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AN APPLICATION OF FOUCAULT'S ANALYTIC OF
POWER/KNOWLEDGE
TO THE OKANAGAN WATER BASIN STUDY
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

by

Tamara Koltermann, B.A. (Hons)

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Geography

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

APRIL, 1998

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and Research acceptance of the thesis

**An Application of Foucault's Analytic of Power/Knowledge to the
Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program**

submitted by Tamara Koltermann, B.A. (Hons)
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

Two handwritten signatures are shown side-by-side, each underlined. The signature on the left is 'S. D. Oby' and the signature on the right is 'Fiona MacIntyre'.

Thesis Supervisors

A handwritten signature, likely 'M. W. Smith', is shown underlined.

Chair, Department of Geography

Carleton University
1998

ABSTRACT

An Application of Foucault's Analytic of Power/Knowledge to the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program

While public involvement has been hailed as part of the emancipation process of the modern period (Pieterse, 1992), much of the theoretical and applied literature which deals with public involvement has been described as "...prescriptive [and] rhetoric, resting on unanalyzed premises and assumptions" (Wengert, 1976:24). The purpose of this dissertation is to problematize and challenge the theoretical premises underlying public involvement theory, and to apply the theoretical insights gleaned, to an analysis of the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program. The specific objective is to challenge conventional public participation theory and practice by examining key issues of power and representation using Foucault's approach to the deconstruction of discursive practices.

An extensive literature review of public involvement theory, a theoretical discussion of the value which Foucault's work has for public involvement theory, intensive interviews, discourse analysis and archival research methods are used to create a historical, contextual narrative which explores the workings of power/knowledge in the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program from 1969-1974. This analysis weaves Foucauldian methods and epistemologies together in order to create a work which is simultaneously theoretical and applied. Particularly relevant in the current age which calls increasingly for public involvement, the insights which this thesis yields have the potential to transform the theory and practice of public involvement.

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CHAPTER ONE:

Introduction

While public participation has been hailed as a process which is integral to democracy itself, this thesis demonstrates that public involvement processes can be deconstructed to reveal complex, refractive relationships between power and knowledge creation. To do this, this thesis draws extensively from Foucault's writings on "power/knowledge" (a construct which he formed to indicate that power and knowledge are so inextricably interrelated that they cannot be considered in isolation). Whereas much of the existing literature on public involvement focuses on evaluating programs in order to determine "success factors", this thesis suggests that universalistic definitions of "success" or "failure" are not useful for scholars who wish to understand these complex relationships invoked by power/knowledge. Decontextualized evaluations of "success factors" or "failed public involvement efforts" neglect to ask critical questions involving power/knowledge.

If one wishes to ask whether a public involvement program was "successful", it is necessary to add "for whom?". Public involvement silences as much as it provides opportunities for inclusion. This thesis demonstrates how the category "public" can be strategically re/constructed in order to legitimize some discourses, while simultaneously marginalizing others. In addition, it problematizes the process of the public involvement itself by unravelling questions of power/knowledge which are central to understanding public involvement processes. In order to do this, this study reviews existing literature on public involvement, applies Foucault's theoretical gains, with specific reference to his

analytic of power/knowledge and finally examines the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program using Foucault's theoretical and methodological tools.

This chapter will show how this study evolved from an intuitive investigation which relied on unexamined assumptions about the value of public involvement in environmental decision-making to a more sober analysis of how the discourses of public involvement are articulated with power/knowledge. Additionally, it will provide a context to begin the study of the analytics of power/knowledge in the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program (1969-1974).

In 1994, when I was designing my research project, there appeared to be a growing controversy around Kelowna's development strategy and the contentious issue of water scarcity seemed to be at the crux of the issue. Fresh from resource management courses, the challenges of managing aspects of both the quality and quantity of a "common property resource" was appealing; and so I began to study the issues as they were presented in the local newspapers. From the 1994 newspaper reports, the positions of the main actors appeared to be clear.

One major proponent of securing "adequate" water for orchardists was the Curator of the Orchard Industry Museum, Wayne Wilson. Mr. Wilson argued that the residents of Kelowna needed to recognize that it was "...those early farmers who turned the Okanagan from brown to green and made it into the parkland that it is today" and for that reason, he urged Kelowna residents not to "...short agriculture of water, no matter what happens."¹ While advocates for the conservation of agricultural lands argued that farmers should have first rights to the water resources, Kelowna's politicians' decisions appeared to have

been predicated upon a growth ethic which equated increases in urban development with increases in economic security. On April 1, 1994, a reporter in the Kelowna Capital News criticized a decision by the Mayor and Council (which overrode recommendations by the City's own Planning Department and Advisory Planning Commission and opposition from local residents) to rezone a large area of the hills of Southeast Kelowna which was orchard and pine forest. The then Mayor, Jim Stuart, was quoted as responding, "There are times when you have to run a city like a business....If you want nobody else to come here, you have to be willing to give up your job, because there won't be jobs for anyone" (quoted in Kelowna Capital News, April 1, 1994). The Council's decisions appeared to be implicitly saying that although farmers were to be economically compensated for their inconvenience, increased urbanization represented economic growth, and development was to be supported by rezoning large tracts of land from rural to urban use classification.

Reading these newspaper reports, it seemed that Kelowna was recklessly following a short-sighted, unsustainable development path. The loss of fruitlands was irreversible and I wanted to discuss the impact which unrestrained urbanization was having on the social and physical landscapes. Being a "common property resource", water seemed the ideal vehicle to discuss damage to the environment as it enabled me to avoid discussions about the "rights" of private property owners to use their land in unsustainable ways.

Initially, my primary concern was the irreversible loss of agricultural fruitlands (Krueger, 1977), as I had personally witnessed the increasing number of abandoned orchards on the periphery of new housing developments and the mushrooming of residential developments on previously agricultural land. My initial research had indicated that

this increasing urbanization was generating an increased demand for water, while poorly designed and rapidly built housing developments on the Valley's hillslopes were resulting in septic tank seepage into the water supply (Lindsey, 1994; A5).

Public Participation: A Means to Sustainable Development?

Because loss of water quality and quantity affects all who live in the Okanagan Valley, I assumed that the public should be able to participate in decisions affecting the water. Much of my undergraduate studies focused on "development" efforts in "less developed countries" and much of my knowledge and understanding came from theoretical and applied critiques of the "conventional development paradigm". In 1994, I discovered Max-Neef's book Human Scale Development: Conception, Application and Further Reflections (1991:10) which argues convincingly for the need to "...develop processes of economic and political decentralization, strengthen genuine democratic institutions and encourage increasing autonomy in the emerging social movements". New development theory seemed to be embracing the "local" as the optimum scale of operation and "grassroots social participation" as the process. This new approach to development challenged the "top-down" approach which was characteristic of conventional development approaches.

As a result, I decided to centre my research on the local scale, focusing on "community participation in environmental decision-making". My survey of local newspapers between January and April 1994 indicated that the political institutions in the Okanagan Valley were attempting to respond to the "water crisis" by establishing a regional planning board which was to be comprised of elected officials from the different municipali-

ties which belong to the Okanagan region. In 1994, newspaper reports indicated that the elected officials believed that it would be inappropriate for non-elected officials to make regional planning decisions (Waters, 1994:A1). Yet, there did appear to be hope for political decentralization and public involvement in decisions which would affect this critical environmental issue when the newspapers quoted Tom Rothery from the “Public Involvement Alliance” which claimed to represent fifty-five community organizations throughout the Okanagan Valley.

In 1994, while studying development theory at the IDRC (International Development Research Centre) offices in Ottawa, this Public Involvement Alliance seemed to represent the ideals presented by Max-Neef. It seemed clear that the decisions about the environment (which would ultimately affect the lives of all who live in the Okanagan Valley) should include the public. Tom Rothery appeared to be the “champion of the people” and was quoted as saying:

It [the decision-making process] started off wrong and it’s continuing that way....It’s working from the top-down and that approach has failed in the past and it will fail again.

This confirmed my belief that we are experiencing similar developmental challenges as those in “less developed countries” and that it is appropriate to apply development theory and knowledge gained overseas to our own practice of local development efforts.

