roles of the institution. As Barnett (2011) argues, “the contemporary university has ever-expanding functions, not only in knowledge production and knowledge transfer but in a manifold of relationships with the state and society” (1). Therefore, it is the university in its totality that is of importance in this project and that will be the topic of this literature review.

This literature review is divided into three sections. In the first, I offer an overview of the effects and forms of commercialization within the university. In the second section, I provide a historical account of the university as a social institution, drawing primarily on the work of Marcus Ford and Bill Readings, in order to identify how this commercialization both reflects and supports a transformation in the institution’s social mission, captured in the shift from the civic to the entrepreneurial university. In the final section, I outline the current engagement agenda of universities and explore this in relation the entrepreneurial university, highlighting existing

discrepancies between this commitment to engagement and the social mission of this university.

I: Commercialization

Commercialization is most simply defined as the “attempt to hitch universities and colleges to the private sector” (Turk 2000, 4). In this section I outline the different forms and effects of commercialization within the university. This discussion reinforces the need to look at the university in its totality, as commercial processes affect both the academic and non-academic functions of the institution.

The most familiar form of commercialization is the process of turning universities into marketing sites for commercial products (Turk 2000, 4). This form of corporate influence is evident in increasing privatized delivery of goods and services within the university (Polaris Institute 2009). Corporations have entered into deals with universities to be the “sole providers of goods and services and to shut out competitors” (Hedges 2011, 93). This privatization of university services can occur at both the academic and non-academic sides of the institution. On the non-academic side, the university has become the marketing site for corporations. Corporate logos and advertisements can be seen across university campuses, from bathroom stalls and university athletes’ uniforms to building names. The university as a marketing site allows corporations to target the institution’s “huge captive audience of young consumers” (Turk 2000, 4). Furthermore, the commercialization of the non-academic side of the university can include the privatization of support services previously provided by the institution, including athletic and food services, bookstores, and campus security (Oster 1997). Universities are

increasingly privatizing these ancillary services and contracting their provision to primarily for-profit providers (Oster 1997).

One clear example of the commercialization of the non-academic side of the university is the growing presence of beverage exclusivity contracts on university campuses across Canada. In these contracts, a beverage company is given exclusive rights to sell its products in agreed upon spaces, including vending machines, cafeterias, and convenience stores around the campus and, in return, the University receives funding from the particular company (Polaris Institute). In a 2008 campus survey conducted by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and the Polaris Institute, fifty-four percent of respondents, including faculty, staff, and students, stated that their university had an exclusive contract with Coca-Cola, while 40% indicated that their university had a similar contract with PepsiCo (Polaris Institute 2009, 7).

As much of the non-academic side of the institution has already been privatized, the potential for the private sector increasingly lies in the academic side of the university. For example, this form of commercialization also involves the alteration of how education is delivered to support the “greater usage of privately supplied goods and services” (Turk 2000, 5). The most significant private intervention of the academic side is the growing incorporation of online learning and virtual education. Though there is little evidence that the increasing use of virtual education has improved the quality of education for students, “as universities and college are devoting ever increasing resources to adding on-line capabilities they are certainly enriching the economic purposes of hardware, software, and educational service companies” (Turk 2000, 6). For example, in

response to the increasing use of massive open online courses (MOOCs), professors from the Philosophy Department at San Jose State University, sent an open letter to a Harvard professor who created a MOOC, stating that the move to pre-packaged MOOCs is “financially driven” and serves to “replace professors, dismantle departments, and provide a diminished education for students in public universities” (The Chronicle of Higher Education 2013).

A second form of commercialization is the increasing pressure on universities to operate as if they are private (Turk 2000, 6). As businesses nurture a new form of corporate welfare in universities and, as corporations benefit from building partnerships, these public institutions begin to “behave more like the \$250 billion business it has become” (Bok 2003, 61). There are several signs and consequences of this form of commercialization. Susan Roberts argues that one effect of this is the university being run by an “administracy” that is characterized by a high level of control from the top (cited in M’Gonigle and Starke 2006, 330). As a result, faculty, staff, and students act primarily as “individual consumers of bureaucratic power rather than as collective producers of discursive power”. M’Gonigle and Starke (2006) argue that this results in students working on issues facing students through student associations, staff working on issues through their unions, and faculty focusing on faculty interests through faculty associations. These pervasive and divided bureaucratic relationships create an environment where a “collective dialogue on generalizable issues does not easily take root” (M’Gonigle and Starke 2006, 330).

Another clear example of this transition is the adoption of corporate or market language within the institution. This includes the common use of such language as

“customer,” “client,” and “products” (Turk 2000, 6; Svensson & Wood 2007, 18).

Svensson and Wood (2007) argue, the use of marketing metaphors inappropriately describe the student-university relationship as this “relationship is not just predicated on the purchase and use of a product, but upon a level of interaction between the product, the consumer and the supplier that is not the norm in the general marketing relationship” (18).

The prevailing philosophy of education embraced by the commercializing university is one that minimizes the notion that education should provide students with the opportunity to both reflect on how the world is and conceive of how it could be (Newson 2000, 186). Newson (2000) argues that in this environment the intrinsic value of the liberal arts is lost. The commercial model of the university portrays the world as fixed and students are left with the task of assimilating to a world that is unyielding to their “diverse aspirations, innovative ideas, and rich imaginations” (Newson 2000, 186). The corporate model present in Canadian universities privileges knowledge as a form of investment in the economy and the value of the individual’s labour-power (Giroux 2004, 173). Knowledge, therefore, has little value in terms of “self-definition, social responsibility, or the capacities of individuals to expand the scope of freedom, justice, and democracy” (Giroux 2004, 173). Supporters of this model for higher education argue that it allows students to gain the skills to pursue a secure and successful future. In reality, however, Newson believes that it denies students the opportunity and resources to shape their own future (Newson 2000, 186).

Chris Hedges (2011) argues that the university is increasingly organized around “minutely specialized disciplines” (89). As education is narrowly defined within the

commercial university as serving to increase the value of one's labour-power, a specialization appears more beneficial than engaging in broader cross-discipline discussions. By isolating themselves into specialized disciplines, faculty and students rarely engage in collective and cross-discipline dialogues. Furthermore, faculty and students are not equipped to partake in these forms of conversation as their limited and specialized vocabulary serves as a "barrier to communication" (Hedges 2011, 90).

As universities begin to operate as if they are private, it is easier to justify replacing public funding with a user-pay approach to financing education. This move to user-pay redefines post-secondary education as a private good and the primary focus becomes the benefit for the individual student. Not only does this shift in focus ignore the broader societal benefits of higher education, but also allows governments to justify significant increases in tuition fees and cuts in public funding. With the student being portrayed as the sole benefactor of the education, it becomes the individual's responsibility to pay the price. As a consequence of this shift in funding practices, a student's family income rather than the ability to benefit from further education determines whether a student attends university (Turk 2000, 7).

This overview of the literature reveals several negative impacts and risks of commercialization; however, as Renke (2000) argues, these changes can benefit different actors within universities based on what these actors value. The costs, benefits, and risks of these changes are unevenly distributed and, therefore, a calculation of these effects depend on where you are situated in the university and what you understand the role of education and the university to be. Commercialization is not always being imposed by an array of actors external from faculty, staff, and students, including business, government,

and university administration. These changes are often the result of or reinforced by our own actions. Renke (2000) argues, “we may freely choose commercialization, or choose to work in areas that are directly relevant to the marketplace” (43). For example, the type of research an academic or graduate student may choose to pursue can have commercial applications. The most powerful factors that direct us to support commercialization are cultural. As we are primarily treated as consumers outside of our academic lives, it seems inevitable that we begin to also think of the role of the university and post-secondary education in commercial terms (Renke 2000, 43).

In the following section, I focus on the university as a social institution in order to show how these forms and effects of commercialization reflect and support a broader shift in the very social mission of the institution.

II: History of the University

In order to understand the impact of commercialization on the university as a social institution, it is necessary to first identify the historical roles of the institution. As Bill Readings (1995) notes, one must be careful to not talk of the *real* university, as this institution has never existed (5). This idea of the real university is captured in the image of the Ivory Tower, an academia isolated from society. It is clear, however, that this image of the university as an autonomous institution, protected against societal pressures, is nothing more than an illusion. It is important to challenge this illusion, as it can serve as a useful ideological fiction to defend the legitimacy of the university and conceal the effects of societal pressures on the organizational structure and purpose of the institution. The following historical account of the institution reinforces Readings’ warning,

emphasizing how the role of the university has always been contested and used by different societal actors to serve particular interests.

There is no single historical account of the university; however, for this research project, I will primarily draw on Marcus Ford's work. In his historical account, Ford looks specifically at the organizing principles of the institution and the moments of transformation in the university's structure and purpose, particularly in relation to the external interests it is intended to serve. As I am primarily focusing on how to better identify and interrogate the intended civic role of the university, Ford's work is particularly useful as he is similarly identifying societal shifts that have previously resulted in moments of transformation for the civic purpose of the university.

The history of the university closely follows the history of Western civilization and can be told in terms of three universities: the University of Paris, the University of Halle, and the University of Phoenix, which serve to highlight the general features and transformations of the institution. With the fall of the Western Roman Empire came the rise of the Christian church to stabilize European civilization. It was in this context that the church gave rise to the university. In places such as Rome, Florence, and Salerno, universities grew in conjunction with the church. The University of Paris, founded between 1150 and 1170, established the model of higher education employed for nearly 1000 years and represents the medieval conceptualization of higher education. The University of Paris was comprised of four faculties: an undergraduate program in liberal arts and three graduate programs in medicine, theology, and canon law. The doctorate of theology held preeminent status within the university, as the medieval university was devoted to serving Christian civilization (Ford 2002).

In the middle of the seventeenth century, European civilization increasingly began to emphasize national identity over religious identity. These societal shifts mark a moment of transition for the university as the institution began to structure itself around state interests rather than the objectives of the Christian church. The University of Halle, established in 1694, embodies this defining characteristic of the civic or modern university, departing from the church in order to serve the secular state. This university, first established by Frederick I of Brandenburg, was initially created as a center of Lutheran culture, but this relationship with the church was quickly abandoned and the university became a center of “objectivity and rationalism, scientific attitudes, and free investigation” (Ford 2002, 7). To serve the interests of the state, curriculum at Halle was intended to train officials and bureaucrats and educate the citizenry. Therefore, the curriculum at Halle shifted away from Latin, theology, and the liberal arts, which were prominent in the University of Paris, to focus on courses in public administration and statecraft. This notion that higher education was intended to benefit the nation-state began to spread throughout Europe and areas under European domination (Ford 2002).

With the conclusion of World War II, however, the nationalistic phase of European history started to come to an end. As nations came together postwar to discuss how to reorganize the world to reduce the chances of another war, a shift began to occur towards political and economic globalization and, as a result, a societal shift towards economism. Economism, as presented by Ford, privileges the economic interests of individuals over the interests of particular nations. It was this move away from nationalism in favour of economic and political globalism and economism that provided the context for a shift in the organizational structure of the university. This shift from the

primacy of the nation to the primacy of globalism and economism was gradual. In the post-war context, social demand fuelled the expansion of higher education. For example, in the United States higher education enrollment increased 78% in the 1940s, 31% in the 1950s, and 120% in the 1960s (Newfield 2008, 28). During this time, the benefits of the university were understood in terms of the benefit for the public, which was reflected in university funding (Newfield 2008, 173). In Canada during this time, government grants and public funding accounted for 76% of university operating revenues while private sector contributions accounted for less than 10% (Axelrod 2002, 89). This funding structure and perceived benefit of the university reflect the social democratic state, which is “committed to full employment and the optimization of the well-being of all of its citizens subject to the condition of maintaining adequate and stable rates of capital accumulation” (Harvey 2006, 25).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the shift towards globalization and economism was accelerated with the rise of neoliberal policies. David Harvey (2006) argues that it was in the 1970s that neoliberalism took center stage in public policy. Neoliberalism is rooted in the belief that “open, competitive, and unregulated markets, liberated from all forms of state interference, represent the optimal mechanism for economic development” (Brenner and Theodore 2002, 2). Harvey (2005) argues that, in its first instance, neoliberalism is, “a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade” (2). The role of the state in this system is to create and preserve the institutional framework appropriate for these practices (Harvey 2005, 2). Therefore,

neoliberalism weakens the role of the state through the privatization of public enterprise, the changing role of bureaucracy, and the commodification of basic social services (Buono and Lara 2007, 3). Peck and Tickell call this “roll back” neoliberalism, which involves the “‘rolling back’ of the frontiers of the welfare state and savage critiques of the capacities and practices of post-war management” (Raco 2005, 328). This is seen in Canada where total university revenue from government sources dropped from 74.5% in 1978 to 55.6% in 1998, while tuition fees rose 224% between 1981 and 1998 (Axelrod 2002, 94).

In the 1990s, Peck and Tickell argue that neoliberalism changed in practice (Raco 2005, 328). The “rolling out” of neoliberalism focuses on the “purposeful construction and consolidation of neoliberal state forms, modes of governance, and regulatory relations” (Raco 2005, 328). In order to produce hegemony for this political and economic project, “rolling out” neoliberalization involves instilling particular ideas of citizenship and subjectivity (Harris 2009, 60). This process of producing subjectivities is referred to as neoliberal governmentality. As a form of governmentality, neoliberalism creates subjectivities that center on the individual as an “autonomous, individualized, self-directing agent” (Harris 2009, 60). These subjectivities stress that individuals are personally responsible for their own adjustments to economic restructuring and social dislocation through self-improvement (Pudup 2008, 1228). In so far as these subjectivities are accepted, individuals are recruited into neoliberal forms of governmentality (Harris 2009, 60).