Disillusionment: Engaging Public Participation in the “Field”

However, I soon learned that fieldwork is both personal and political. Once engaged in fieldwork, I found that terms like “participatory development” and “public participation” are problematic in application. As part of my initial research, I was a

participant-observer at a “community planning meeting” in my childhood home community of Lakeview Heights (a sub-division on the outskirts of Kelowna). The organizers had brought in a “planning expert” to assist the community to make an “informed decision”. Alan Artibese presented us with a dynamic, futuristic vision for Lakeview Heights as a community designed using “neo-traditional” principles. His body language reinforced his role of “expert” (he stood at the front of the room, classroom style and used a microphone) and he presented only one option—the neo-traditional community with an architectural mixture of height and low density was the only alternative. We (the “public”) were then divided into three groups and given an assignment: to apply the design principles which he had presented, to Lakeview Heights.

The “process of public involvement” which occurred at this public meeting, itself, is worthy of comment. It could be argued that by dividing the public into working groups, significant participation was occurring. Because we were discussing the future of the community’s development and growth, it could be assumed the we (the “representative” public) were grappling with community decision-making in a proactive manner. However, the method, the assignment and the public were all problematic.

The method by which the participants were divided up caused us to focus on the issues of our own group. In my group, this meant that the time for proactive consultation with the community decision-makers was used instead for managing conflict within the group. The group which I participated in contained people with radically different beliefs about Lakeview Heights’ development. Some of the issues were relatively minor, but we spent a great deal of time arguing (eg. “there should be a better bus service here”

vs. “if we live here, its because we can afford to drive here”). It became clear that there is no such unified category as “the public”. Despite the fact that, as community members we (apparently) held an interest in the future development of the area; we were bitterly divided and quite unfocused.

The “assignment” (and it did feel like we were students in a classroom, given an assignment to complete in a group) precluded any discussion of whether we wanted to design our future community along neo-traditional principles—we were supposed to work together to implement the ideas. There was no “space” for a discussion of whether this was the path we wanted to take. The parameters for an appropriate discussion were firmly established.

The concept of “public” itself was problematic. Not only were we divided amongst ourselves, but we were certainly not representative of the community. The people represented were either concerned about the financial impact of the plans (“NIMBY”)⁴, or they were concerned about the “environmental impact” of the present development⁵. Not even I was there simply to help plan my community. I had a vested interest, too. I was doing my analysis.

The effects of this “public consultation exercise” were negligible at best. After we did our group work, we came together again in the larger group for a tightly controlled discussion about our conclusions. This discussion was led by one of the elected politicians who wielded his microphone as his instrument of power. Whereas the public was provided with no such amplification and people had to strain to hear each other’s comments, his voice boomed powerfully throughout the room. My experience of the use of

technology and spatial dynamics, the process and public involved, forced me to examine my unconditional acceptance of public involvement as a means to sustainable development. Instead, I began to focus on how power/knowledge expressed itself in the process of including public participation in environmental decision-making

Later in my research process (September, 1995), I was a participant-observer at a day-long seminar sponsored by the Ministry of Environment⁶. At this conference, the presentations were informative in that they educated the represented public about issues surrounding the methods and the data being used by the Ministry of Environment to make environmental decisions. The majority of the presentations dealt with operational/methodological issues, such as “how water samples are taken”, “how the snow pack is measured”, “how the system of waterflow management works” and “thermal dynamics in Lake Okanagan”.

However, the data presented at this conference were either presented as inconclusive (“scattered”) or as “normal”, implying that the water quality was satisfactory. The presentations at this conference also focused on phosphates and water clarity. These variables may have been chosen more on the basis of politics and economics, than on environmental health. The implication was that if the water appears to be good, then it must be good (at least, good enough to maintain tourism). Water clarity and the growth of lake weeds was presented as more significant to the “water crisis” than the lake’s ability to support marine life and human populations⁷.

A significant linkage to the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program was forged when a participant at the conference asked the Ministry of Environ-

ment representative who had presented “How the System of Waterflow Management Works” why the system of dams and diversions was devised with so little concern for the lake fish populations. The Ministry of Environment speaker replied that the Okanagan Water Basin Study scientists had consulted with the public at the time that they were designing the water management system and that the public had indicated that they were more concerned with using water for consumptive, irrigation and commercial uses and that they had rated use of water for fishing last.

In 1995, significant decisions about water use and diversion were being justified by referring to the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program which had occurred 1969-1974. While it is true that all “Public Task Forces” answered the question: “What ranking should be given to those items that we feel should have high priority in a year where consideration cannot be given to all with regards to water?” with the answer: “agriculture before recreation (shoreline, fish and wildlife)”, it is necessary to look at that “public response” in its proper context.

The discussion which the Ministry of Environment speaker alluded to took place during the fourth meeting of six Task Force groups. The question to be decided on before the ranking took place was “should the water system flows be operated such that they do not have a negative effect on wildlife, especially fish?”. All Task Forces agreed to the need to ensure that the mainstream management did not adversely affect fish. This example of the strategic use of decontextualized “knowledge” suggests that the workings of public participation may be more complex than previously theorized.

Consequently, it appears that the way that the discourse is framed, the research

methodologies are employed, the way the data are interpreted, the questions are chosen and the information presented are determined by more factors than those of a “objective” science. This thesis strives to apply Foucault's power/knowledge in order to generate useful insights into the dynamics of knowledge creation for public consumption which are integral to an understanding of the exercise of power in public involvement programs.

Discovering The Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program

In 1994, I found that there had been a major environmental study of the Okanagan Water Basin which had a significant public involvement component. The Okanagan Water Basin Study is still used today to evaluate changes in water quality. This study took place between 1969-1974. It was one of the most progressive efforts to include the public in environmental decision-making because unlike many Environmental Impact Assessment Initiatives, it encouraged *proactive* public involvement. There was no development proposal which needed to be accepted or rejected. It appeared to be a straightforward inclusion of the public into a study which was projecting the directions and rate of the development of the Okanagan Valley.

Discovering the Study documents left me dissatisfied. Here was this apparently ground breaking study which employed many “cutting edge” public involvement methods to include the public in a discussion of water quality and quantity issues in the Okanagan Valley. Yet, here I was, living in the Okanagan more than twenty years later, experiencing the consequences of poor water quality⁹ and quantity¹⁰. This was the very thing that the Okanagan Water Basin Study (OKWBS) was supposed to prevent. I read

several reviews of the OKWBS public involvement program which reported favourably on the Study (Collins, 1981; Main Report of the Consultative Board, 1974; O’Riordan, 1976), yet it seemed that its actual impacts had been negligible. I asked myself: could it be that merely adding public involvement into the environmental decision-making process was not sufficient to ensure ecologically wise and sustainable choices?

Many of the evaluations written about the OKWBS Public Involvement Program (PIP) note that the process of the public involvement was effective and place importance on the implementation of the public’s wishes. This thesis will not attempt to trace the development of the implementation programs, nor does it seek to produce another evaluation of the “successes” or “failures” of the OKWBS PIP. Instead, it will attempt to examine the articulation of power/knowledge which occurred in the process of including the public in the OKWBS PIP from 1970-1974.

Constructing Consent: Power/Knowledge and the Environment

According to Pieterse (1992), public involvement has been portrayed as part of the emancipation process of the modern period. However, the vignettes above illustrate that public involvement processes are neither simple, nor free of the constraints of power. Whereas the modern period was characterized by power through physical force, in today’s post-modern era, power is exercised by those who have the ability to manipulate information and knowledge. Bruce Lincoln (quoted in Richardson *et al.*, 1993) explains how power is exercised through discourse, supplanting the need for more physical force:

Discourse supplements force in several important ways, among the most important of which is ideological persuasion. In the hands of

elites and of those professionals who serve them (either in mediated fashion or directly), discourse of all forms—not only verbal, but also the symbolic discourses of spectacle, gesture, costume, edifice, icon, musical performance, and the like—may be strategically employed to mystify the inevitable inequities of any social order and to win consent of those over whom power is exercised, thereby obviating the need for the direct use of coercive force and transforming simple power into “legitimate” authority (Lincoln, 1989:4-5).

Those who have access to and can control the production of knowledge have direct access to power. From this perspective, public participation potentially “cleanses” and obfuscates the wielding of elite power by manufacturing community consent for decisions which benefit power-holders. To be able to say “we consulted the public” appeals to democratic ideals and provides a powerful rationale for decisions which might otherwise be scrutinized.

In addition, the term “community” itself must be problematized. Young (1990:300) explains that community may be no more than “...an understandable dream, expressing a desire for selves that are transparent to one another, relationships of mutual identification, social closeness and comfort” and her article “The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference” argues that while the dream of “community” is understandable, it is politically problematic. Young asserts that the desire to create a unity can generate borders, dichotomies and exclusions, and deny difference. In addition, Murray Li (1996:503) argues that it is necessary to recognize that advancing the claims of “community” is tied closely to politics of identity formation and representation. In her article “Images of Community: Discourse and Strategy in Property relations” (1996:523), she explains that “Divergent images of community result not from inadequate knowledge or confusion of purpose, but from the location of discourse and action in the context of specific struggles

and dilemmas”. Indeed, invoking the term “community”, implies a unified group, however, as we shall see, there is a politics and a strategy to the categorization of “public”.

The social construction of knowledge which is based on an ideal of “community participation” can legitimize actions and reinforce existing power relationships. Major decisions can be undertaken and justified on the basis that they followed a mandate given by the public. The creation and use of this knowledge can be used to control and produce “appropriate” public involvement in decisions. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the discourses surrounding public involvement programs to see how they can “...gain, consolidate and maintain power” (Richardson et al., 1993:10).

In the 1960s and 1970s, public participation in Canada was incorporated into three major river basin planning exercises: the St. John River Basin in New Brunswick, the Qu’Appelle Basin in Saskatchewan, and the Okanagan Basin in British Columbia. In 1969, the Federal government and the Provincial government of British Columbia signed a four-year agreement to develop a comprehensive framework plan for water and related resource management in the Okanagan Valley, located in southern British Columbia.

The “Main Report of the Consultative Board” for the “Canada-British Columbia Okanagan Water Basin Agreement (published March, 1974) gave credence to the belief that the public should be involved in planning. According to this document, it was recognized at the inception of the study that “...planning cannot be undertaken in a vacuum, insulated from the residents of the Okanagan Basin” (v). This commitment to facilitating public input was especially significant because in the past, “...public input to the planning and management of water and related resources in the Okanagan, as elsewhere in Canada,

appear[ed] to have occurred on a rather haphazard basis” (ibid, 271). Consequently, the Public Involvement Program which the Okanagan Study initiated was to be both “...an experiment in techniques as well as a real attempt to gain public participation in the planning process” (ibid, 271).

The Public Involvement Program consisted of a series of meetings with the general public, local government officials and Study representatives. This evolved into the creation of six community task forces which were formed in order to bring a larger cross-section of the community into the public consultation. Part of the program was to educate the public on water issues. This objective resulted in news releases and news conferences, multimedia seminars, data bulletins, the creation of two films (“Will There Be Water Tomorrow?” and “A Future for the Choosing”) and visits to high schools as well as a number of public meetings. The three major components to the public involvement program (opinion surveys and public meetings, creation of task forces to allow direct citizen input into the planning process, and the public information program) were carefully directed so that they paralleled the major steps in the planning process.

The production of knowledge was particularly extensive in the Public Involvement Program of the Okanagan Water Basin Study. One evaluation of the public involvement program refers to the “...considerable burden placed on technical study personnel to prepare data that were both relevant to the questions being posed by the public and easily understandable” as “...complex issues were carefully distilled and condensed into 10 four-page bulletins which provided members of the public with a basic understanding of the plan’s major components” (Jon O’Riordan, 1976:193). In addition to written materials,

oral briefs, radio call-in programs and presentations were mediums to communicate the knowledge which was created for the public's consumption.

The construction of knowledge often reinforces existing power relations. Timothy O'Riordan discusses the role of experts as "uncertainty absorbers" who filter complicated and conflicting knowledges into a comprehensive format. This knowledge is continually refocused and manipulated until it becomes increasingly simple, structured and certain (1976:62) This thesis will focus on the creation of the knowledges presented by experts to the public as central to questions of power/knowledge.

Much of the literature surrounding public involvement has been "...prescriptive, rhetoric, resting on unanalyzed premises and assumptions" (Wengert, 1976:24). The overall objective of this study is not to point to some "ideal" public involvement process, but to problematize the discourse of public involvement in the Okanagan Water Basin Study by examining how it shaped knowledge and defined power relations and so helped to shape not only the social reality, but also the physical reality of the Okanagan Valley. Thus, this analysis provides a narrative which describes the relationship between power/knowledge and public involvement which occurred within the OKWBS from 1969-1974, and yields insights about how Foucault's notions of power/knowledge have the potential to transform the theory and practice of public involvement.

Linkages to Theoretical/Applied Geography

Consequently, this study is simultaneously "theoretical" and "applied". Thus, it challenges dualisms within geographical scholarship which have assigned applied geography a role which is significantly distinct and separate from theoretical geography.

Johnson (1991:19) explains that applied scientists are considered to be "...concerned not so much with the establishment of theories and facts but rather with the use of existing knowledge". Sant (1982:1 emphasis in original) makes the distance between theoretical and applied geography even more explicit:

Applied geography is concerned with *ends* rather than *means*....In the present context, however "means" refers to theory and methodology....The critical difference is that applied science couches its questions in terms that are both *normative* and *prescriptive*, whereas in pure science the normative element may be present but not the prescriptive.

This thesis is concerned with both ends and means. It attempts to examine the process (means) of public involvement in the Okanagan Water Basin Study in order to explain how it was designed and implemented. Initially, the study itself was generated in response to a question which is concerned with "ends": "Why was it not sufficient to include the public in decisions which directly impacted them?" , "Why did this inclusion not significantly influence the Okanagan's development path?" Although in retrospect, these questions seem naive, they are questions of application of knowledge; concerned with *ends*. At the same time, this thesis is concerned with "normative" issues, such as the value which conventional public participation theory (based on juridico-discursive assumptions about power) has for explaining the complex dynamics of power/knowledge in environmental decision making.

However, this study eschews the prescriptive. It rejects attempts to define "good", "successful", or "failed" public participation efforts and it abandons any sort of decontextualized prescription for "better" public involvement. While affirming the specificity of local contexts, this dissertation provides a framework which can be invoked to under-

stand some of the implications which a Foucauldian analysis of power/knowledge has for an understanding of the complexities of power, knowledge and identity creation in public involvement efforts.

Introduction to Chapters

This chapter has shown how this dissertation developed from an initial investigation which was grounded in an uncritical acceptance of the value of public involvement for making environmentally sustainable decisions to an analysis of the discourses of one public involvement program (OKWBS) and a theoretical discussion of the workings of power/knowledge in public participation efforts in general and in the OKWBS in particular.

Chapter Two provides an extensive literature review of articles which deal with the more theoretical aspects of public participation and presents rationales which have been given in support of public involvement. In addition, it outlines the growth and development of public involvement theory, introduces the contribution which Foucault's work presents and demonstrates that because conventional critiques of public involvement are grounded in a juridico-discursive model of power, they obscure an understanding of more significant workings of power.

Chapter Three establishes and develops the relationship between Foucault's power/knowledge and discourse and explains how a sustained discourse analysis can yield vital knowledge about power's strategies and tactics.

Chapter Four begins the intensive examination of the analysis of the OKWBS PIP

by presenting a description of the context which gave rise to the Study, outlining the evolution of the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program itself, and examining the process by which some “publics” were included and others excluded.

Chapter Five seeks to determine who had access to and control of the PIP discourses. This chapter deals with the actual operationalization of the PIP. It relies heavily on discourse analysis of Study documents and transcripts in order to determine where the boundaries of the discourse were drawn.

Chapter Six concludes the Study by reflecting upon the evolution of the discourses of public involvement, discussing potential future directions of public involvement theory and practice and suggesting implications which this thesis’ contribution has for scholarship in the fields of geography, public administration and philosophy.

The Afterword describes the role of the researcher in the process of creating this textual discourse. In a thesis which relies heavily on postmodern methodologies and theory, it is necessary to affirm the disjunctures and subjectivities which are inherent to the research project. Reflexive in nature, this chapter attempts to elucidate the author’s personal subjectivities which are significant to the design and implementation of this dissertation.