With the rise of the neoliberal state, a new kind of university was required, which Ford labels the entrepreneurial university. This new model of the university moved away

from the civic university's emphasis on nation-building to one that saw the role of higher education as "imparting useful skills and knowledge to its 'customers' in the most cost-effective manner such that shareholder profits are maximized" (Ford 2002, 32).

The rise of "roll back" neoliberal policies resulted in changes in the structure funding for higher education that made the university open to corporate influences. One cause for this transition was the rising debts of Canadian governments, both provincial and federal, which led each to restrain spending on education and other social services and, as a result, turn to the private sector for the provision of these needs (Axelrod 2002, 90). The main factor driving this change, however, was the growing influence of economic logic that Ford discusses and these neoliberal policies that resulted in the unleashing of "market" forces on public institutions (Axelrod 2002, 90). The effects of these shifts persist in funding structures today (Polaris Institute 2009). The focus on personal responsibility and self-improvement in "roll-out" neoliberalism is also evident in the entrepreneurial university, where both the benefits and costs of higher education are downloaded onto the individual.

The University of Phoenix, established in 1976, represents this intensification of the economic logic that had begun to shape the mandate and organizational structure of the university in the neoliberal state. This is a for-profit university that structures itself and its curriculum to meet the professional needs of both students, referred to as customers, and the companies that employ them (Ford 2002, 32). The purpose of higher education in this case is to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for individual economic success. Rather than being focused on the religious or civic benefit, this shift towards economism identifies the individual, and an increase in the value of one's labour-

power, as the primary benefactor of the education. As a result, in this university, both the costs and benefits of this education are individualized, which reflects the neoliberal subjectivities that emphasize and value personal responsibility. Though the University of Phoenix can be understood as an extreme example of the entrepreneurial university, and few universities publicly admit to following this model, many universities across Canada are adopting certain aspects of this model, as evident in the discussion of the different forms and effects of commercialization.

Though he uses different terminology, Bill Readings provides an interesting analysis of this shift from the civic to the entrepreneurial university that is also rooted in how this shift affects the social mission of the institution. Readings' argues that with the decline of the nation-state post World War II as the primary site of capitalism's self-reproduction, the social mission of the university has effectively been voided (Readings 2005). Before this societal shift, the university's social mission was associated with the production of "culture," which Readings argues is inseparable from the nation-state and national identity (Readings 2005, 465). Based on this interconnection between the production of national identity and culture, I would argue that the social mission of what Readings calls the University of Culture is aligned with Ford's civic university. Furthermore, Readings explores the shift from the University of Culture to what he terms the contemporary university, which reflects a similar organizational structure and purpose as Ford's entrepreneurial university.

It is helpful to bring Readings' work into this historical account of the university as his analysis compliments Ford's by exploring how these changes in the social mission of the university affect the dominant pedagogy of education within the institution. While

Ford primarily identifies changes in what disciplines are prioritized, Readings goes further to grapple with how the very idea and purpose of education is transformed.

Readings (1996) argues that the University of Culture emphasizes a “process of development, of the cultivation of character” (64). The social mission of a university pursuing culture is not merely a site for contemplation to be transformed into action, but rather “the university seeks to embody thought as action toward an ideal” (Readings 1996, 69). In the University of Culture, Readings argues that knowledge is positioned as “its own end” and the university is a “place of education, [rather] than of instruction” (Readings 1996, 75). In this structure of the university, students are encouraged to not merely regurgitate information, but actively engage with the material. Education in this sense is a process by which students are able to reflect on and challenge the world around them.

For Readings, the result of this growing influence of neoliberal policies and economic logic in the university is a shift from the University of Culture to the contemporary university. Readings argues that the sign of this transformation is an adherence to excellence substituting the pursuit of culture in the contemporary university. In this sense, excellence is not simply being imported *into* the university by business in order to run the university as if it were a business, but rather this notion of excellence is developing *within* the university as the central idea the institution is centered around (Readings 1995). The concept of excellence, Readings argues, is the henchman of the market ideology and stands for “nothing more than a field or concept’s market value” (Newfield 2008, 152). What is particularly interesting about the idea of “excellence” becoming the “watch-word of the university” is that it is an entirely meaningless

classification in the sense that it is not a fixed standard of judgment (Readings 1996, 32). In essence, “excellence has no content to call its own” and, therefore, by stating that excellence is the objective of the university, it states nothing (Readings 1996, 32). Readings argues that this allows the administration of a university to hide and continually change the criteria used to judge each sector of the institution. A focus on excellence is evident in universities’ strategic plans and mission statements across Canada. For example, Acadia University’s vision statement states, “Acadia strives to achieve excellence in teaching, research, scholarship services, and community engagement” (Acadia University 2006, 2).¹

With the task of achieving excellence, Readings argues that the responsibility of the contemporary university to society can solely become a matter of “services rendered for a fee” (Readings 1996, 32). In comparison to the pursuit of culture, Readings argues that this emerging system draws only one boundary, which is “the boundary that protects the unrestricted power of the bureaucracy” (Readings 1996, 33). As a result, the university has become a bureaucratic system rather than an ideological apparatus and, therefore, is entirely “self-interested without regard to wider ideological imperatives” (Readings 1996, 40).

Though Readings’ analysis is of use, I am critical of how far he draws his conclusions on both the University of Culture and the contemporary university. Though the University of Culture certainly values knowledge as its own end, this university serves multiple purposes, which may not all reflect this approach to knowledge. The new

¹ This focus on excellence in the specific case of Carleton is discussed on page 63.

universities built in Canada in the 1960s and 1970s were “conceived as broad-spectrum ‘multiversities’” (M’Gonigle & Starke 2006, 327). These universities included “arts and sciences, professional schools, research centers, even technical training that could all advance the national macroeconomic interest” (M’Gonigle & Starke 2006, 327). These ‘multiversities’ were both a place of “education” as Readings’ describes, as well as instruction. In terms of the contemporary university, Readings argues that this university “serves nothing other than itself, another corporation in a world of transnationally exchanged capital” (Readings 1996, 43). He goes so far as to argue that the social mission of the university has essentially been voided in the shift from the University of Culture to the contemporary university; however, I argue that the social mission has not been voided, but rather shifted to serve different interests.

Though there are flaws in his analysis, Readings’ discussion of excellence in the contemporary university is helpful for understanding how the entrepreneurial university is able to present and justify itself. Though Ford argues that the social mission of this university is focused on the market and the professional needs of students, universities are able to use the concept of excellence to declare broader priorities and conceptions of the university’s mission that more closely aligned with the social mission of the civic university. Universities are said to be pursuing excellence in such things as research, teaching, learning, and engagement. With the content of excellence being ambiguous and able to mold to serve particular purposes and interests, universities are able to declare these different priorities without necessarily substantiating these declarations with concrete objectives and/or terms of reference.

Both Readings and Ford show how the structure and purpose of the university have changed in response to broader societal changes. From this historical account it is clear that the university as a social institution has shifted away from a focus on civic or public benefits to a focus on the economic success of individuals. As Ford (2007) argues, “the decision to move away from nationalism as the organizational principle of modern society and to adopt economic globalization in its place is as profound a cultural shift as the move some 300 years earlier to elevate the concerns of the state over religion” (8). In each of these moments, the university was responding to societal changes occurring outside of it. The importance of understanding this history of the university, even in such broad strokes, is to “recognize how the university has, on occasion, undergone significant and rapid changes in response to externalities” (Ford 2007, 8). The university has changed dramatically from the University of Paris to the University of Phoenix. Ford (2002) highlights these drastic differences by stating, “the University of Phoenix is so unlike the University of Paris that it is in some ways easier to think of them as two different kinds of social institutions rather than as two forms of the same institution” (35).

Wayne Renke (2000) argues that it is important not to “swooningly embrace nor obstinately reject” commercialization and, I would add, the shifts in the social mission of the university. The question then becomes how to identify the effects of these changes that need to be challenged. Renke offers a useful starting point for determining which commercial take-overs should be resisted. He argues that it is important to begin with the mission statement of a university. This statement serves as a declaration of what a university intends to do. By addressing this statement, it becomes possible to compare commercial take-overs with this mission in order to determine if these processes of

commercialization support or challenge the university's ability to perform the duties it is said to fulfill. It is, therefore, useful to assess the degree or risk of harm of a particular commercial process to a component of the mission of a university (Renke 2000, 44).

As this shift from the civic to the entrepreneurial university accelerated in the late 1970s and 1980s, a growing interest in renewing and strengthening the engagement and public outreach of the university began to emerge in the mission statements and priorities of universities (Roper and Hirth 2005). If, drawing on Renke's work, one way to identify which commercial take-overs need to be challenged is by assessing which effects of commercialization risk or challenge the mission of the institution, I focus specifically on how commercialization and the social mission of the entrepreneurial university can affect the ability of the university to accomplish its declared conceptions of and commitment to engagement. In the next section I provide an overview of this engagement agenda and begin to examine the relationship between this agenda and the social mission of the entrepreneurial university.

III: The Engagement Agenda

Roper and Hirth (2005) argue that the university's "third mission" of public service, outreach, and civic engagement has evolved in response to changes in societal needs and demands on the institution. Several scholars have gone so far as to argue that "today's research universities will not survive unless they increase their connections to local communities and relate academic research and teaching more closely to real-world issues" (Ostrander 2004, 76). As we have seen, the social mission of the university has shifted from a focus on public benefit and strengthening the nation to a central focus on

the economic success of individuals; however, if universities do not have this link to external communities, they can become socially irrelevant, and therefore, incapable of being sustained as necessary institutions (Boyer 1990). Therefore, though the importance of the university's civic role is not new and is actually challenged by the shift from the civic to the entrepreneurial university, scholars argue that it is of particular resonance in today's context where universities "must justify rising costs by defending their legitimacy and contribution to society" (Ostrander 2004, 76).

The Carnegie Foundation defines community engagement as the "collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Carnegie 2005). As universities integrate these conceptions of community or civic engagement into the mission statements and policies of the institution, there is the need to shape and reshape the culture of university campuses by expanding institutional boundaries to accommodate this as a campus priority (Weerts & Hudson 2009).

The engagement agenda is grounded in a shift from a unidirectional model of outreach and knowledge production to an inclusive and two-way approach that emphasizes collaboration. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) analyze this transition from a unidirectional model to a two-way approach to engagement. The unidirectional model of outreach was founded on the "idea that knowledge was produced by the university and disseminated to the public" (Weerts & Sandmann 2008, 77). This approach to knowledge production operates on several key assumptions. Knowledge is viewed from an objectivist epistemology that emphasizes logical thinking over understanding.

Furthermore, in this model, knowledge is understood as value neutral and existing on its own. Based on this approach, knowledge is viewed as a commodity that is transferred from a knowledge producer – the university – to a user. This emphasis on logical thinking results in the university being the site for the production of knowledge, whereas external communities are only understood as the beneficiaries of the knowledge. The unidirectional approach to service reinforces the epistemic ignorance of the university as it delegitimizes and devalues epistemologies and knowledge production that exist outside of the institution (Weerts & Sandmann 2008).

This transition away from a unidirectional model of outreach is based on the acknowledgement that complex social problems cannot easily be addressed through this linear paradigm of knowledge dissemination (Weerts & Sandmann 2008, 78). As a result, in the mid-1970s, a more inclusive and two-way approach to knowledge exchange and implementation began to be adopted. In this approach, knowledge is understood as “local, complex, and dynamic” and “learning takes place in the context and place in which knowledge is applied” (Weerts & Sandmann 2008, 78). This challenges the idea of the university as the exclusive site of knowledge production. By acknowledging communities as partners in knowledge production, this commitment to engagement can challenge the epistemic ignorance evident in the university by legitimizing knowledge that does not align with the Eurocentric approach valued in the Western university (Weerts & Sandmann 2008).

In practice, the engagement agenda can take a number of forms in the university. Ostrander (2004) argues, “the main components of university civic engagement are student-learning, curriculum transformations, and knowledge production” (79).

Universities are increasingly integrating experiential learning, including community service learning, cooperative education, and placement or internship opportunities, which reflect these main components. Several of the factors supporting this experiential learning are connected to the concerns and priorities of the engagement agenda, including: grounding academic research in real-world context, connecting knowledge and practice, forming and strengthening relationships between academics and community members and organizations, improving conditions in local communities/supporting local initiatives, and building democracy and civil society (Ostrander 2004; Strand et al. 2003; Dulmus & Cristalli 2012). The university has increasingly leveraged this engagement agenda, which reflects the social mission of the civic and post-World War II university, to strengthen support for these institutions; however, as I will explore, there are tensions between these conceptions of engagement and the social mission of the entrepreneurial university that Ford and Readings identify (Weerts & Hudson 2009).