Endnotes

¹ Kelowna Daily Courier, March 28, 1994

² A survey of recent publications in the development literature indicates disenchantment with conventional, post-WW2 style of development which was inspired by the rapid development achieved with the Marshall Plan. This style of “developmentalism” (Max-Neef, 1991) focused on the need for economic growth to abolish poverty, developmental stages which assumed that “Less Developed Countries” were “backward” and needed progress to achieve the successes of modern industrial nations (W.W. Rostow) and favoured urban growth at the expense of rural regions.

³ While this term has been described as an “in-word” for the 1990s (Torrance, 1991:1), the concept is not clearly defined. Despite the vast and burgeoning literature which has attempted to define and employ the concept, its essence is ethereal. Pierce (1992:310) explains that it represents a “...coalescence of views whose expression and acceptance at any one time is a reflection of different ideologies and exigencies of society”. Richardson *et al.* (1993) explain that “...the phrase ‘sustainable development’ has an immediate appeal. It sounds like a noble goal, one worth striving for, and it suggests that we can have everything we want all at once, including a healthy environment and economic well-being”.

⁴ “Not in my back yard”—often these people are concerned about the value of their property. In this case, the neo-traditional principles meant that zoning would change in Lakeview Heights in order to accommodate “multi-family residential”. This was a major point of contention for those who feared that the resulting development would bring “undesirables” and that apartment complexes would destroy the character of the area. The issue of bus service was also, in actuality, an issue of NIMBY because those people were trying to exclude those who didn’t have cars from living in Lakeview Heights—a more subtle form of discrimination.

⁵ In my group, even those who were concerned about the development of Boucherie Mountain could be seen as “NIMBY” proponents. The Lakeview Heights Neighbourhood Association formed in response to an impending residential development on the mountain which had been presented to all of those who had bought property adjacent to it in the 1970s and 1980s as a “park”. Imagine the drop in property values that this development represented.

⁶ This seminar took place on Saturday, September 9, 1995.

⁷ According to the BC Water Quality Status Report (April, 1996), increased levels of phosphorous come from agricultural practices, forest operations and septic tank seepage. Phosphorous is perceived to be important because “...high phosphorus levels cause heavy growths of algae which detract from aesthetics.

impart tastes and odours to drinking water supplies and deplete oxygen. Low oxygen concentrations can impact fish survival” (81).

⁹ According to the Public Opinion and Attitude Survey prepared for by the Okanagan Basin Implementation Board (1981): “Peoples’ ideas about the management of water quality centre more on the presence of undesirable factors than on an absence of desirable ones—we see what we know to see. Milfoil, debris, discoloured or malodorous water are the things people use to gauge the quality of water” (50).

⁹ In the summer of 1996, an outbreak of “cryptosporidium” caused illness for thousands and near death for some Kelowna residents. As of 1998, the actual cause of the outbreak is still to be revealed.

¹⁰ The spring run-off of 1997 resulted in unusually high water levels and many incidences of flash floods. Some people are beginning to wonder if the water flows are being disrupted by logging practices upstream.

CHAPTER TWO:

Democracy and the Role of Public Involvement

According to Ventriss and Pecorella (1984: 224), "...the nature and extent of citizen participation in governmental organizations, an issue of concern since the formation of Greek city states, takes on added significance under the pressures of modernization". The very philosophy underlying democracy establishes the right of individuals to be informed and consulted on issues which affect them (Sewell and O'Riordan, 1976). While "consent of the governed" has become a prerequisite of the social compact (Wengert, 1976:23), the question of *how* this consent is obtained is debated. On the one hand, the ideology of "direct democracy" maintains that "those most affected by a decision should participate directly in the decision-making process" (Parenteau, 1988:1); on the other hand, the ideology of "elected" or "representative" democracy is based on a delegation of power. Modern representative democracies have evolved a constitutional parliamentary mechanism which allows the public to elect representatives to act on their behalf. These representatives make decisions which affect the welfare of their constituents based on what they think their constituents want and on what "...they themselves judge to be best" (Schatzow, 1977:269).

Sewell and O'Riordan (1976:10) add a further dimension to the theory of representative democracy. They assert that it enables the political culture to establish "...roles, rules and social norms that frame all policy making activities and permit [the] peaceful resolution of conflict". The "roles" are those of the "polity" (ie. the general public as it is divided into electorates, social groups, economic organizations and other sectional inter-

ests) and its “elites” (ie. the elected or appointed community leaders, senior administrators, interest group leaders and community opinion influentials). In Sewell and O’Riordan’s (1976:10) model, the interaction of these two groups creates a transactional arrangement in which the polity makes demands and provides the power base which enables the elite to decide and act in the polity’s “interest”.

To determine the needs of the polity, representative politicians rely on conventional techniques such as the ballot box, public inquiries, public protest and letters to officials and newspapers (Sewell and O’Riordan, 1976). Others (Gregory et al., 1996; Boyte, 1995) have debated the merits of surveys used to provide input to policy makers and argued that surveys are viewed by many as “...a natural extension of the principles of democratic governance and as a way to provide a much-needed balance to the closed circles of agency- or expert-driven decision making” (Gregory et al., 1996:2). However, conventional uses of these public input-devices have been criticised for not significantly involving constituents in matters of public interest because “...in practice, few elected officials know much about the broad spectrum of public opinion on most issues and few citizens have any notion as to how their elected representatives are protecting their interests” (O’Riordan, 1977:269). One reason for this lack of accountability can be traced to the bureaucratic apparatus itself:

The administrators, whether elected or appointed, are far removed, physically and morally, from the public. They implement decisions, regulations, and laws whose basic content is often procedural...the administrators are also far removed from the elected officials and from the public’s designated representatives. A social and political vacuum is thus created around major administrative structures and their legitimacy in regard to social development is called into question (Parenteau, 1988: 2).

Even for the governments which attempt to engage public involvement through

extensive surveying, the techniques of public involvement can be problematic. Gregory et al. (1996:3) explain that often the surveys can be ineffective:

...people are now being asked their opinions about issues that are very complex, exhibit scientific uncertainty, and involve controversial political positions. In many cases, the public-sample participants have not thought deeply about the issue in the course of their daily lives and do not hold stable attitudes or opinions about the critical variables. In addition, such issues often involve a balancing of benefits against costs or risks that people may prefer not to think about: examples include survey questions about possible reductions in resource based jobs (to protect the environment), cutbacks in environmental protection (to preserve income flows), or increases in taxes (to provide additional environmental services).

Despite the problems inherent to public participation in decisions in the public interest, it appears that formal public involvement has been and will continue to be a key element of governance. Ventriss and Pecorella (1984) explain that public involvement in western democracies became a primary concern in the 1960s, fueled by the concerns of proponents of participatory democracy. It should be noted that in the 1970s, public participation was considered to be worthy of academic analysis. This focus, however, has changed and in the 1990s the term “public participation” is seldom found in academic literature.

The “Golden Era” of Public Involvement Theory

In the years leading up to the 1970s, the literature on public involvement reflects a growing concern that the public had become alienated from governmental decision-making processes. This concern is described by Bell (quoted in Crosby et al., 1986:171) as a “...society-wide uprising against bureaucracy and a desire for participation” and by Wilkinson (1976:118) as an unwillingness to accept “unilateral decision-making by institutions”. As a result, the emergence of interest and pressure groups which sought to

affect policy decisions at regional and national scales of political organization evidenced public pressure for more direct participation (Wood, 1976; Sewell and O’Riordan, 1976; Gladwin, 1980; Connor, 1997).

Some theorists asserted that there existed discreet types and levels of democracy which could be categorized according to the level of direct public participation. These “democracies” were seen to lie along a continuum from representative to direct democracy and the introduction of public participation into the planning process implied a movement along that continuum. Consequently, the notion of social evolution was employed to support the appeal for increased public participation. As society was evolving, so too, should society’s democratic structures evolve. The question was not framed as whether we *should* move from a representative to a participatory democracy, but rather how we could “...move from an imperfect but familiar arrangement of representative democracy to the uncharted waters of participatory democracy” (O’Riordan, 1976:169).

Today’s political process is characterized by its commitment to democratic ideals and with “democracy” comes a call for public involvement. In the 1960s and 1970s, the perception that the representative system of democracy had failed to address the populace’s needs led to pressures for formal mechanisms to incorporate direct public participation into decision making. This concern is reflected in the literature on public involvement, the greatest volume of which was written in the 1970s. As Crosby et al. (1986:170) explain: “...discouragement over modes of [existing] political participation seemed matched...by a hope that new and viable forms of participation might be found”.

According to Skuba Jackson (1994) the “golden era” of public participation (1970s)

soon gave way to the emergence of a recognition that there were significant problems in the practical implementation of public involvement efforts and by the 1980s, “citizen participation” had fallen into dysfunction. Skuba Jackson’s literature analysis reveals that in the 1990s the majority of literature which addresses questions of citizen participation is written not by academics and researchers, but instead by public involvement practitioners and agencies. This indicates that the existing questions about public participation do not provide enough theoretical rigor to warrant academic study. For this reason, it is significant that this thesis re-evaluates and challenges the existing theoretical foundation of public involvement research.

Growth and Development of Public Involvement

While advocates for increased public participation agreed in principle, their arguments came from different, often conflicting, philosophies. An examination of the pragmatic rationales for public involvement which are presented in the literature of the era of the 1960s and 1970s reveals these contradictions. Not only was public involvement promoted as integral to democracy, it was also advocated as a “cure” for “social diseases” and as a “legitimizing device” for unpopular decisions. In Canada, the 1970s saw organized public participation programs implemented by the transportation and electric power industries which sought to include the “public” in decisions about corridor and route selection for roads, transit and powerlines; and in planning and managing airports by Transport Canada.

Next, waste management planners adopted public involvement to select landfill sites. Finally, resource extractive industries such as mining, gas and oil industries and

forestry (particularly in Alberta and BC) began to include public involvement in their planning exercises.

According to Marsden (1992), beginning in 1968, Leader of the Liberal Party, Pierre Trudeau, challenged the closed society and closed politics which had characterized Canadian federal policy-making in the post-war period. In addition, he initiated significant reforms to House rules and procedures and to the Election Expenses Act. Marsden (1992:306) explains that “...working from his own political philosophy and the mood of the country...the purpose of the changes was to create ‘participatory democracy,’ a mandatory feature of any ‘just society.’”

At the time of the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program, formal public involvement was considered to be experimental. The trend today appears to be toward increasing public involvement in policy, program and project development as public participation in decisions is considered to increase accountability and efficiency in the government apparatus (Connor, 1997:1-39).

Regardless of the rationale underlying public involvement efforts, according to Ventriss and Pecorella (1984: 224) the research from twenty years of analysis has concluded that “...the very nature of bureaucratic society has a decisively negative effect on lay participation in decision making”. Nevertheless, it is useful to outline the various rationales given for public participation in community decision-making.

Public Involvement as “Social Therapy”

In the United States, citizen participation in decision-making was popularized in the 1960s with several governmental programs designed to improve the lives of the underprivileged. The “Poverty Program”, “The Model Cities Program” and the creation of the “Office of Economic Opportunity” were all attempts to employ citizen participation as a form of social therapy (Cupps, 1977; Stenberg, 1972; Sewell & O’Riordan, 1976). The project of increasing public participation was stimulated by the findings of the “Hawthorne Experiments”. These experiments indicated that by fostering employee participation at all levels, management could encourage their personnel to integrate their individual needs with the company’s organizational goals. The result was promoted as “self-actualized” employees with increased productivity and job satisfaction.

When applied in the field of public administration, the rationale underlying these programs came to mean that the social dysfunctions within a community were caused by the segregation of the population from the decision-makers who shaped their environment (Edgmon, 1979). Consequently, the programs of this era strove to “...provide opportunities for the participation of the poor, who traditionally lacked access to decision-making” (Schatzow, 1977:296). “Maximum Feasible Participation” became the slogan and programs, like the Poverty Program, attempted to accomplish this by involving representatives of “underprivileged populations” in discussions as to how their circumstances could be improved (Sewell and O’Riordan, 1976; Wengert, 1976; Syme and Eaton, 1989).

In summary, one rationale for the inclusion of the public in bureaucratic decision-

making was that the process would help underprivileged members of the public to “self-actualize” and to integrate their individual needs with general societal goals. This direct participation of the disaffected public was promoted as a panacea for a variety of social diseases, from poverty to “anomie, apathy and alienation” (Schatzow, 1977:296). However, despite their well-intentioned efforts, these programs were criticised for not meeting their objectives because they did not come to terms with the issue of power (Sewell and O’Riordan, 1976; Skuba-Jackson, 1984; Cupps, 1977; Wengert, 1976).

Public Involvement as a Means to Efficiency and Productivity

Another rationale for increasing public involvement in decision-making was that it would increase efficiency and productivity as it could avoid unpopular decisions. The argument asserted that when there is sufficient communication between the polity (citizens) and the elites (bureaucratic decision-makers), then unpopular decisions could be circumvented. The proponents of this argument concluded that failing to encourage public involvement led to inefficiencies when plans and projects were forced to halt after resources had been wasted in conception, design and sometimes partial implementation (David, 1972).

According to Connor (1997:1-39), in Canada, this rationale resulted from the Project Managers’ experiences of “...public participation as confrontation...especially after the [publication] of Rachel Carson’s **Silent Spring**, which heightened people’s awareness of environmental problems”. The conclusion which public involvement proponents presented was that the public interest must be adequately represented in order

to make more efficient decisions:

...the solutions explored and finally chosen will be better, in the sense of both fairly and efficiently working toward the best interests of the society, than would solutions implemented without the involvement of the public. If the relevant public is not involved, decisions are likely to be inefficient and inequitable (David, 1972:1).

Schatzow's work affirms this conclusion and explains that increased public involvement would result in other efficiencies such as "...a more explicit policy process and a more detailed consideration of alternatives" and "...an explicit consideration of the major issues, particularly the relationship between environmental quality and economic growth and development" (Schatzow, 1977:47).

Referring to an even more inclusive definition of efficiency, a Canadian Federal Task Force on Environmental Impact Assessment (quoted in Lucas, 1976:74) concurred that increased public involvement in environmental decisions would lead to better decisions because "...members of the public may provide useful information to the decision-maker, especially when values are involved that cannot be easily quantified". Richardson, Sherman and Gismondi (1993:9) explain that public participation as mediated through Environmental Assessment Hearing Procedures has been championed as "...a service requested of the public by the government to help it make an informed decision and to favour a harmonious relationship between economic development and environmental protection". They quote the authors of the report Public Review: Neither Judicial, Nor Political, But an Essential Forum for the Future of the Environment to illustrate how public involvement efforts conventionally assume that the most productive decisions can be made by melding public values and expert opinions:

...the role of the public at an environmental public hearing is to make value judgments or choices about a development, and that the proper role of experts

is to state the facts about the development and predict its effect on the environment (Richardson, Sherman and Gismondi, 1993:9/10).

This definition of efficiency is not based merely on straightforward cost/benefit tables, but also includes the intangible notion of values. Irland (1975:263) suggested that including the public's values is an important consideration in land-use planning because technical training and appropriate resource data were no longer sufficient to create land management plans and decisions that would be in the public interest:

Leaders of the old conservation movement assured [resource managers] that this was so. Pioneer foresters and park men used phrases like "the greatest good, for the greatest number, for the longest time...". They held unshakeable faith that they knew precisely what these words meant...the old idols have fallen.

In the early 1970s, demands for increased public participation were a direct result of rapidly shifting values and a breakdown in consensus (Connor, 1997). However, it is necessary to recognize that these commentaries assume that there is a clear distinction between "facts" and "values" and that it is possible to base effective public consultation on a balance between the two. In addition, although they were writing specifically about the publication created by the Study Group on Environmental Assessment Hearing Procedures, Richardson, Sherman and Gismondi's (1993:10) work provides a lucid explication of the *potential* of technical experts to articulate *subjective values* as *objective facts* in public consultation efforts [my emphasis].

While advocates of public involvement suggest that citizen participation in the planning process results in decisions which are more efficient because they are accountable to a broader range of values, Cupps' article "Emerging Problems of Citizen Participation" identifies problems with the assumption that enabling public involvement in decision-making leads directly to efficient decisions. He explains that:

Administrators must begin to inquire into form, style and objectives of public participation as well as the conditions under which it can function most effectively...[and] recognize the limits of the device as a means of providing solutions to highly complex and many sided administrative issues and problems (1977:479).