Ford and Readings' historical account shows how the university is not simply operating as if it is private, but that the social mission of the institution has shifted away from public benefit towards a focus on private and economic interests. The ways in which the university is redefining whom it exists to serve is in tension with this civic engagement agenda. As universities rely more heavily on private funding, the corporate sector is able to steer the education process and priorities of the university. This is evident in universities across Canada that have signed deals with corporations that give unprecedented influence over the academic direction of the institution to these businesses. Though university administrators claim that this corporate money is "accepted without strings," it is often the case that "the outside funds determine what

universities will teach and research, what direction the university will take” (Soley 1995, 7). This corporate influence is evident in the funding of some academic research and programs over others. Due to this influence, research questions and projects that do not promise short-term commercial profits are often marginalized (Turk 2000, 11). Though corporate partnerships are part of the university’s commitment to engagement, the literature on the engagement agenda address how this commitment is predominantly framed in relation to community organizations and civil society rather than the private sector (Weerts & Hudson 2009; Weerts & Sandmann 2008; Carnegie Foundation 2005).²

Several universities across Canada have entered into these controversial donor agreements and deals with corporations. For example, the University of Toronto signed secret deals with the Joseph Rotman Foundation, with Peter Munk of Barrick Gold and Horsham Corporations, and with Nortel, allowing each of these corporations to influence the direction of the Faculty of Management Studies, the Centre for International Studies, and the Nortel Institute for Telecommunications, respectively (Turk 2000, 10). Similarly, the University of Waterloo and Wilfred Laurier entered into a partnership with the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), a private think tank founded by Jim Balsillie, to launch the Balsillie School of International Affairs (Bradshaw 2012). In 2012, CIGI attempted to enter a similar partnership with York University, in which it would provide the school with \$30-million donation from Balsillie to create ten research chairs and twenty graduate scholarships in international law (Bradshaw 2012). This partnership, however, was rejected by the university due to the level of influence the

² This way of framing the engagement agenda is discussed in the specific case of Carleton on page 67.

arrangement would have given CIGI over York's academic affairs (Bradshaw 2012). In 2010, Carleton University signed a controversial \$15 million donor agreement with Clayton Riddell, a Calgary businessman, to launch a graduate program in public management (Bradshaw 2012). After this deal became public, it became known that Riddell was able to entirely appoint two seats on the program's steering committee - with two others being selected by the university, and one jointly chosen - that has the power to approve the budget, select adjunct faculty and staff, including the Executive Director, and participate in faculty hiring decisions (Bradshaw 2010). Due to severe backlash from both the Carleton University Academic Staff Association and the Canadian Association for University Teachers, the administration at Carleton re-negotiated this deal to limit the power of the steering committee to an advisory role (Cheadle 2012).

As the interests of private actors increasingly influence and steer the actions and priorities of universities, the engagement agenda can become narrowly defined around these interests. For example, by affecting the academic priorities of the university, these partnerships can influence the curriculum and internship and placement opportunities within the university, which are forms the engagement agenda can take in the institution. Furthermore, the very importance of community, civil society, and public benefit in the engagement agenda is in tension with Ford and Readings' conceptions of the social mission of the entrepreneurial university, which they argue is centered on individual and market interests.

The rhetoric of engagement far exceeds the reality that is supported by university policies and resources (Ostrander 2004). How can the similarities and differences

between the proposed priorities of a university and the reality on the ground be identified?

Conclusion

Ronald Barnett argues, “as universities increasingly engage with the world beyond the classroom and the campus, those who work within higher education are left to examine how the university’s mission has changed” (1). In this literature review, I explored these changes to the university, outlining the forms and effects of commercialization and changes to the university as a social institution. In particular, this chapter has outlined shifts in the social mission of the university. Drawing primarily on the work of Ford, I look at these changes in terms of the shift from the civic to the entrepreneurial university. Whereas education in the civic university is understood in terms of benefits for the public, in the entrepreneurial university the role of the institution and education is understood in terms of individual and market interests. Emerging at the same time as this shift in the social mission of the university, however, has been a growing commitment to engagement, evident in the mission statements and documents of universities. In these documents, engagement is primarily framed as partnerships with and contributions to communities and civil society for public benefit. There is a clear tension between the engagement agenda and forms and effects of commercialization and the social mission of the entrepreneurial university.

Ford and Readings’ analyses of the university are valuable; however, their historical accounts are not exhaustive, but rather identify general trends in the structure and purpose of the institution. Though there is substantial evidence that supports this shift

towards the entrepreneurial university, this does not require the complete abandonment of the priorities and social mission of the civic university. As Ford states, the University of Phoenix most embodies the defining characteristic of the entrepreneurial university. This suggests that there is a spectrum in this transition and the degree to which universities embody the characteristics of this university model. Therefore, in order to explore the potential tension between the commitment to engagement a university declares and the reality of its policies and practices, this discussion needs to be rooted in a particular example. For the purposes of this thesis, I look at Carleton University, analyzing the ways in which this university has declared a commitment to engagement and the existing similarities and discrepancies between these declarations and the practices and policies enacted.

In the following chapter, I present the concept of space as a potential tool for identifying these similarities and differences between the proposed commitment to engagement evident in the mission and priorities of the university and the reality on the ground.

2 A Theoretical Framework: A Social Approach to the Spatial

Introduction

As the previous chapter shows, there is a great deal of literature on the commercialization of the university, shifts in the university's social mission, and the emerging engagement agenda. Relatively little research has yet been done on the spatial effects of these commercial processes. Michael M'Gonigle and Justine Starke highlight the separation of these two conversations when they state that the "critical analysis of the university as a corporatized institution is long-standing," but note the "unremarked possibilities of the university as place" that academics have barely begun to investigate (M'Gonigle and Starke 2006, 326). In creating a distinction between these two issues, M'Gonigle and Starke overlook the relationship that can exist between them and the potential use of the concept of space to further uncover the depth and impact commercialization can have on the university. In this thesis, I explore this link, contributing to the existing literature on the university by analyzing the relationship between the commercialization of the university, as well as its engagement agenda, and shifts in its social mission and changes in both the uses and conceptualizations of space within the institution.

Space is a complicated and highly contested concept. David Harvey argues that due to the range of meanings that are attached to this word, space is "one of the most complicated words in our language" (Harvey 2006, 119). This is a complicated concept as it "functions as a compound word and has multiple determinations such that no one of

its particular meaning can properly be understood in isolation from all the others” (Harvey 2006, 148). In this chapter, I first define space and spatiality, drawing on Harvey’s three dimensions of space: absolute, relative, and relational. I also present place as an important dimension of sociospatiality for a spatial analysis of the university. In this overview, there is a clear shift towards denaturalizing space and recognizing the social character of its production. Second, I look at how this acknowledgement of the social nature of the spatial makes space a useful concept for the analysis of the university. In particular, I explore how this multifaceted approach to space reveals how social control and culture within the university are spatially manifested.

I: Space Defined

In this section, I focus on how space has been denaturalized and understood as intrinsically social. I primarily use Harvey’s tripartite division of the spatial, which includes absolute, relative, and relational space. This classification of space is a useful framework as it is rooted in the abstraction of space from matter or, more specifically, the separation of relative from absolute space (Smith 1984, 70). I first define absolute space, offering several critiques of only understanding space in absolute terms, before looking more closely at the shift towards relative and relational space. Second, I argue that place is an important dimension of sociospatiality for a spatial analysis of the university.

Absolute, Relative, and Relational Space

By absolute space, Harvey refers to the conceptualization of space as a “thing in itself” (Harvey 2006, 121). Absolute space is associated with Newton and Kant and is primarily represented as a “pre-existing and immovable grid amenable to standardized

measurement and open to calculation” (Harvey 2006, 121). This approach to space results in the epistemological reduction of space to an abstract construction, understood as something that exists outside of any relations or objects, as it presents space as a surface we are simply placed upon (Jones 2009, 489). Conway argues, “social relations are conditioned by hegemonic spatial discourses and arrangements which are typically experienced as pre-given, fixed, and even ‘natural’” (Conway 2008, 212). Since the early 1960s, scholars have been challenging this common conceptualization of space, as it “obscures the political and historical significance and active production of the ‘spatial’” (Bondi 2005, 140).

Sharon Zukin does not deny the existence of natural or “presocial” space, but she argues that “as soon as humans notice it, space becomes social” and cannot be understood as simply natural (Zukin 2002, 345). Though several scholars, such as Herb Gans, focus on use as the first moment of socializing space, Zukin argues that sight is the true origin of the socialization of space, as it “provides a space’s demarcation, meaning, and sense of beneficence or danger.” Sight is also closely linked to questions of control in so far as “to picture a space...is often to advance a strategy of bringing it under social control.” Therefore, at the moment of sight, space cannot simply be understood as a backdrop for different actors. Instead, space becomes a basic element of social relations (Zukin 2002, 345).

Though these critiques show the inadequacy of solely understanding space as absolute, as this conceptualization does not account for the complexities and social nature of the spatial, this spatial dimension remains important and should not be dropped entirely. Harvey argues that, just as focusing exclusively on absolute space is dangerous,

there is a serious danger in focusing exclusively on relational and lived space. This is particularly important for forming the theoretical framework for this project. Harvey states, “at some point something has to be materialized in absolute space.” Though it is important to denaturalize space, “the sheer materiality of construction in absolute space and time carries its own weight and authority” (Harvey 2006, 147). The River Building as a physical or absolute space cannot be ignored as the very design of this space supports particular social mission of the university. As Sharon Zukin (2002) argues, “we must look at the built environment as more than an end in itself. Cities and suburbs, buildings and roads, transmit power” (347). Therefore, though it is important to problematize only seeing space as absolute and acknowledging the social and political nature of the spatial, the absolute spatial dimension will remain an important component of this theoretical framework.

Critical geographers, including Lefebvre, Harvey, and Massey, have rediscovered “space-as-process,” and their work reveals the processes through which social phenomena are shaped by space (Swyngedouw 2000). Relative and relational space allow us to move beyond the absolute dimension of space and understand the ways in which space is produced through human agency and, in turn, affects social relations. These conceptualizations of space are useful for exploring how processes of commercialization and shifts in the social mission of the university are spatially manifested.

Relative space is rooted in two key assumptions. First, space can only be defined in relation to the object(s) and/or processes being expressed in the space (Jones 2009, 490). Space is relative in the sense that it is understood as a “relationship between objects which exists only because objects exist and relate to each other” (Harvey 2006, 121).

Second, and as a result of the first, there can be no fixed or defined relationship for locating space (Jones 2009, 490). Relative space emphasizes that the “spatial frame depends crucially upon what it is that is being relativized and by whom” and, therefore, measurements and conceptions of space depend upon the “frame of reference of the observer” (Harvey 2006, 122). This abstraction of space from matter or, more specifically, the division between absolute and relative space defines space not merely as objective, but rather as simultaneously objective and the product of social forces. This is an important transition in an analysis of the spatial as it allows for the recognition of the importance that specific context has on the formation and interpretation of space, but does not ignore the absolute dimensions of space. This spatial dimension will be used in this project to explore how different actors within the university conceptualize and experience the spaces of the River Building.

The last form of space Harvey defines is relational space (Harvey 2006, 121). Relational space shifts away from both absolute and relative space as it “dissolves the boundaries between objects and space, and rejects forms of spatial totality” (Jones 2009, 491). Relational space requires that space be regarded as “being contained in an object in the sense that an object can be said to exist only insofar as it contains and represents within itself relationships to other objects” (Harvey 2006, 121). In this sense, “objects *are* space, space *is* objects, and moreover objects can be understood *only* in relation to other objects” (Jones 2009, 491; emphasis in original). This view of space holds that space cannot be identified outside of the processes that define it and, therefore, “the concept of space is embedded in or internal to process” (Harvey 2006, 123).

Relational space clearly reveals the social nature of the spatial. Doreen Massey presents an alternative approach to space that is rooted in three key propositions, which each align with this shift towards thinking about space relationally. First, she argues that space must be recognized as the product of interrelations (Massey 2005, 9). In this sense, space is “constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny” (Massey 2005, 9). Second, Massey argues that space must be understood as the sphere of coexisting heterogeneity and/or multiplicity (9). Third, she argues that space is always in the process of being made and, therefore, can never be understood as complete or finished (9). As space is the product of relations that are embedded in material practices that are being carried out, it is always under construction (9).

Both Massey and Harvey’s conceptualization of relational space align with a commitment to anti-essentialism, the recognition of heterogeneity and multiplicities of histories, and allow for a greater openness to alternative possibilities than both absolute and relative space. In this multifaceted approach to the spatial, space is neither simply “a physical container of objects, nor an infinite, discursive field” (Butler 2009, 322). To think of space relationally focuses on the “open-ended, actor-centred, and mobile politics of spatiality” (Jones 2009, 488). This form of space is of particular importance for this research project as it emphasizes how space is social and political in nature. While relative space allows for the recognition of different experiences and conceptualizations of space, relational space shows how the space is the product of and supports particular social relations and processes and cannot be understood outside of this context. By exploring the River Building as a relational space, I am able to uncover social relations and processes within Carleton that support a particular social mission for the university.

Harvey argues that in order to fully understand a space, all three forms he outlines must be appreciated. A space can become one or all types simultaneously depending on the circumstances. Therefore, these forms of space are not hierarchically ordered and one conception cannot gain prominence over the others. Though an analysis of relative and relational space demonstrates the inadequacy of absolute space on its own, this form of space is no less important. Harvey argues that contemporary geography's critical turn has heavily focused on relational conceptualizations of space, but runs the risk of "dwelling only upon the relational and lived as if the material and absolute did not matter" (Harvey 2006, 148). The construction of what Harvey terms a "distinctively geographic imagination" requires constant movement between the different dimensions of space he outlines (Harvey 2006, 148).

To emphasize the importance of holding these forms of space in dialectical tension, Harvey creates a spatial matrix that places his threefold division of absolute, relative, and relational of space up against the tripartite division identified by Lefebvre (Harvey 2006, 133). Lefebvre divides the spatial into experienced, conceptualized, and lived space. Experienced space is the space of experience and perception, which is open to physical touch and sensation (Harvey 2006, 130). This form of space is closely associated to Harvey's absolute space. Conceptualized space focuses on the ways in which space is conceived and represented (Butler 2009, 320; Harvey 2006, 130).³ This

³ Chris Butler's (2009) outline of Lefebvre's tripartite division of space is helpful for the scope of this discussion, which is presenting Lefebvre's division briefly in order to understand Harvey's spatial matrix. I draw on Butler in this section as he is conducting a similar project to my own. As he is using Lefebvre to highlight the importance of the politics of space for critical legal thought,

dimension of space includes the abstract knowledge produced both formally and informally through apparatuses of power that are engaged in the organization of space (Butler 2009, 320). The last dimension is lived space, which is associated with the “social and bodily functions of lived experience” (Butler 2009, 320). Harvey states that this dimension of space addresses “the imagination, emotions, and meanings incorporated into how we live day by day” (Harvey 2006, 130). This dimension of space moves beyond the physical touch and sensation captured in experienced space to capture the emotions, fears, dreams, etc. that help to form the social imaginary of the space (Butler 2009, 320). Lived space is both affected by and affects the experiences and representations of space.