Cupps concludes that far from making decisions more efficient, public involvement can direct politicians and agencies “down the garden path” by redirecting their focus onto the “most dramatic, most highly publicized issues” and away from “longer range, less visible problems” (1977:480). Additionally, Cupps challenges the representation and legitimacy of the “public”, asking “...precisely whom do public interest groups speak for and how accurately do they reflect viewpoints of their constituency?” and perhaps most critically, he challenges the role of the public in participation efforts for its “...overdramatization, hyperbole, shrillness...exploitation and abuse of mass media...unsubstantiated inferences and conclusions” and concludes that far from making more efficient decisions, the involvement of the public leads to “[approaching] policy questions from a singularly narrow and unrealistic point of view” (1977:480).

Public Participation as a Legitimizing Device

The literature on public involvement includes one other rationale for increasing public involvement in decision-making: legitimization of the existing system. In Sewell and O’Riordan’s (1976:10) model of a political culture based on the interaction between the polity and the elites, it is clear that the decision-making system is conventionally “...predicated upon the balance of potentially disruptive tensions”. Consequently, they conclude, the polity must be constantly vigilant that their trust is not violated by the elites and so, individuals and groups within the polity should emerge in order to monitor politi-

cal decisions and ensure that they are adequately representative. Thus, as part of the political arrangement, the elites “...endeavour to accommodate their policies to meet the needs of their power base” (Sewell and O’Riordan, 1976:10). The elites accomplish this by use of “symbolic legitimizing devices” such as elections, commissions of inquiry, congressional hearings and opinion polls.

O’Riordan (1976: 61) has established the connection between knowledge and power in environmental management in his article “Policy-Making and Environmental Management: Some Thoughts on Process and Research Issues”. In this article, he categorizes the role of key individuals and groups in policy making into the categories of “resources” and “power”. In this typology, “resources” refers to “...the level of information, the expertise and the organizational ability to transmit this information effectively”, and “power” is determined by the way the “resources” are used to influence decisions in desired directions” (ibid:61). This implicates the exercise of power in the creation of knowledge. It is not difficult to see how “information/knowledge” could be created which ensures that the “public” does not feel threatened.

Wood asserts that generally the polity voluntarily delegates the task of decision-making to the elites, that is, they generally accept the conventional modes of representative democracy and they only demand their right to participate directly when they feel threatened. He concludes that it is therefore necessary to incorporate citizen input at different stages of the decision-making process and “...to pay some attention to it, lest prolonged and stressful conflict result” (1976:137). Bolle (1971:499) also refers to the need for controlled public participation as a means to avoid conflict and prevent uncon-

trollable protest. He argues that if there is no established mechanism to allow the public to participate, they will “...feel left out of any policy and decision-making and resort to protest as the only available means of being heard”. Consequently, it is clear that in the 1970s, the government apparatus was encouraged to employ citizen participation as a means to avoid conflict and to legitimize its decisions.

Ingram and Ullery (1977) present this form of participation as “procedural” and contrast it with “substantive” involvement. According to their typology, while “procedural” participation entails giving the public an opportunity to express their opinions, it does not strive to effect change based on the public’s input. The purpose of this form of participation is merely to legitimize the established decision-making system, rather than to act on the public’s recommendations:

...the procedural aspect of participation entails giving interested public participants an opportunity to air their views and perhaps creating for them an illusion of substantive impact. Even if their advice is rejected, participants may feel they have at least had their day in court and are more likely to accept policy decisions (69).

O’Riordan concurs with Ingram and Ullery that public participation is often a vehicle to establish the validity of an existing decision environment and describes requests for “public response” as an example of a “legitimizing mechanism” (O’Riordan 1977: 56).

While it must be noted that most resource management decision-making studies are characterized by their emphasis on physical geography and are “...noticeably lacking in their treatment of the political culture and environment” (Moore, 1975:16)¹, public participation in resource decisions has been promoted as a means to establish public confidence in governmental decision-making. This is confirmed by a Federal Task Force on Environmental Impact Assessment, quoted in Lucas (1976:74) which explains that “...ac-

countability of political and administrative decision makers is likely to be reinforced [sic] if the process is open to public view” and that “...public confidence in decision-makers is enhanced, since citizens can clearly see in every case that all issues have been fully and carefully considered.” Based on this approach to citizen involvement, it was not long before several theorists began to write about the role of power in public involvement (Draper, 1977; Estrin, 1979; O’Riordan, 1977 and Gunton, 1984).

Power and Public Involvement

...power in its strategies, at once general and detailed, and its mechanisms, has never been studied. What has been studied even less is the relation between power and knowledge...(Foucault, 1980:51).

In 1969, Sherry Arnstein’s “Ladder of Citizen Participation” was published. Although this foundational article was written in the U.S. urban social context, it has influenced most of the critical public participation literature/theory which has followed (Onibokun and Curry, 1976). This theoretical model of power in the process of public involvement has become one of the most often quoted articles for public participation theorists and practitioners. In this paper, Arnstein asserts that in order for authentic public involvement to occur, there needs to be a transfer of power from the powerholders to the participants and she argues that for the most part:

...citizen involvement processes [had been] contrived by some to substitute for genuine participation. Their real objective [was] not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable power holders to “educate” or “cure” the participants (1969:145).

Arnstein’s “ladder of citizen participation” (see figure p. 146) consists of eight rungs. The bottom two rungs represent programs in which no power is transferred to the public (non-participation), the middle three rungs represent minor amounts of power

transferred (tokenism) and the top three rungs represent significant power-sharing.

The first two rungs (therapy, manipulation) symbolize ways that powerholders attempt to “educate” and “civilize” the public, while avoiding genuine participation. Some practices which Arnstein considers to be “non-participation” are: naming citizen representatives to advisory committees or organizing cultural and social activities. The next two rungs (informing, consultation, placation) symbolize public involvement efforts which invite public input into the decision, but exclude the public from access to or analysis of its effect on the actual decision. Arnstein argues that public participation has no lasting impact if it can only provide advice, without monitoring the effect of its advice. She categorizes public information through media, questionnaires and polls, community meetings and public hearings in this category. The fifth rung (placation) on the ladder of citizen participation is presented as a different level of “tokenism”, distinguished from levels three and four in that it does allow citizens access to comment on the decisions taken by the powerholders. Arnstein’s model indicates the value of knowledge as a means to power at this level when she adds that, at this level, the public’s influence is dependent upon the quality of the technical information in its possession. Only the sixth, seventh and eighth rungs (partnership, delegated power and citizen control) of the ladder represent *true* participation. Level six (partnership) encourages the public to engage in negotiation and bargaining over the effects of decisions taken. Level seven (delegation of power) grants citizens the majority of seats on decision-making committees and level eight (citizen control) gives public representatives full administrative control.

This model clearly links issues of public participation in decision making to issues

of power. This model of public participation implies an inherent conflict of interest between the bureaucrats who engage the citizens in public involvement programs and implies that most public involvement efforts fall into the category of therapy (Stenberg, 1972). Most critical analyses of public involvement (Arnstein, 1969; O'Riordan, 1977; Bregha, 1977; Draper, 1977; Stenberg, 1972) are based on what Foucault refers to as a "juridico-discursive" model of power. This model is based on the liberal, juridical, conception of power which is rooted in the eighteenth century (Foucault, 1980). This conception of power accepts that power can be taken to be a right, that it can be possessed, and that it can be transferred among and between parties like a commodity. Foucault explains that the juridico-discursive model defines power in a "strangely restrictive way" as:

...poor in resources, sparing of its methods, monotonous in the tactics it utilizes, incapable of invention, and seemingly always doomed to repeat itself. Further, it is a power that only has the force to say no; in no condition to produce, capable only of posting limits, it is basically anti-energy. This is the paradox of its effectiveness: it is incapable of doing anything, except to render what it dominates incapable of doing anything either, except for what this power allows it to do (1978:85).

Foucault's work dismantles dichotomies, such as "oppressed/oppressor" and replaces them with complex, dynamic "matrices of transformations". In doing this, he implicates the entire societal apparatus in the power relation. In contrast, conventional critiques of public involvement have been based on a juridico-discursive approach to power which conceptualizes power as a finite, scarce commodity which must be transferred from "powerholders" (usually perceived as the state apparatus) to "citizens" in order for authentic public participation to occur. These assumptions about power have led public involvement theorists to attempt to categorize and measure the amounts of power which have been transferred by reviewing the recommendations which the public contrib-

uted and assessing how well the recommendations were incorporated, if at all, into the implementation program (Vindasius, Hampton, and Farrell *et al* in Sewell and Phillips, 1979; Arnstein, 1969).