Harvey uses this spatial matrix to express the complexities of spatial relations and “consider the combinations that arise at different intersections within the matrix” (134). This matrix highlights the need to hold these dimensions of space in dialectical tension rather than treat these categories as hierarchically ordered. Therefore, all three dimensions of space that Harvey outlines, as well as moments of interaction with Lefebvre’s tripartite, are important for the theoretical framework for this project.

Place

Place, as a dimension of sociospatiality, is an important analytic tool for this project. Progressive understandings of place move away from the traditional association

his outline of Lefebvre’s tripartite division of space provides the level of detail necessary for my own work, which is intended to serve as an entry-point for making connections between the study of higher education and questions of space.

of “place-based politics and identifications with a xenophobic politics of nostalgia” (Kiel and Mahon 2009, 7). Conway identifies that places are being “constituted in significant ways by forces and conditions arising beyond the place” and, therefore, cannot be conceived simply as “pre-given or bounded locals” (Conway 2008, 212). Instead places are understood as “unbounded, porous, fluid entities, rather than bounded, fixed, and stable bundles of attributes” (Bondi 2005, 142).

This transition away from traditional understandings of place is similar to the shift towards a relational approach to space and supports the acknowledgement of the social nature of the spatial. Place, as defined by Massey, entails “geographical proximity, the embedding of social relations within particular locations, and patterns of area (horizontal) differentiation” (Brenner 2009, 31). In other words, place is “social relations stretched over space” (Massey 1994, 14). Roger Kiel and Rianne Mahon (2009) argue that place is “tied to everyday life, has temporal depth, and is linked to collective memory and social identity” (7). It is evident that the unique characteristics of a particular place cannot be understood without addressing its particular position relative to the social relations that exist within and beyond the specific place (Bondi 2005).

Places in this sense are “temporary constellations of trajectories” (Massey 2005, 153). Based on this conceptualization, Massey discusses the presence of negotiation within places, stating that “place [is] an arena where negotiation is forced upon us” (154). As place is the site of multiple, intersecting trajectories, it demands negotiation. Negotiation in this context “stands for the range of means through which accommodation, anyway always provisional, may be reached or not” (Massey 2005, 154). This understanding of place is important for the theoretical framework of this

thesis. In the spatial analysis, the River Building will not only be discussed as an absolute, relative, and relational space, but also as a place in so far as the challenge of negotiating the multiplicity of trajectories has been confronted (Massey 2005, 141).

This attention to place is of particular importance for the analysis of the entrepreneurial university, which, as Chris Hedges (2011) argues, functions as a site of separated lives and disciplines. Michael M’Gonigle and Justine Starke (2006) argue that these separations can result in the activities of actors within the university having no connection to the place in which they occur and, therefore, that the university can become a “placeless space”. The university can be “placeless” in the sense that,

One can go to the office and home, leave for conferences and distant meetings, connect by e-mail to the global netscape, seek career progress increments and identity through distant grants and publication – none of which need have much to do with where one actually lives and spends time. (M’Gonigle & Starke 2006, 332)

Students, faculty, and staff do not have to connect their activities and interactions within the university to the particular location or to one another. As a result, the spaces of the university do not demand the negotiation of the multiplicity of ideas and trajectories within the institution and the potential of the university as a place and the site of social identity and collective memory can become unrealized.

In this section, I have developed the theoretical framework I will use to analyze the River Building. The approaches to space and place I present denaturalize the spatial and emphasize its social nature. Harvey’s spatial categories will be used to explore the River Building as an absolute, relative, and relational space. Furthermore, Massey’s

approach to place will be used to analyze the River Building as a site of a multiplicity of ideas and trajectories. This multifaceted approach to the spatial will be used to reveal the social relations and priorities that are contested within and supported by the River Building.

II: Space Applied

In the social sciences, there is a growing interest in the spatial dimensions of social life. Two evident results of this shift are the development of critical approaches to human geography and the revival of urban sociology (Butler 2009, 314). This growing area of study is premised, in part, on the denaturalizing of the spatial and, as a result, an acknowledgment that spatial factors are key in shaping and, therefore, understanding social relations. As Doreen Massey argues, space is crucial for the “ordering of the world, positioning ourselves, and others human and nonhuman, in relation to ourselves” (Massey 2005, 105). Janet Conway argues that “spatial arrangements are actually constantly produced and reproduced through ongoing practices and discourses” (Conway 2008, 212). As a result, individuals are engaging with implicit and explicit conceptualizations of space in countless ways. Massey argues that the ways in which space is conceived and imagined has political and social effects. As social space is shaped by human agency, spatiality, in turn, affects social, economic, and political relations. Therefore, Massey argues that it is imperative that we begin to think about space explicitly. In this section, I begin to show what thinking about space explicitly can offer to an analysis of the university, particularly in regards to social control and the production of culture within the university.

Space is the product of social phenomena and society and social relations are shaped by the spatial. Through the production and control of both dominant conceptualizations of and access to space, societal control can be attained. Specific individuals and activities can be included or excluded from a particular space through both physical and symbolic barriers. A gated community is a common example of physical boundaries that allow the access of some individuals and the exclusion of others. In the case of the university, an example of physical barriers is the strict guidelines universities have in regards to what student activities can occur in specific campus spaces and, consequently, which cannot. In response to these physical limitations, we are seeing the replacement of student mobilization on university campuses with the practice of “tabling” (Hedges 2011, 92).⁴ These physical barriers are rooted in the absolute and experienced dimensions of space and are tangible ways that spatial control allows for social control.

When addressing access to particular spaces, it is important to move beyond physical boundaries and identify the presence of symbolic barriers. The symbolic meanings and social imaginations of a space are related to the relative and relational dimensions of space and, similar to the physical boundaries, can serve to determine what actors and activities are allowed within a space. Central to this argument is the idea of “simultaneous positioning,” which incorporates the importance of both the physical

⁴ “Tabling” describes a practice common in universities where student organizations and clubs are required to submit an application to set up a table on the campus – primarily the student union building - to provide information on the group, advertise events, sell baked goods, etc. Hedges (2011) argues that the practice of “tabling” is controlled “by strict restrictions and permitting processes” (93).

limitations of one's access to space as well as symbolic dimensions (Soja 1989). Lefebvre reflects on this two-way relationship that exists with the spatial in which individuals serve to create and sustain the very space that then serves to influence their thoughts and actions (Lefebvre 1991). To refer back to his tripartite division (experienced, conceptualized, and lived space), the ways that a space is represented can affect the lived space and the emotions and imagination an individual incorporates into that space. Edward Soja also addresses this two-way relationship in his concept of "thirdspace," which describes the process by which meanings that are invested in a space become self-reinforcing as the real and imagined attributes of the space co-exist (Soja 1996).

The concept of landscape is also useful in this discussion of the spatial manifestations of social control. Zukin argues that landscape, a concept borrowed from art history, is useful for showing how "every built environment makes a point about social power" (Zukin 2002, 346). Landscape, as defined by Zukin, does not simply incorporate the usual geographical meaning of physical surroundings, but also an "ensemble of material and social practices and their symbolic representation" (Zukin 1991, 16). Therefore, understanding a space as a landscape helps to capture how the built space has both material and symbolic forms (Zukin 2002, 346). Cultural geographers understand landscapes, "as symbolic, as expressions of cultural values, social behavior, and individual actions worked upon particular localities over a span of time" (Zukin 1991, 18). This concept brings together the physical and symbolic forms of space I have discussed and can be used to show how the River Building is not simply a built environment, but also symbolic and an expression of cultural values within Carleton.

Culture is spatiality manifested and also serves as a tool for social control. Sharon

Zukin (1995) argues that in so far as culture symbolizes “who belongs in specific places,” it is spatially manifested (1). Don Mitchell (2000) also makes this connection between space and culture, describing culture as a conflation of political identities that establish value systems, which serve to order social behaviour in space. Furthermore, Harvey (1973) makes the connection between this production of culture and social control, arguing that culture is a force in the very political organization of space that serves to determine its use.

In these approaches, culture is both determined by and the determiner of spatial construction and contestation. The actors who control the dominant conceptualizations of and access to particular spaces are able to foster a culture within these spaces that serves particular interests. For example, as private actors and an autonomous administration increasingly gain influence within the entrepreneurial university, these actors are able to construct a student culture that is centered on the commodification of the university experience and treats the student primarily as a consumer. These actors are able to benefit economically from this particular culture, as well as challenge the emergence of different student cultures that may challenge their control.

Who, then, has control of these physical and symbolic dimensions of space within the entrepreneurial university and, as a result, who and what are being designed in or out of these spaces? It is these concerns that drive the remainder of this thesis.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I present a multifaceted approach to space and sociospatiality. Critical geographers, such as Massey, Harvey, and Lefebvre, have challenged a static and

natural approach to space and reimagined space-as-process and the social nature of the spatial. Alongside this shift, there has also been a reimagining of place that I argue is a useful dimension of sociospatiality for the study of the university, as the entrepreneurial university can be seen as a placeless space. With this multifaceted approach to space I begin to identify the ways in which space is a tool for social control and the production of culture.

To explore changes in the social mission of the university, it is helpful to understand this as a spatial project. Using this multifaceted approach to space and sociospatiality, a spatial analysis of the university can be conducted to identify what kinds of individuals and activities are being designed in or out of the entrepreneurial university. Due to the scope of this thesis, in this spatial analysis I focus in particular on exploring how space can uncover existing differences between the rhetoric and reality of the university as a social institution. What social mission do the spaces of the university reflect and support and how does this social mission compare to the mission developed in the documents that inform university decision-making? It is these questions that I will work through in the specific case of the River Building at Carleton University.

In the following chapter I situate my own interests in this research project and discuss the methodological foundations for this project, including the reasons for selecting an in-depth case study and the methods I use for collecting and coding data. In the chapter that follows, I then conduct a spatial analysis of Carleton University, specifically its new River Building, in order to show how a spatial analysis of this building can uncover a particular social mission for the university, one which differs from the mission outlined in Carleton's strategic and academic plans.

3 Methodological Foundations

I: Self-Reflexivity

To understand the structure of this thesis, it is important to outline my own motivations for conducting this research. My interest in the university, and in particular the intersection between commercialization and engagement, is rooted in my passion for and involvement in student activism. While completing my undergraduate degree at Acadia University, I was involved in a number of activist groups and found myself continually frustrated by existing barriers that served to hinder the ability of students to take effective political action. In his book *The Abandoned Generation: Democracy Beyond the Culture of Fear*, Henry Giroux (2004) argues that the university is a public institution that should provide students with the opportunity to “learn the power of questioning authority, recover the ideals of engaged citizenship, reaffirm the importance of the public good, and expand their capacities to make a difference” (187). It has become apparent to me during my time at both Acadia and Carleton University, however, that the university does not provide this platform for students. Instead the university has transformed into an institution that fosters in students a narrow sense of responsibility and agency.

In February of 2011, the Acadia Student Union (ASU) proposed significant cuts to the production budget of the *Athenaeum*, the student-run newspaper. As this paper is essential for fostering and supporting student activism and a democratic campus community, I was actively involved in the student movement against these cuts. When organizing a public forum to gain student input regarding the proposed budget cuts, the

Athenaeum staff members were told that they could not use the main floor of the Student Union Building (SUB) to host the event. Organizers were told by the building general manager that this space was not intended for political events, but rather social events, such as dances and concerts. It was this incident that led me to explore how the spaces of the university shape and reflect the intended culture and purpose of the institution.

In my undergraduate thesis I explored how space is conceptualized in the contemporary university in order to show how these conceptualizations of space negatively impact the presence and effectiveness of student activism. I argued that corporate actors and an autonomous administration construct a dominant conceptualization of space, which fosters a particular culture that favors the student as a consumer. My research concluded that these emerging conceptualizations of space within the university must be challenged in order for the institution to support the emergence and effectiveness of student activism, which is both a sign of the health of the institution and the fulfillment of its broader role to society.

When beginning my MA research in the Institute of Political Economy at Carleton University, I knew that I wanted to continue exploring these spatial effects of commercialization, but was unsure of a specific focus. My interest in the civic role of the university emerged as a result of my participation in two community-based research (CBR) projects, *Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement* and *FemNorthNet*. These CBR projects, which bring together academics and community organizations to explore campus-community partnerships and the effects of economic development on women in northern Canada, caused me to think about how commercialization affects the university's interactions with external communities. I find

this to be of particular interest as it is clear that commercialization greatly affects the external interests a university serves, but that a commitment to civic engagement has also been used as a strategy to defend the legitimacy of the university to the public, though this appears to be divergent with the social mission of the entrepreneurial university.

As my own interests in this topic are rooted in activism and my participation in CBR projects, this analysis goes beyond simply using space to identify the effects of commercialization on the civic role of the university; I also offer recommendations to challenge these changes. Marx states that “the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it” (Swyngedouw 2000). Therefore, this thesis is both a theoretical and empirical project. This project not only serves as a theoretical entry point into exploring how space can allow for a deeper understanding of the effects of commercialization, but also provides a grounded example of employing this theory to offer recommendations in a specific context. To use Brent Flyvbjerg’s (2001) language, this project intends to produce both context-independent and context-dependent knowledge.