This type of analysis often leads to a mere condemnation of the process of public involvement and a retreat into theory. It is generally concluded that the unwitting public were manipulated and that the power was usurped by powerful interests and players. This leads to a circular argument where the researcher concludes that the “power stole the power”. Unfortunately, this kind of critical analysis is not particularly useful, in application, because it does not provide the reader with a starting point for a strategy of action/resistance.

Foucault’s conception of power, however, leads us to pose different sorts of questions. Instead of asking “was there an effective transfer of power?” which leads us to attempt to measure tangible impacts of public involvement, we are led to ask “how did power produce knowledge and discourses?”, “what types of knowledge were produced and by whom?” and “where were the parameters of the discourse established and why?”. These questions are more practically useful because they lead to a concrete understanding of the strategy underlying the exercise of power.

Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983:187) explain that Foucault’s power is neither an institution, nor a structure. It is “...the name one attributes to a complex strategic relationship in a particular society”. Their interpretation of Foucault’s work concurs with that of Couzens Hoy (1981:127) which elucidates the linkage between Foucault, Marx and Nietzsche’s conceptions of power and suggests that Foucault’s notion of power is linked to

Marx's thought that "...power is not reducible to individuals' intentions". Dreyfus and Rabinow's interpretation of Foucault indicates that power is not exercised in a conspiracy-like fashion:

There is a logic to the practices [of power]. There is a push towards a strategic objective, but no one is pushing. The objective emerged historically, taking particular forms and encountering specific obstacles, conditions and resistances. Will and calculation were involved. The overall effect, however, escaped the actors' intentions as well as those of anybody else. As Foucault phrased it, "People know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983:187).

It is necessary to clarify then, that the purpose of this thesis is not to attempt to determine *who* is directly responsible for the strategic use of knowledge/power. The discourses and knowledges created in public involvement programs are not the result of power exercised in a conspiracy-like fashion by some isolated individuals. They are the result of the culmination of many and diverse micro-actions taken for a variety of motivations. The end result may have been the suppression of some publics' voices and the construction of public consent, but that was not the end goal of a group of unified individuals.

The Social Construction of Power and the Creation of Knowledge

...the exercise of power itself creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information....The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power....Knowledge and power are integrated with one another, and there is no point in dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power; this is just a way of reviving humanism in a utopian guise. It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power (Foucault, 1980 p.51/52).

It is necessary to deconstruct the way in which knowledge in public involvement

programs has been created and disseminated in order to understand the workings of the “analytics of power”. This approach is in direct contrast to conventional critiques of public involvement which rely on dichotomized identities (oppressed/oppressors, public/government; or public/industry) to explain the effects of a repressive, finite, commodity-like power. Consequently, these analyses and evaluations are limited in their ability to explain the complex workings of the dynamic relationships between power, identity, and knowledge.

This weakness becomes particularly evident in discussions of representation. Instead of focusing on how (and for whom) terms like “public”, “citizens”, and “community” are constructed, conventional evaluations of public involvement programs restrict themselves to measuring power-transfer and accept this terminology at face-value. Consequently, the theoretical models are full of unexamined (and uncritical) terms, such as “power holders”, “responsible elite”, “citizens”, “key citizens”, “key actors”, “stakeholders” and “well-adjusted citizens” and the key issues of representation and identity become foggy. Who are the “power holders”? Does this term refer to government officials? Which government officials? What is the relationship between government and business interests? Another common term is “responsible elite”, is this set in contrast to “irresponsible elite”? What are they responsible for? Are they elite because of familial reputation or because of wealth, or both? What do we mean by familial reputation?

The term “citizens” is also problematic. Obviously it is impractical for every citizen to be involved in every decision to be taken on the environment, so who represents the “citizens”? The response may be “only the stakeholders should be involved”—how do we

define a “stakeholder”? It could be defined as narrowly as people who own property which will be directly impacted, or organized, non-profit groups who have expressed concern, or it could be any member of the public who could be impacted, however tenuous the connection.

Theorists who equate public with community and rely upon a transfer of power from the “powerholders” to the “community members” or the “public” generate what Young (1990:315) has termed “a dichotomy between the “authentic” society of the future and the “inauthentic” society which we live in, which is characterized by “alienation, bureaucratization and degradation”. Because this thesis focuses on applying Foucault's work on power/knowledge, this dichotomous approach is unacceptable. As Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983:200) point out, it would be incongruous with Foucault's epistemology/method to:

...appeal to an objective theory of human nature in order to say what sort of social arrangement can produce well-being and what sort can produce disorder and distress. Nor can one legitimize one's discourse by appealing to a past golden age, or to the principles which would govern an ideal future community.

Perhaps even more significantly, Young asserts that the sort of prescriptive dichotomization (characteristic of public involvement literature) does not lead to effective social change or resistance:

...On this understanding, social change and revolution consist in the complete negation of this society and the establishment of the truly good society...[this] projection of the ideal of community as the radical other of existing society denies difference in the sense of the contradictions and ambiguities of social life...a liberating politics should conceive the social process in which we move as a multiplicity of actions and structures which cohere and contradict, some of them exploitative, and some of them liberating. The polarization between the impure, inauthentic society we live in and the pure, authentic society we seek to institute detemporalizes the process of change because it fails to articulate how we move from one the

other. If institutional change is possible at all, it must begin from intervening in the contradictions and tensions of existing society (1990:315).

Young concludes that radical politics must "...develop discourse and institutions for bringing differently identified groups together without suppressing and subsuming the differences" (1990:320). This implies that the theories of "public involvement" need to deconstruct their categories of "citizens", "public", "powerholders", "community" in order to yield strategic knowledge about the intricate workings of power/knowledge. According to Clegg (1989:151), understanding the dynamics of identity politics is integral to understanding the shifting matrices of power in modern society . He explains:

The *meanings of* and *membership within* the categories of discursive practice will be constant sites of struggle over power, as identity is posited, resisted and fought over...identity is never regarded as being given by nature...membership in a category, as a particular type of subject, is regarded as the effect of devices of categorization; thus identity is seen as contingent, provisional, achieved, not given (emphasis in original).

A review of the public involvement literature indicates an attempt to represent "public" as a unified group which can be categorized and understood. This may now be being challenged to some degree in more recent public involvement literature which increasingly emphasizes the need to include "multiple stake-holders" (Skuba Jackson, 1994). The era of public involvement "theory-creation", however, can be characterized for its reliance on traditional categorizations and assumptions of the "public" as comprising a unified consensus. This assumption weakens attempts by members of the public to engage in decision-making because it is easy to refute any citizen's claim to speak on the basis that the citizen is "not representative of the community". Consequently, it is necessary to re-examine public involvement theory's foundational assumptions (as reflected in the theoretical literature) about the relationship between power, identity, and public

involvement.

Foucault's Power/Knowledge's Potential for Strategic Resistance

Because many of the terms used in "public involvement literature" have not been examined or clearly defined, they expand or contract, depending on the needs of the knowledge-producers. The entire categorization of who comprises the constituency of any group changes according to whose needs are being served by the definition. This is congruent with Foucault's puzzling description of his view of the categorization of identity as contextual, unstable and constantly shifting. In response to the question: "Who is struggling against whom?", Foucault responds:

...I would say it's all against all. There aren't immediately given subjects of a struggle, one the proletariat, the other the bourgeoisie. Who fights against whom? We all fight against each other. And there is always within each of us something that fights something else (Foucault quoted in Sawicki, 1991:26)

Similarly, issues of identity and categorization are central to discussions of power in public participation programs which rely on a "representative public". When there is resistance to a project, proponents of the project can accuse those who resist, of merely representing "special interest groups". Thus, the credibility of the resisters is usurped by the redefinition of the term "public". This effective use of this tactic repositions those who resist, as selfish, self-interest driven, parochial groups who do not have the interest of the "community" or the "general public" at heart. In the public participation literature, power struggles and shifting alignments and coalitions have been alluded to (Moore, 1975:49), but never been explicitly problematized.