II: Case Study

I selected an in-depth case study to address the key research questions guiding this thesis project for a number of reasons. First, as this project intends to serve only as an initial exploration of how the concept of space could be used to further study the effects of commercialization, one in-depth case study is sufficient to begin to apply or test the usefulness of this theoretical discussion. Second, discussions around the concept of space are often abstract and a case study allows me to explore how the theory plays

out on the ground. Lastly, my case study is not an attempt to prove the existence of commercialization and the increasing commitment to “engagement” within the university, which are well established in the literature. Instead, I use the case study to explore how some of these trends and transformations are playing out on the ground and are changing the ways that university spaces are being produced and used.

There are, of course, limitations associated with the use of an in-depth case study: Dogan and Pelassy (1990) and Diamond (1996) have noted that case studies are too subjective and do not lend themselves to generalization. With these critiques in mind, to justify the use of an in-depth case study, I will briefly draw on Flyvbjerg’s work. Flyvbjerg outlines several misunderstandings about the nature of case studies, which are rooted in the common oversimplification of conventional wisdom about the case study. Two of these misunderstandings that Flyvbjerg corrects are relevant to this research project.

The first misunderstanding Flyvbjerg (2006) identifies is that the case study has a bias towards verification as it has the tendency to confirm the researcher’s preconceived ideas (234). This critique is based on the argument that the case study and other qualitative methods allow more room for the researcher’s subjective judgment than other methods. In response, Flyvbjerg argues that, not only do questions of subjectivism apply to all methods, but that case studies are characterized more by falsification than verification. The case study allows the researcher to “‘close in’ on real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice,” which can often challenge the preconceived assumptions, concepts, and hypotheses of the researcher (Flyvbjerg 2006, 235). Based on my motivations for conducting this research, I did have

a number of assumptions going into the research process and, therefore, this tendency of case studies towards falsification and challenging assumptions is particularly important. In the following chapter I will discuss the preconceived ideas I had about the case study that were challenged by the interviewees.

The second misunderstanding Flyvbjerg addresses is that context-independent or theoretical knowledge is more valuable than concrete context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2006, 221). Flyvbjerg argues that social science is strongest when it is rooted in concrete, context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2006, 223). The case study is useful insofar as it serves to produce this context-dependent knowledge. This is of particular resonance in regards to this research project and my goal of concluding with concrete recommendations on how to challenge the divide between the rhetoric around Carleton University's priorities and commitment to engagement and the reality on the ground.

Though context-dependent knowledge is important for my research, this project is also theoretically based. Though Flyvbjerg's work is helpful for supporting the use of a case study, he outlines theory in a very narrow and limited way, heavily focusing on predictive theory, which he argues fails in the social sciences where context is crucial. He does not offer a broader conceptualization of theory beyond this general, universal approach (Falk et al. 2009): according to Flyvbjerg, "theory – by definition – presupposes context-independence" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 42). In this thesis, my choice to use an in-depth case study is closely related to the theoretical nature of this project. As stated, discussions of space are often abstract and, therefore, the use of an in-depth case study allows me to explore how questions of space play out in a particular context. In

this research, I am analyzing the relationship between an in-depth case study and theoretical framework.

Flyvbjerg's critiques of existing misunderstandings on the nature of the case study help to justify the use of an in-depth case study in this research. In the following chapter, the case of Carleton University and the River Building is analyzed through the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 in order to address how questions of space can be used to identify discrepancies and similarities between the rhetoric of the university and the reality on the ground.

III: Why Carleton University?

Carleton University, and in particular the River Building, were selected to be the case study for this research project for several reasons. Here I will briefly outline three key effects of commercialization that are evident at Carleton. In the following chapter I will focus more specifically on the ways in which Carleton reflects Readings' contemporary university and the growing commitment to engagement discussed in the literature review.

First, a number of the themes that emerged in the literature review on commercialization are occurring at Carleton University. Most recently, President and Vice Chancellor Roseann O'Reilly Runte praised a consequence of commercialization in a guest editorial the *Globe and Mail*. President Runte supports the growing integration of technology into education, as it will "reduce costs, [and] educate *more* students, *more* rapidly, for *less* money" (Runte 2013; emphasis added). The article goes on to focus on the financial effects of technological advancement in education rather than the proposed

benefits for students. This unqualified support for educational technologies appears to reflect James Turk's (2000) argument that one of the greatest private interventions on the academic side of the university is the growing use of online learning and virtual education, which reduces costs for the university and benefits software and educational service companies with little attention to the quality of education for students. The increasing integration of online education supports the skill-building approach to education in the entrepreneurial university. An approach to education that favours critical thinking is supported by small-class sizes and interactions between students and with professors, both of which are expensive for the university.

An article in response to President Runte's guest editorial highlights a second effect of commercialization that is evident at Carleton, which is the growing use of contract instructors. Turk (2000) argues that one effect of the university operating as if it is private is an increase in the hiring of part-time and contract employees who can be paid less, receive fewer benefits, and are less likely to unionize (Turk 2000, 7). Craig McFarlane, a contract instructor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton, writes, "in some departments at Carleton University, more than 50 per cent of the undergraduate courses are taught by contract instructors and it is possible for students to graduate without ever taking a course with a tenure-track or tenured professor" (McFarlane 2013). This reliance on contract instructors cannot only be understood as a way to cut costs, but also as an effect of the university becoming private in practice and redesigning work to rely on part-time employees.

Both of these examples reflect the focus on efficiency and cost reduction in commercialization; however, as the literature review demonstrates, the effects of

commercialization in the university are potentially much deeper, shifting the very conceptualizations of the role of the institution and benefits of higher education. As the role of the university is seen as imparting useful skills to customers and the benefit of education as an individual investment, there is a downloading of costs onto the individual students. The evidence appears to back this trend at Carleton, where tuition has increased from \$4,152 (per session) for a Bachelor of Arts in 2005-2006 to \$5,818 (per session) in 2013-2014 (Carleton Financial Report). This is a 40% growth between 2005 and 2014; an annual growth of 4.4%. To justify the most recent tuition increase, the Charlatan reports that administration cited the continued shortage of provincial government funding to universities (Inayat 2013). When asked about the 2013-2014 tuition increase of 3%, the maximum increase under the current Ontario government framework, President Roseann Runte is quoted in the Charlatan as stating, “everybody says tuition is high, things cost money... Well, I can’t do anything about things costing money. When the prices go up, I have to pay for it.” She goes on to state that she cannot ask governments to just “turn around and give us a lot more money” (Inayat 2013). This need to increase tuition in place of government funding reflects the shift in education away from an emphasis on public benefit and a downloading onto the individual.

Carleton University is also a strong case study for this research as a direct connection has been made at this university between the mission and culture of the institution and the physical spaces. One interviewee highlights this well:

One interesting aspect of the River Building is that it reflects an outward looking vision. If you think about how the university has been developed, it started to develop around the quad. The first physical plans of the university

were all around creating an internal community. If you look at buildings around the quad, they all look inward and if you look at most of the other buildings on the campus, they look inward. But, in the new university plan from 5 years ago, it sort of said, “wait a minute, we need to look outward.” So you have the River Building that looks out on the river and the Canal Building that faces the Canal and those are the first two examples of built space that are intended to orient the university outward.⁵

The allocation and use of space on the Carleton campus have also been a contentious issue for students. Student groups on campus have made connections between space and the priorities of the university. An example of this is the struggle over the Galleria in the University Centre. Though Carleton’s Campus Master Plan states that this space was intended to serve as a central gathering place for students, upon its opening in 2006, a quarter of the space was rented to Starbucks. A movement emerged in response to this commercialization of the space.

As part of the struggle to reclaim the space for its intended purpose, students and faculty began to refer to the space as the Atrium. These faculty and students do not believe that the Atrium was created for the expansion of corporatism on the Carleton campus and, therefore, refer to the space by this alias. By referring to the Galleria as the Atrium, students and faculty are creating a symbolic meaning for the space that is innately their own. While the use of “Galleria” creates a symbolic meaning that allows for the justification of the commercialization of the space, the use of “Atrium” allows for

⁵ The methods used to collect and code this interview data are discussed on page 56.

the reimagining of the space into one with an inherently different meaning, reinforcing the purpose of the area as a communal space for students. Based on the importance placed on renaming the space, it is evident that this movement recognizes the relationship between the symbolic meaning of a space and its uses.

Similar controversy regarding the use of space has been raised about the conference space in the River Building, opened in Spring 2012, which is administered by Conference Services with a for-profit mandate. This mandate for the space begged a deeper analysis as it appeared to fit with the conceptions and control of space evident in the administration of the Atrium. It is clear that the university is supporting a particular vision in its use of this space. For these reasons, Carleton University and the River Building are a strong case study to begin exploring how space can be used to further understand the effects of commercialization on the civic role of the university.

IV: Methods

Qualitative methods were used to help identify and understand themes related to how the engagement agenda of the university is reflected in the physical and symbolic spaces of Carleton University, particularly the River Building. In-depth interviews and primary document analysis were the main methods used.

Five interviews were conducted with individuals who were involved with the design of and consultation process for the River Building. These interviews included the directors of the main programs housed in the building, the Dean of Public Affairs at the time of the consultation process, a representative from Physical Plant, and a member of the Board of Governors Building Committee. Furthermore, in lieu of in-person

interviews, both the Office of the President and Vice President Finance requested that interview questions were emailed; however, neither office responded to these questions. Interviews were semi-structured and lasted between twenty and forty minutes. Questions primarily focused on the vision and mandate of the building, design priorities, the consultation process that took place, and questions surrounding funding allocation.

I also collected relevant documents, such as mission statements, meeting minutes, and institutional reports, and reviewed the Carleton University website to inform the interviews and context of this case study.

The coding measures for this research are informed by Bogdan and Biklen (1982). Initially, I intended to use grounded theory; however, the emphasis in this methodology on theory emerging from data does not reflect this project. In grounded theory, the researcher is not focused on testing a hypothesis, but rather allowing theory to emerge from empirical data (Dunne 2011, 111). As this project is intended to serve as an entry point into applying the concept of space to the study of the university, I require developing the theoretical framework before collecting data. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) argue that analyzing qualitative data involves, "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (145). Their coding measures for qualitative data analysis allow for both the theory and literature to inform the specific case study. First, I focused on the literature and theoretical reviews, as discussed in chapters one and two, in order to identify the ways in which the work being done on space speaks to the scholarship on the university as a social institution. Second, I created key words and phrases to represent these topics and

themes. Third, I went through the primary data and recorded where these themes emerged and where there was existing counter-evidence. This coding method allowed me to identify when these two bodies of literature intersect and speak to one another in the specific case study.

V: Limitations

Although this research does serve as an important entry point in bringing together conversations in critical geography and the study of the university, it is important to address the limitations of this research project. First, due to time constraints, the interviews conducted have been limited to individuals involved in the consultation process and design of the River Building. With the allocation of space and the mandate of the Atrium and conference facility in the River Building being somewhat controversial at Carleton, this research could have been strengthened by also interviewing broader members of the Carleton community, including faculty and students, who were excluded from the consultation process, but have strong opinions on the space.

A second limitation of this study is the lack of documents on the River Building. Since the building was only opened in 2012, the information publicly available is limited. As a result, in the initial interviews I focused primarily on gathering basic information about the timeline for the building, who was involved in the consultation process, and the vision and budget for the building. Lastly, the theoretical nature of this project did serve as a barrier in the interviews. I found it difficult to raise the different

conceptualizations and effects of space I am working through in the case study without posing leading questions to interviewees. To try to work around this, I chose to briefly explain the theoretical framework of the research project at the beginning of each interview in order to situate my interest in the River Building and then to shift away from directly using these terms and theory. I instead focused on broad questions about the River Building and the conference facility that allowed for the relationship between this space and the university more broadly to naturally emerge and allowed the interviewee to use his or her own terms. With this absence of theoretical language in the interview questions, it is very interesting how many responses in these interviews still reflect the literature on space.

4 A Case Study: Carleton University's Social Mission in Word and Brick

Introduction

In this chapter, a spatial analysis of Carleton University is conducted, looking specifically at the River Building. In this analysis, I explore how the spaces of the university can reveal a contradiction between the university's proposed vision and priorities and the actual reality on the ground. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides an overview of how Carleton University is presented in the two key documents that currently inform the university's decision-making and outline the main priorities and future directions for the university: *Defining Dreams: A Strategic Plan for Carleton University 2009* and *Realizing our Dreams as Canada's Capital University: The Carleton Academic Plan (CAP) 2010/11-2014/15*. I identify the language and goals within these documents that align with several of the themes that emerged in the literature review on the contemporary or entrepreneurial university, particularly the focus on strengthening and expanding Carleton's pursuit of excellence and a commitment to engagement.

The second section focuses specifically on the River Building and how the vision, design, and administration of this space shows the relationship between these declared visions for and priorities of the university and the reality of existing practices. In this section, I primarily rely on the interviews I conducted with individuals involved in the consultation process for the building, as these individuals are able to speak to the intended vision and mandate of the space in comparison to its actual use upon opening. I conclude this chapter by situating this analysis in the theoretical framework developed in

Chapter 3. By not solely seeing the River Building as an absolute, built space, but rather as a relational space that is the product of and supports social relations, an analysis of this building reveals a different view of the intended social mission of the university.

I: The Declared Carleton University

In consultation with both internal and external groups, President Roseann O'Reilly Runte developed *Defining Dreams: A Strategic Plan for Carleton University 2009* (Strategic Plan). The final plan is the result of several consultative meetings, including: eight roundtables with students, alumni, parents, educators, business leaders, the arts community, political representatives and members of civic organizations; meetings of the Senior Planning Committee; meeting with the deans, senior administrators, and stakeholders; and an online consultation process. The Board of Governors approved the Strategic Plan on February 2nd, 2009. The document highlights the university's top priorities and goals, including specific targets and timelines, for the five years following its approvals.

The Carleton University Senate approved the Carleton Academic Plan (CAP), entitled "Realizing our Dreams as Canada's Capital University," on June 25th, 2010. This document is inspired by the Strategic Plan and is intended to provide a plan to realize the ideas and goals outlined in this strategic plan, especially as it relates to the academic programming of the university. Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Peter Ricketts, states, "the aim of this process has been to work with the Carleton community to create a *Carleton Academic Plan* of which we will all feel proud – an academic plan that will invigorate us all to make Carleton an even better place in which to learn, teach, and

engage in research and scholarly activity” (CAP 2010, 1). The CAP defines the mission and academic values of Carleton and outlines the goals and objectives that are intended to strengthen and further develop research and learning at the university.

Both the Strategic Plan and the CAP inform Carleton’s decision-making until 2014-2015, “guid[ing] academic and administrative units as they develop their plans and agendas in the coming months and years” (Carleton University 2013). Since I provide an overview of the specific forms and effects of commercialization evident at Carleton in Chapter Three, here I focus more broadly on the social mission of the university. Several of the principles and goals outlined in the Strategic Plan and the CAP support the historical foundations of Carleton as a civic university.

Founded in 1942, the original vision for and purpose of Carleton University reflect Ford’s civic university. The university began as a non-denominational college created to provide young people in Ottawa, many of whom had postponed their education and taken jobs in response to the pressures of the Depression, the opportunity to further their education (Carleton University 2013). On April 1st 2013, the Charlatan, Carleton’s student-run independent newspaper, published an article on the history of the university. In this article, former history professor David Farr, who joined the Carleton faculty in 1947, states, “Carleton was part of the planning that took place during the Second World War for how to cope with the returning veterans at war's end” (Charlatan). During World War I, Farr states, “this had been a big problem because there hadn’t been enough advance planning and at the end of the war there was massive unemployment,” (Charlatan). Carleton was founded with the purpose of ensuring that this did not occur again.

The mission of the university and perceived benefit of higher education were directly connected to strengthening Canada post World War II. Carleton was established to “provide increased access to higher education and research for people seeking to make significant contributions to the post-war society and economy” (CAP 2010, 3). The university was not simply a place for individuals to attend post-war as a way to deal with the issue of unemployment. There was a broader understanding of higher education that was connected to strengthening Canadian society and its economy. This direct relationship between the purpose and mission of university and nation building aligns with the social mission of the civic university that Ford describes.

The approach to education and knowledge in the CAP reflects this historical relationship between the university and the broader community. When describing the academic vision of Carleton, the CAP states that the university has always had a,

...tradition of ensuring that its students understand the relevance of academic thought and expression, and that its students will learn the skills of critical thinking and its application towards making the world a better place for human endeavour (CAP 2010, 3)

This focus on applying knowledge to societal problems reflects the civic university’s approach to knowledge that emphasizes the national and public benefit.

The dominant pedagogy outlined in the CAP also reflects Readings’ University of Culture. This document states,

Since its founding in 1942, Carleton University has been devoted to independent inquiry and informed engagement with varied ways of making

sense of our world; the CAP reflects an ongoing commitment to this heritage. It values the rich diversity of a university in which critical reflection, pure research, and applied knowledge complement each other and evolve in tandem. Carleton aims to make a space and place in which students become active participants in a civic-minded learning community, where they can attain the critical and historical knowledge they need to reflect seriously on significant questions and to arrive at creative, informed solutions. (CAP 2010, 3)

In the University of Culture, the dominant educational philosophy treats knowledge as “its own end” and students are encouraged to not merely regurgitate information, but instead actively engage with the material (Readings 1996, 75). Learning in this university is understood as a process by which students are able to reflect on and challenge the world around them. The declared commitment in the CAP to critical reflection, applied knowledge, and supporting a civic-minded learning community reflect this approach to knowledge and education. In contrast, the dominant educational philosophy in the entrepreneurial university is one that privileges knowledge as a form of investment in the economy and the value of one’s labour-power. In the entrepreneurial university, Ford and Readings argue that critical reflection is replaced with a focus on skills building.

Though the priorities in the Strategic Plan and CAP suggest that Carleton represents a civic university in Ford’s typology, certain language and goals in these documents also reflect the entrepreneurial university. In particular, I highlight the focus on both excellence and engagement in the Strategic Plan and CAP.

A University in Pursuit of Excellence:

Readings argues that the contemporary university is centred around an adherence to excellence. What is important about this concept becoming the declared standard of the university is that excellence has no established terms of reference. Therefore, the use of this term can highlight how a university is able to state a particular goal without having to outline any clear objectives that can hold the institution accountable.

Furthermore, there is a certain value for this term being unobjectionable, as it is difficult for anyone to be opposed to “excellence” even if they may be opposed to the activities that are done under this banner of “achieving excellence.” In both the Strategic Plan and CAP, the pursuit of excellence is presented as a guiding principle and priority of Carleton. In the Strategic Plan, one of the four key goals of the university is the “pursuit of excellence in every activity” (Strategic Plan 2009, 4). Similarly, the CAP states that Carleton is “dedicated to achieving excellence in everything that we do” and the term is used 16 times in the 18-page document (CAP 2010, 3).

In the Strategic Plan, excellence is one of the four key goals of Carleton and is presented as follows,

Carleton must be, and be recognized as, one of the best universities in Canada with internationally recognized programs. We wish at the same time to ensure that these programs are accessible to the community at large. We strive for excellence in all our activities – teaching, research, scholarship, and service. We recognize that the academic mission of the university is

dependent upon outstanding administrative and student support services
(Strategic Plan 2009, 5)

Based on this description, which is the sole paragraph under the heading “Excellence,” all that can be attributed to achieving excellence is recognition, accessibility, and outstanding administrative and student services. There is not a clear vision or understanding of what striving for excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, and service entails.

In the CAP, excellence is frequently used as a standard for the goals and objectives in the academic mission of the university. For example, the document proposes developing educational programs to “assist faculty, contract instructors, and teaching assistants in achieving teaching excellence” (CAP 2010, 6). In the CAP there is also a commitment to “ensure excellence in academic and non-academic graduate student experience” (CAP 2010, 11). Unlike the Strategic Plan, many of these specific uses of excellence throughout the CAP are substantiated with clear objectives to reach this goal. However, there are several instances where excellence is the standard outlined within these specific objectives and, therefore, leave the goal unsubstantiated.

In both the Strategic Plan and the CAP, excellence is continually presented as the end objective for the university; however, there is not a clear articulation of what it means to reach excellence in the different areas of the university. Just as Readings argues, the use of excellence as a priority of Carleton is left ambiguous and unsubstantiated by concrete objectives and/or terms of reference. Both these documents support Readings’ argument that excellence as the watchword of the contemporary university is a meaningless classification, void of a fixed standard of judgment (Readings

1996, 32). Is this what we see at Carleton? Though these documents are the result of campus-wide consultation processes and are intended to inform Carleton's direction and decision-making, their stated commitment to excellence makes it difficult to hold the university administration accountable. Therefore, a university centred on excellence has the potential to become "fragmented, hierarchical, narrowly instrumental, and largely unaccountable" (M'Gonigle and Starke 2006, 332). With this problem identified, in the analysis of the River Building, I explore the presence of this unaccountability and hierarchy at Carleton.

Carleton as an Engaged University:

As I discuss in the literature review, a commitment to engagement has increasingly been leveraged in the context of commercialization in order to justify rising costs and strengthen support for universities. This engagement agenda focuses on the university's "third mission" of public service, outreach, and civic engagement (Roper & Hirth 2005). Engagement, in this context, refers to a commitment to relating research and teaching more closely to real-world issues, greater collaboration between universities and their larger communities, and a two-way approach to knowledge production (Ostrander 2004; Roper & Hirth 2005; Weerts & Hudson 2009; Weerts & Sandmann 2008). Though this commitment to engagement reflects the social mission of the civic university, which is understood in relation to benefits to the public, this agenda is evident in the entrepreneurial university as a way to counter critiques of the changing social mission of the university.

The importance of engagement at Carleton is evident in the very mission statement of the university, which reads,

Carleton University is an independent, collegial university dedicated to the advancement of learning through disciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching, study, and research, the creation and dissemination of knowledge, and the betterment of its community. It is centered in Ottawa and serves the people of Ontario, Canada, and the world. (CAP 2010, 3)

In the Strategic Plan, this commitment to engagement is presented as something not new, but that has always been an important part of the university. The introduction to the document states,

Carleton University has long been recognized for its community engagement. Carleton was built by the community, for the community and in the community, and our community is now global. Students and faculty are present in the surrounding community and around the world, working in hundreds of volunteer programs, internships and joint research projects. (Strategic Plan 2009, 1)

Engagement is presented as one of the four key goals of the university in this document. This goal is described as follows:

As a designer and custodian of the future, Carleton must serve our academic community and all the communities and the local and international environments with which we interact. The university has the responsibility and the intellectual resources to lead our local, regional, national, and international communities as stewards not only of community well-being but of healthier, more sustainable communities (Strategic Plan 2009, 5)

It is interesting how in both of these excerpts from the Strategic Plan, the emphasis is on social engagement. Rather than a focus on the private sector and economic growth, engagement in this document is closely tied to the health and sustainability of communities. This approach to engagement reflects the focus on public service and outreach in the literature on this growing engagement agenda.

As Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Peter Ricketts notes in his opening message of the CAP, the academic plan of the university is directly tied to the social mission of the university and is intended to inform how Carleton can “contribute in a significant way to the intellectual, cultural, and economic development of our city, our province, our country, and our world” (CAP). The CAP encourages the further development and strengthening of “regional partnerships and innovation strategies that will link [Carleton’s] academic and research activities with the surrounding community” (CAP 2010, 15). The goal of engagement is defined in the CAP as comprising “an engaged community of students, faculty, and staff to ensure that it is constantly influential through its teaching, research, and service and that it can make a significant contribution to the advancement of a civil society” (CAP 2010, 17). Civil society is not defined in this document; however, as the Strategic Plan inspires the CAP, this approach to engagement can be seen to be similarly rooted in a commitment to contributing to the sustainability and health of the community.

To support this commitment to engagement, several practices and policies are outlined in the Strategic Plan and CAP. One way in which Carleton intends to further develop this engagement agenda is the integration of experiential learning in curriculum, which can be in the form of community service learning, cooperative education, and

placement or internship opportunities (CAP 2010, 10). The CAP describes this integration of experiential or active learning opportunities as a way to further a commitment to engagement in teaching and the student learning experience (CAP 2010, 10). In relation to research at the university, the CAP states that the university will rethink “university time” in relation to “research, service, [and] community engagement” (CAP 2010, 17). The engagement agenda in relation to research at Carleton is also discussed in the Strategic Plan, which states that the university will “increase the impact of research through scholarly outlets, as well as through student engagement and contributions to the local, national and international communities” (Strategic Plan 2009, 9). Engagement as a priority of Carleton in both of these two documents affects the practices of teaching, learning, and research at the university.

Both the Strategic Plan and CAP offer a detailed account of Carleton’s proposed priorities and goals. These documents are intended to inform decision-making at the university until 2015. Based on these documents, the growing engagement agenda discussed in the literature review is evident at Carleton and the university is portrayed as a civic university; however, these priorities cannot simply be accepted as reality. Instead, this picture of Carleton needs to be compared to the reality created by the policies and priorities on the ground. In the following section, I look at how the concept of space allows us to see how this relationship is reflected in the River Building.

II: The River Building

In this section, I first provide a brief overview of the initial proposals for a new building on the Carleton campus, including a brief discussion of funding sources and the consultation process that occurred. Second, I outline the two-fold vision for the River Building that, based on the interviews conducted, was evident throughout the consultation, particularly in relation to the conference facility. Third, I compare this vision with the reality upon the building's opening. In this discussion, I apply the theoretical framework developed in chapter two to show how the River Building as an absolute and relational space can be used to interrogate the priorities and social mission of Carleton.

Initial Proposal:

There is very little public documentation on the consultation process, mandate for, and design of the River Building, which opened in Spring 2012. Therefore, this discussion primarily relies on data gathered from the five interviews conducted with the individuals involved in the consultation process for the building.

The initial proposal put forward by the Carleton administration to the Board of Governors in 2005 was for a large all-purpose building that would straddle the railroad tracks and house five or six different programs. This proposal fell through before it was even considered due to the City of Ottawa's decision to not proceed with the light rail project (Interviewee 4). As a result,

[The administration] started talking about having it built [on the current site].

And when they talked about building it down here, it was originally going to be a building that had both everything that is in here and also everything that

is in the Canal Building, so it was going to be one big building. But the next thing I heard was that that would have created some sort of monstrous building. (Interviewee 4)

This second proposal put before the Board was rejected. One interviewee states,

The Board rejected this as too large a building with too many purposes and instead asked the administration to come up with a better plan. This plan was to reduce the size of this building and add a second building, the Canal Building, which together would have the same amount of space as the single building but would make it easier to divide the use. In this plan, the Canal Building would be part of the Science precinct and [the River Building] would be part of the Public Administration precinct. (Interviewee 2)

Once it was clear that there would be two buildings, each with a specific purpose, the Board of Governors Building Committee approved the proposal.

The funding for the River Building primarily came from the federal and Ontario governments. In 2009, universities across Ontario received significant investments from both the federal and provincial governments to enhance university infrastructure. At the federal level this money came from the Knowledge Infrastructure Program, a part of the Economic Action Plan, and provided \$500.3 million to Ontario universities. Provincially, the Ontario government committed \$607.1 million to universities in the 2009 Budget and Strategic Capital Infrastructure Program. In total, for the River and Canal buildings, Carleton received \$26,250,000 from both the provincial and federal government (Council of Ontario Universities 2010). The budget for the Canal Building was approximately \$30,400,000 and the total budget for the River Building was \$52,000,000

(Carleton University 2013).

The consultation process that took place included the directors of the three primary programs, the Dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs, a representative from the Board of Governors Building Committee, Ian Kennedy (the project manager), architects from Moriyama and Teshima Architects and GRC Architects, and general contractor from R. E. Hein Construction. One interviewee states that this consultation process was “extensive” (Interviewee 2). When I ask if there was anyone who was not included in this process who felt they should have been, the interviewee shakes his/her head and answers,

I am sure there are people in the university who wished they had gotten a new building, but that is a typical process whenever there is a new building put up, everyone thinks they are the most deserving of it. That is a job of the senior administration to determine who is going to be housed where.

(Interviewee 2)

In terms of how this consultation process was structured, one interviewee describes it as,

Mostly one-on-one with Ian and the architects in the early stage. It was when you got to actually building it and the reality of how you are doing things in comparison to what you wanted to do. There were a few meetings at the faculty level because we are all in the same Faculty of Public Affairs, but there were not a lot of meetings. (Interviewee 4)

The Two-Fold Vision:

There are two visions for the River Building. First, this is a space to bring together the three professional programs at Carleton: Public Policy and Administration,

the Norman Patterson School of International Affairs (NPSIA), and the School of Journalism and Communication. These programs were chosen for two reasons. First, the administration saw that these programs were long overdue for facility upgrades. One interview discusses this, stating,

As it were these three programs – which have a lot in common – were housed in three different areas of the university, none of them in quarters purpose built. This was particularly a handicap for the Journalism and Communication School because [this program] was in the Jackson building where [it] didn't have the proper facilities for their studios and so on, but it was also a problem for [NPSIA] because [its] Resource Centre was far too small for the number of students that they have, there was not enough space for their graduate students, and I think Public Administration faced the same kind of problems. So I mean all three departments were overdue for better housing facilities... NPSIA has been promised for 35 years that they would have a purpose built space at Carleton and this would be the first opportunity to realize that promise because they had first been housed in Patterson Hall and then in Dunton Tower and had facilities that were not purpose built.

This promise of a for-purpose space for the three professional programs was raised in all of the interviews.

The second reason for bringing these programs together was that they share common visions, and it was hoped that stronger connections could be formed between the programs. One interviewee addresses the need to bring these programs closer together on campus, stating,

Public Affairs was created in 1997 and the big move was to bring Journalism over from the Faculty of Arts to Public Affairs, the conception being that good public policy has this very strong communications component, so that made sense. So there was the School of Journalism and Communications way over in St. Patrick's, with studios in Southam. This was not working; it was not capitalizing on what was there. (Interviewee 3)

One interview highlights the vision for bringing together these programs in the River Building, stating,

What was always talked about was that we needed to create something like the Kennedy Centre at Harvard or the Maxwell Centre at Syracuse. You've got some strong professional programs – [the School of Public Policy] and Journalism were the reason that Carleton College started in the first place, but because [these programs] don't work together as much and Journalism was way over in [the] St Patrick's [building], [the two programs] haven't created the synergies that they could. So it was partly trying to – and recognizing increasing competition in the field – it was trying to build some of those kinds of connections. The Dean is very keen on doing this across the [Faculty of Public Affairs] and not just with those units. So it is an interesting case of trying to use design to change behavior. (Interviewee 1)

Another interviewee also discusses this vision of creating synergy between the programs, stating,

This idea of trying to create something a little akin to the Kennedy School on the Carleton campus and with the idea that there could be a way of moving NPSIA, Public Policy/Administration, and Journalism into a building that also had these other attributes that could be very synergistic and also could be something to be attractive to potential funders. (Interviewee 4)

By bringing together these professional programs with the goal of developing greater collaboration and connections between the schools, this vision for the River Building challenges the isolation of disciplines Chris Hedges identifies in the contemporary university. Hedges (2011) argues that the university is organized around “minutely specialized disciplines,” which produce a “highly specialized vocabulary” and weaken the opportunity for collective and cross-discipline dialogues (89). Furthermore, by fostering greater dialogue between these programs, this vision for the River Building can support the commitment to critical dialogue and reflection in the Strategic Plan and CAP. In terms of achieving this vision and creating greater synergy between the programs, one interviewee states,

I think it has started, but will take a while... The Dean is driving this in terms of developing a strategic plan and better knowledge of what the others are doing and trying to have us come up with a vision of what that could be.

(Interviewee 1)

Another interviewee echoes this, stating that the space has resulted in “some [greater collaboration], but I think over time it will be more” (Interviewee 2). As these synergistic relationships take time to form and this thesis is written only a year after the River

Building opened, it is difficult to know if a disconnect between this vision for the building and the reality of the space will develop.

The second vision for the River Building is to house a facility on the Carleton campus for engaging with the broader community. From the early design stages, it was decided that a conference facility would be included in the building. This facility would not be in the classroom pool, but was a facility that could be used by the university as a whole, with the purpose of hosting academic events and connecting with external communities. As one interviewee notes, “it was more than just a new building for existing programs, but it was a way of connecting Carleton into the community” (Interviewee 1). In part, this focus on engagement is in response to the needs of Public Policy and Administration, NPSIA, and the School of Journalism and Communication. One interviewee states, “you have leading professional schools that need a way of connecting into community, being able to hold events that people come here to attend, those kinds of ways of engaging” (Interviewee 1).

Due to part of the building being intended for community engagement purposes, one interviewee states,

The Board expressed the view that this building should be a better building than Carleton had traditionally built, it should be a building suitable for invited guests to speak at, a building suitable for civic outreach, a building that could showcase some of Carleton’s best programs and be a gathering place for people to meet. (Interviewee 2)

The interviewee goes on to state that this goal was achieved and that, “the building as a structure is capable of performing that function” (Interviewee 2). With these high

architectural standards, this space is arguably, “the first place on campus that you can actually invite an international visitor to come and give a guest lecture” (Interviewee 2).

This vision for the River Building and conference facility supports several of the priorities for Carleton that are outlined in the Strategic Plan and the CAP, particularly the commitment to community outreach and engagement, which is one of Carleton’s four main priorities. A space for the university to engage with community members and organizations on campus is important for supporting this commitment to engagement. The vision for this conference facility, however, appears to have changed since the building’s opening. Since space is not static or neutral, but rather the product of social relations, an analysis of how the vision for this space has changed and what vision and priorities this space now supports is useful for comparing the priorities of the university expressed in the Strategic Plan and CAP and the built reality.

In the following section, I first outline how the conference space has been administered in the year since the River Building’s opening and then discuss how analyzing this space can help to reveal existing differences between the expressed priorities and visions of the university and the reality on the ground. I draw from the theoretical framework developed in chapter two, including Harvey’s tripartite division of space, place, and the relationship between space and social control.

Conference Space, Conference Services, and Controversy

In the CAP, it is made clear that implementing this academic plan requires aligning the “overall institutional planning process with the plan, including financial and budget priorities of the institution” (CAP 2010, 16). For the conference space in the

River Building to support this academic plan, the plan for and financial priorities of the space need to align with the proposed academic mission of the university. As Massey (2005) argues, it is imperative that we think about space explicitly, as the ways in which space is conceived and imagined has political and social effects. To identify the social mission of Carleton, it is important to see this as a spatial project and begin to identify how the vision and priorities of the university as a social institution are not only reflected in, but also supported by the spaces of the institution. From all of the interviews, it is clear that the intention for the conference space throughout the consultation process was connected to the academic mission of the university; however, when Conference Services began to administer the space with a for-profit mandate, the priorities of the space were disassociated from this mission.

As Harvey argues, though a relational approach to space is important, it is still necessary to consider the absolute space. Certain choices in the design of the absolute space establish parameters in which the space can be used. For example, the absolute space of the conference facility can be seen as a barrier for academic events. All interviewees note that one structural flaw of the building is the lack of technology designed into the conference facility. Technology and audio/visual were not designed into the conference space and, therefore to hold an event, the host of the event has to rent all the technology. One interviewee states that accessibility is being “hindered by the rental rates and costs of all the equipment” (Interviewee 4). Though the space was intended for academic events and to support civic outreach, the very design of the space hinders accessibility for these types of events that often have a limited budget. Though costs themselves are not a matter of absolute space -- but rather administration --in this

case, this additional cost is the result of the design of the space. The need to rent this technology may support the use of the space for private parties, such as weddings, which have much larger budgets and do not necessarily require the same audio/visual technology as academic events. No interviewees discussed whether this design flaw was an oversight or a conscious choice.

The conference space in the River Building cannot only be seen as an absolute space. Using a multifaceted and relational approach to space, we can see how this space both shapes and is shaped by social relations. What social relations are supported by this conference space? What does the conference space reveal about Carleton University as a social institution?

Several of the interviewees identify a contradiction between the proposed vision for the conference facility in the consultation process and its actual use. When asked if there was a common vision in the consultation process regarding what the intended communities were for this space, one interviewee answered,

I think as we were designing the building we had a very clear and consistent view, certainly with the Dean and ourselves. The deans changed at that point, but the deans were consistent with that. I think we were looking at a whole variety of professional communities, government, non-profit, anybody we worked with, and we wanted to engage. (Interviewee 1)

Throughout the consultation process, it was understood that “the [conference] space [would be] linked to the academic mission of the university” (Interviewee 1). However, when the space was opened, it quickly became evident that there had not been a uniform conception of community and engagement between the directors and the Dean of Public

Affairs and the higher-level administration. One interviewee states that this decision to change the purpose of the conference space upon its opening is,

A typical policy adopted by small-minded people, by administrators... The decision comes from Duncan Watt's office and we should ask VP Academic or the President why they have allowed financial considerations to override academic considerations.⁶

The decision to have Conference Services administer the conference facility is the main point of contention regarding the conference facility. One interviewee states, "the big mistake that they made was to have Conference Services take over the conference space and run it as a business without giving any priority to academic units, in particular to the units in the building, but really to any Carleton units" (Interviewee 1). When I asked if the way the conference space would be administered was discussed during the consultation process, one interviewing simply states, "no it was not" (Interviewee 3). This interviewee goes on to state, "it is sort of ironic. The first time I had a tour of the building, we went out on the balcony and I said, and I was joking, 'great place for a wedding.' And as it turns out..." (Interviewee 3). Another interviewee echoes this, stating, "this was never a part of the consultation process, that this would become a for-profit centre. That was a decision by the administration after the building was completed" (Interviewee 2).⁷ This divide alone reflects one effect of commercialization

⁶ I have chosen to leave this quote anonymous to avoid potential reprisals.

⁷ I sent an email to Conference Services on April 4th, 2013. I briefly outlined my research project and requested a list of prices to rent the conference space in the River Building, as well as a list of the events that had been held in the facility. I did not receive a response to this email.

evident at Carleton, which is the increasing power of a primarily autonomous administration.

As discussed in the theoretical review, space is an essential tool for social control. Based on the interviews, the vision for the conference facility changed upon the building's opening. The Carleton administration acted autonomously and went against the vision that had been discussed throughout the consultation process and applied a vision for the space that had never been raised. By creating this new vision, the administration was able to create a different conceptualization of the space that supports a particular use for the space, and more broadly, a particular role of the university. Rather than being connected to the academic mission of the university, this new vision for the space supports Carleton as the perfect place to host a private party.

When discussing the tension between these two visions for the conference facility, one interviewee states,

There are sort of two arguments. First, this is a university and we shouldn't be in the business of being a wedding chapel. In fact, many other universities are wedding chapels, this is not unique to Carleton; this isn't us being the first to go over to the dark side. And the argument is, also, that we need these external functions, whether they be weddings, etc., to help pay for the building. The other side of the coin obviously is that this is a building that is primarily for university use, for academic purposes, and for public engagement purposes. (Interviewee 3)

With these arguments in mind, this interviewee argues that there are two questions that need to be asked when dealing with this issue:

Does the commercial function close off opportunities for the university to use it? And, this is again in a way almost more important; does the cost of using the facility make it prohibitive for units in the university to use?

(Interviewee 3)

Based on these two questions, this interviewee believes that the key concern in regards to Conference Services administering this space with a for-profit mandate is whether this challenges the availability of the space for academic purposes. One interviewee argues that it does, stating,

It is a problem for everybody because we get charged a lot of money to use it. We use it on occasion, but don't use it a lot. Two reasons. Number one, in some cases it is not available and in other cases it is very expensive. And so, we will try to do things in other ways to avoid paying the money... sometimes find different spaces on campus or sometimes do it in the classroom or do whatever we can do to try to prevent that. (Interviewee 4)

One interviewee addresses these barriers in regards to one of the programs, stating,

[This program] has an [event] that often uses the Senate Chambers, but can now use some of these facilities, but [this is] handicapped by the fact that we have to come up with money for it. There is also [another event] and again I think we would prefer to use this building but we use the Senate Chambers, which is a poorly... it's a terrible facility. But again, because of the Conference Services belief that a wedding and bar mitzvah are a better use of it we don't. And similarly we have small conferences where we have to look for space and don't always get it in the building, which is most suited to it.

(Interviewee 2)

Similarly, the other two programs have been able to host some events in the conference space, but there have been limitations due to the available budgets for these events. One interviewee states,

We did [one event], which is groups of about 50 people – a really diverse group. We've had a few of those. We've had a variety of different things, but had one student conference... another we had at the Senate Chambers because it had a low budget. But I have to be careful about how many I can support a year unless I am working with an outside organization that can contribute to the costs, I have to think about what I can afford. (Interviewee 1)

Currently, the intended use for this space has also hindered the ability to hold classes in the classrooms above the atrium. One interviewee notes,

We do evening classes Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays and not long after we were here, Conference Services rented out the atrium to a 12-piece band. I guess it was a student group... or I don't know who it was. But I got one of my contract instructors saying, "I can't hear myself". There was a similar event not long ago where there was loud music and it was a campus event... loud music and all the instructors in classes overlooking the atrium couldn't conduct their classes and approached the organizers to ask if they could keep it down and their point was that they paid \$1400 for the space, "we're going to use it any way we wanted." Conference Service hasn't been particularly discriminating in determining whether the use of the space is

compatible with the classroom and instruction. (Interviewee 1)

Administering this space with a for-profit mandate is a clear barrier in the availability of the space for academic events and, in some cases, the ability to hold classes. Though I agree with the interviewee that suggested that availability is the concern that needs to be looked at when addressing Conference Services administering the space, I do not think that this is sufficient. The key concern I have is the very logic that underlies the decision to have Conference Services administer this space with a for-profit mandate. Regardless of whether this management model affects the availability of the space, it is important to look at what this decision reflects about the university's priorities.

As Sharon Zukin (1995) argues, there is a relationship between the dominant conceptualizations and uses of a space and the production of culture. She argues that in so far as culture symbolizes "who belongs in specific places," it is spatially manifested (Zukin 1995, 1). With a for-profit mandate, who belongs in the conference space is anyone who can pay the price. Rather than prioritizing events that align with the academic mission of the university, this for-profit mandate creates a space that supports a university culture that encourages weddings and parties over academic conferences and community outreach. Whether this decision actually resulted in more weddings and parties taking place at Carleton cannot be the only issue. The decision itself to prioritize these events reveals an intended culture and social mission of the university that does not reflect the vision and priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan and CAP.

By understanding space in a multifaceted way and not seeing the River Building only as an absolute space, but also as a relational space, the building becomes a useful

entry point for interrogating the priorities and vision for Carleton. The social mission of Carleton that is reflected in the conference space is one that narrowly defines who the university is intended to serve. Furthermore, in the Strategic Plan and the CAP, engagement is not discussed in relation to economic outcomes. Instead, engagement is presented as a commitment to public service and outreach that contributes to the community, whether local, national, or global; however, by administering the conference facility with a for-profit mandate, this space supports a commitment to engagement that is economically beneficial for the university.

As one interviewee states, the building as a structure is capable of being a space for civic outreach, but “that is only part of what you do and then it is up to the university how to make the best use of that building” (Interviewee 2). What has been decided to be the best use of this space does not reflect the social mission and vision of the university expressed in the Strategic Plan and CAP.

Conclusion

I began this thesis with a quote by Marcus Ford that reflects the approach of much of the literature on the university. This literature focuses on the changes occurring within the university and then looks beyond the institution to suggest how these changes affect broader society. I situate this research slightly differently and look at how the changes in broader society transform the dominant structure and purpose of the university. In the literature review, I offer a historical account of the university that identifies moments that the social mission and priorities of the university have changed substantially in response to broader societal shifts. Though it is true that the university affects society and how we think about different societal issues, this is not a one-way or apolitical process. Based on this influence of the university, different governance structures that shape society require a different kind of university, which will then influence society in particular ways.

With the rise of the neoliberal state in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Ford argues that a particular kind of university was required, which he calls the entrepreneurial university. The neoliberal state prioritizes personal and individual freedom and individual success is measured in terms of entrepreneurial virtues (Harvey 2005, 65). As a result, the university moves away from the task of nation building and public benefit prevalent in the civic university towards a focus on market values and the economic success of individuals.

Though the structure and social mission of the university change in response to shifts in broader society, the rhetoric of the university does not always reveal these changes and can continue to reflect an earlier structure and purpose of the university. For

example, particular priorities and visions declared by the entrepreneurial university reflect the civic university. In particular, I argue that the growing commitment to engagement within the entrepreneurial university reflects the social mission of the civic university. Engagement is described in university documents as a commitment to public service, outreach, and civic engagement. Engagement, in this context, does not reflect the economic priorities of the entrepreneurial university. Therefore, the rhetoric of engagement can often far exceed the actual practices and these declarations need to be compared to the reality on the ground.

In this thesis, I present the concept of space as a useful tool for uncovering and interrogating this divide. By understanding space as the sphere of social relations and power, Massey (2005) argues that space becomes “the dimension which poses the question of the social, and thus of the political” (99). Conducting a spatial analysis of the university can allow for certain questions to be identified and, consequently, raised. In the specific case of Carleton, the similarities and differences between the proposed vision and priorities of the university as an engaged institution and those which are supported on the ground are articulated in the design and administration of the conference space in the River Building, a space that is the product and articulation of particular social and power relations.

In the following section I review the findings of the spatial analysis of the River Building. I present recommendations for Carleton to challenge the existing discrepancies between the priorities of the university proposed in its Strategic Plan and CAP and the priorities that are reflected in and supported by the River Building. To conclude, I offer potential avenues for further research.

I: Bridging the Divide at Carleton

Carleton University as a case study echoes several of the themes that emerged in the literature review on the university. Not only are several effects of commercialization evident at Carleton, both the Strategic Plan and CAP reflect the prevalence of the pursuit of excellence in the entrepreneurial university. Furthermore, a commitment to engagement is presented in both of these documents as one of the four main goals of Carleton. Engagement in these documents is framed in terms of civic outreach and public service rather than economic interests, which reflects the literature on this engagement agenda.

A spatial analysis of the River Building, particularly the conference space, reveals a division between the vision and priorities that are expressed in the Strategic Plan and CAP and those that are supported by policies in this particular space. One of the primary visions for this building was to include a conference facility that provides a space for engagement on Carleton's campus; however, as each interviewee has stated, upon the building's opening, this space has been administered by Conference Services with a for-profit mandate. As a result, the conference space supports an approach to engagement that values the economic interests of the university over civic outreach and the university's academic mission.

This spatial analysis, however, did support the existence of certain grey areas in the transformation of the university. In Ford's historical account of the university, he states that this history can be understood generally in three shifts, represented in the University of Paris, the University of Halle, and the University of Phoenix, which represent the medieval, civic, and entrepreneurial university. This historical account is

not meant to serve as an extensive history, but rather is done in broad strokes to show how the social mission of the university has transformed in response to broader societal changes. Though there is substantial evidence that supports this shift towards the entrepreneurial university, this does not require the complete abandonment of the priorities and social mission of the civic university.

The educational philosophy in the Strategic Plan and CAP support Carleton as a civic university; however, I was aware that this could simply be rhetoric that is not substantiated. Though the administration of the conference space does not align with this model of the university, the second vision for this space does, in part, support the approach to knowledge and focus on public benefit that Ford and Readings associate with the civic university. As stated, the River Building was designed to bring together the three main professional programs at Carleton in hopes of creating greater collaboration and synergy between these programs. Bringing these programs together is intended to foster deeper critical reflection on key policy issues and, as a result, result in stronger research. This reflects the approach to education within the civic university more so than that in the entrepreneurial university, which devalues critical reflection in favour of education that provides students with the skills and knowledge to increase the value of one's labour-power. However, these intended synergies can also align with entrepreneurial model of the university, as there is certain logic of competition underlying this vision. As two interviewees noted, this decision was, in part, driven by the need to have a similar model as the Kennedy Centre at Harvard or the Maxwell Centre at Syracuse. Therefore, creating greater synergies between these programs is also driven by market-logic, making both the programs and their students more competitive

on the market. The actualized two-fold vision for the River Building supports Carleton as both a civic and entrepreneurial university.

As I state in the introduction, this is a focused empirical analysis and is not intended to prove the breadth of the literature on both the university and space. Instead, the objective of this case study is to test the analytical tools I establish in chapter two in order to explore if this theoretical framework is able to reveal dynamics within the university that might not otherwise be visible. Though, as I have shown, certain language and objectives in the Strategic Plan and CAP reflect the entrepreneurial or contemporary university, this analysis is not meant to be a broad exploration of Carleton as a contemporary university. The objectives of this case study are not to offer Carleton as proof of the transformations described by Readings and Ford, but rather to test the use of a multifaceted approach to space in the study of the university, through a focused account of the ways the engagement agenda is articulated spatially. This analysis has shown that studying the rhetoric of the university on its own is not enough to present an accurate picture of the university. Instead, this analysis of the River Building and the conference space serves to highlight the ways in which space can be used to identify the similarities and differences between the rhetoric of the university and the practices and policies implemented in a particular space.

Furthermore, this case study does not show all the ways in which space can be useful for an analysis of the university. As the interviewees framed their discussions of the conference facility primarily in terms of the administration and management of the space, certain aspects of the theoretical framework I developed did not clearly emerge in the empirical analysis. For example, Massey's conceptualization of place as a site of

negotiation did not emerge in this analysis as very little was said in terms of the consultation process and/or negotiations around the use of the space since its opening. It should also be noted that the processes of negotiation around the River Building and administration of the conference facility are likely to continue, as this space has only been open for a year.

Furthermore, the symbolic dimensions of the space – as discussed by Soja and Lefebvre – did not serve useful for this analysis. Though these aspects of the theoretical framework were not of particular importance for this case study, I do think that these can be used to analyze different spaces of the university. For example, the symbolic dimensions of space could be useful in an analysis of how students think about the student union buildings on campuses and how these representations of the space affect how students choose to use these spaces.

Recommendations:

As I state in my methodology chapter, this thesis is intended to be both a theoretical project and empirical analysis that provides concrete recommendations. Based on the spatial analysis, the recommendation I offer is very simple. The change to the vision for the conference space has not gone unnoticed and complaints have been raised. One interviewee states, “we all just complain. We complain to the Dean, I have written to conference services” (Interviewee 1). As the decision to make this a for-profit space, which directly went against the vision throughout the consultation process, was imposed by the administration, an interviewee notes, “it has to be a decision made at the very highest levels of the university that the space is linked to the academic mission of the university” (Interviewee 1). The recommendation I can offer is to continue to

pressure Carleton administration to change the for-profit mandate of this space. The spatial analysis I have conducted can serve as a tool in this struggle. This analysis clearly shows the divide between this mandate for the space and the priorities and vision that Carleton declares in its Strategic Plan and CAP, which are intended to inform the university's decision-making until 2015. The conference facility has been framed as a space to further Carleton's commitment to engagement and, therefore, this evident gap can be used to continue processes of negotiation with the administration by holding them accountable to the conceptions of engagement in these documents.

II: Future Research

The main recommendation that emerges from this research is not to Carleton, but rather to scholars studying the university. This research is rooted in an evident gap in the literature on the university that does not realize the potential of studying how the changes occurring in the university are spatially manifested. As my case study demonstrates, the university administration is able to paint a particular picture of the institution that may not accurately reflect the reality of the institution. In this research project, I have shown how space is one way to interrogate these pictures and identify the reality that is created by the policies and priorities implemented on the ground.

Several of the arguments in the literature on the university presented in chapter 1 are evident at Carleton and, therefore, though I have conducted a spatial analysis of a very specific case study, the results of this research are not isolated to this university. Just as the rhetoric of engagement is prevalent in universities across Canada, the spaces of these universities are products of specific social and power relations. Therefore, the

theoretical framework I have developed for the analysis of the River Building can be applied to the spaces of universities across the country as a way to critically analyze the rhetoric of the university.

Due to the scope of this research project, this thesis only serves as an entry point into exploring the use of space in the study of the university. Though I focus specifically on the university as a social institution and the engagement agenda, a spatial approach to the study of the university can help to reveal the presence and effects of changes in several different areas of the institution. For example, similar to the language of engagement, the idea of the “university experience” is becoming common on university websites and brochures. How is the intended university experience for students reflected in and reinforced by the spaces of the university? Who is the ideal student for this university experience? What broader changes in the university does this ideal university experience support? A spatial analysis of different areas of the university does not only help to further the literature on these issues, but also provide productive focal points for campus-based resistance to the commercialization agenda. As this thesis has demonstrated, an analysis of the spaces of the university can uncover clear, demonstrable effects of commercialization that can then be used to make concrete demands. Furthermore, thinking about and identifying the spatial effects and manifestations of the commercialization agenda and the social mission of the university is important based on the structural nature of space. Whereas policies can be adapted or reviewed, the spatial aspects of these processes are not easily changed and can, therefore, affect the social function and social relations inscribed in universities, for generations to come. These

spaces shape the future inheritance of these institutions in ways that can be difficult and expensive to undo.

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Note: The direction of the interview may have changed depending on the position the interviewee holds, the answers provided to the questions, and what the interviewee would like to focus on. Furthermore, as the interviews are semi-structured, these questions are intended to be quite broad to allow for open conversation.

1. What is your current position at Carleton University?
 - a. What are the primary responsibilities of this position?
 - b. How long have you held this position?
 - c. Do you hold/have you held any other roles at Carleton? If so, what are they?
2. What has been your involvement with the River Building?
3. Based on your current position, what are your specific interests in relation to this building?
4. What are the first words that come to mind when you think of the River Building?
5. What was the initial vision for the River Building?
 - a. Do you think this vision reflects the broader vision of Carleton?
6. How were you involved in the consultation process for the building?
 - a. How was the conference space presented during these meetings?
 - b. Do you think the consultation process was adequate?
 - i. If so, what do you think were the strengths of this process? Can you identify any ways this process could have been improved?
 - ii. If not, how was this process inadequate? What could have been done to strengthen this process?
7. What would you identify as the design priorities of this building?
 - a. Do you see these priorities reflected in the space and funding allocation within the building? If so, how? Can you draw on specific examples?
8. Do you think that the building meets the needs of the professors and students that work and study in it? If not, what changes would need to occur to fulfill these needs?
9. Do you see the River Building as a space for members of the broader community outside of Carleton?
10. Do you have any additional comments or experiences that would help in my assessment of the River Building?

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