Yet, in a political system where democracy is driven by "representation of the

population”, this tactic is deadly. The ability to effect change is closely related to the ability to manage the creation of knowledge by delineating and defining the identities of those creating alternative knowledges. This is the tactic which was effectively used against Greenpeace by logging activists in British Columbia in the summer of 1997. The complex issues of sustainable logging practices have been simplified by creating a dichotomy: Foreign Environmentalists who do not have to live the consequences of their actions vs. Local Community members who must keep their jobs in order to feed their families, at whatever cost to environment.

It is clear that the discourses of public participation are a prime area to investigate the potential application of Foucault’s analytic of power/knowledge. In her article “Foucault and Feminism: Toward a Politics of Difference”, Sawicki (1991:17) asks “...do the differences and potential separations between women pose a serious threat to effective political action and to the possibility of theory?”. It is useful to pose the same question for public participation. Is it *necessary* to attempt to construct some kind of “representative public” identity which can “legitimately” become involved in public decision-making? Following this parallel, where Audre Lorde (quoted in Sawicki, 1991:18) “...describes the ways in which the differences among women have been ‘misnamed and misused in the service of separation and confusion’”, this thesis has demonstrated how differences among members of the “public” have been misnamed and misused in the service of separation and confusion. This is theoretically significant because conventional public involvement literature has not yet addressed the importance of the re/construction of the “public” identity.

Motivated by "...the desire to avoid dogmatic adherence to categories and assumptions as well as the elision of differences to which such dogmatism can lead", Sawicki (1991:29) applies Foucault's "politics of difference" to feminist theory in order to show that "difference can be the source of fragmentation and disunity as well as a creative source of resistance and change" (1991:18). It is possible to take her insights and apply them to similar issues of representation in public involvement theory. This implies that the dynamic and unstable "public identity" need not lead irrevocably to manipulation. An understanding of the dynamics of power/knowledge opens up avenues for effective resistance.

Sawicki (1991:20) explains that Foucault's rejection of traditional revolutionary theory "...enables him to locate forms of power that are obscured in traditional theories. Thus, he frees power from the domain of political theory". As outlined above, much of Foucault's work on power is set in contrast to what he describes as the "juridico-discursive" model of power. While he does not deny the existence of the power relations presented in this model, he suggests that the model does not bring to light the very forms of power which enable centralized repression (Sawicki, 1991). The juridico-discursive conceptualization of power views power as something which is possessed, as a force which flows from a centralized source from "top" to "bottom" and, ultimately as an agent of repression. As discussed above, these assumptions have penetrated the theory of public involvement which assumes that for "real" public participation to occur, power must be "transferred" from the "power holders" to the "public".

Foucault suggests that this model of power only shows power as an agent of re-

straint and repression and, in doing so, only presents power in its most frustrated and extreme forms, a "...wholly negative, narrow, skeletal conception of power" (1980:117). He suggests that power is much more complex than it has been presented and that it "...would be a fragile thing if its only function were to repress, if it worked only through the mode of censorship, exclusion, blockage and repression" (1980:58). He demands that the reader pose the question: "If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but say no, do you really think that one should be brought to obey it?" (1980:117).

When applied to public involvement programs, this question becomes significant for two reasons. First, it shows that an examination of an alternative view of the workings of power is not an attempt to disregard all prior work. It is not necessary to discard all of the established theory of public involvement. Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation is still useful, as long it is read in conjunction with a critical understanding of the need to deconstruct established categories of identity (such as "public", for example), and to examine how those identities have been created and whom they serve.

Secondly, when Foucault's analytic of power/knowledge is applied to public involvement efforts, it changes the focus. Instead of viewing the exercise of power in public involvement as a force which suppresses, it enables a view of power as a force which produces. Power creates knowledges and provides the dynamic for the episteme which determines legitimate knowledge from disqualified, illegitimate knowledge.

With reference to public involvement, professionals involved in generating "constructive public participation" discuss, how public involvement process can be creatively

structured to create discourses which *prevent controversy*. For example, Connor (1997) has suggested that public participation practitioners should avoid conflict and controversy by not engaging in discussion with “reactive citizens”. He suggests that this can be accomplished by allocating more resources and time to encouraging “non-reactive citizens” to participate, than on striving to address the concerns for the “reactive citizens”. This strategy is essentially “constructive”, rather than “repressive”—yet, by “tipping the scales” in favour of the “public” who support a project and enabling them to “understand” the project through informational materials which have been created for and by those who are serving a particular agenda, the net impact is repressive. By making great efforts to include “supporters”, those who would challenge the projects are subtly silenced and excluded from the participation process.

Foucault affirms this productive aspect of power when he replies to the question: “What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted?” He explains that what makes this form of power so forceful is simply the fact that it does not only “...weigh on us as a force that says no, but it traverses and produces things, forms knowledge, produces discourse” (1980:117). Rather than accepting the assumption that power should be measured by its ability to prevent and oppress, Foucault suggests that power should also be measured by its ability to produce. This is the crux of his power/knowledge analytic, because “[f]ar from preventing knowledge, power produces it” (1980:58).

Foucault cautions his readers about the implications which the juridico-discursive view of power holds for critical social theory. He asserts that the notion that power can be possessed has led to attempts to locate power in a centralized source. This assumption

leads to the classic slogans, “take back the power” and “power to the powerless” which set up dichotomies, thus obscuring an entire network of micro-power relations. Foucault suggests that behind these idealistic concepts of ideology and repression lies a romantic nostalgia: “...behind the concept of ideology, the nostalgia for a quasi-transparent form of knowledge, free from all error and illusion, and behind the concept of repression, the longing for a form of power innocent of all coercion” (1980:117). This quest for objective, scientific knowledge is pervasive in the public participation literature where lengthy discussions of how to “inform the citizens” and the relationships between “scientists and the public” are debated.

Foucault suggests that a mere “transfer” of power leaves intact the myriad of micro-powers (which invest the body, sexuality, family, kinship, knowledge and technology) will result in a re/creation of the original power structure:

...one of the first things that has to be understood is that power isn't localised in the State apparatus and that nothing in society will be changed if the mechanisms of power that function outside, below and alongside the State apparatuses, on a much more minute and everyday level, are not also changed (Foucault, 1980:59).

Thus, both “conventional” and “radical” theory which rest on juridico-discursive notions of power pose questions which obscure an understanding of the real workings of power:

On the right, it [the question of power] was posed only in terms of constitution, sovereignty, etc., that is, in juridical terms; on the Marxist side, it was posed only in terms of the state apparatus. The way power was exercised—concretely and in detail—with its specificity, its techniques and tactics, was something that no one attempted to ascertain; they contented themselves with denouncing it in a polemical and global fashion as it existed among the “others” in the adversary camp...the mechanics of power in themselves were never analysed (Foucault, 1980:115).

Foucault asserts that these views of power lead to social actions which appear to be

radical and significant, but which actually accomplish little to change the status quo.

Public involvement literature based on Arnstein's juridico-discursive model of power demands a transfer of power from the power-holders to the public. Foucault's work challenges this. It is useful at this point to review the juridico-discursive model in order to understand its potential for transformational public involvement theory.

In The History of Sexuality, Volume I, Foucault clarifies some of the major features of the juridico-discursive model: the uniformity of the apparatus, the insistence of the rule and the negative relation. The “uniformity of the apparatus” refers to the belief that power is exercised in the same way at all levels. This uniformity is assumed to pervade the entire structure of power relations:

[f]rom top to bottom, in its over-all decisions and its capillary interventions alike...it acts in a uniform and comprehensive manner; it operates according to the simple and endlessly reproduced mechanisms of law, taboo, and censorship...A legislative power on one side, and an obedient subject on the other (1978:83/4).

This assumption of uniformity encourages the researcher to ignore the multiplicity of ways which power can be exercised. In doing so, it obscures the myriad of micro-powers which play a significant role in enabling the centralized, repressive forms of power (Sawicki, 1991). In addition, it sets up a dichotomy between the “powerful” and the “powerless” which reinforces the assumption that power can be located and resisted in a single source. It also supports the belief that as long as the powerless could access power, they could effect positive change. The implications which this assumption has for public involvement efforts has already been discussed above.

The “insistence of the rule” reinforces the assumption that “the pure form of power” (1978:83) can be found in the function of the legislator. This is significant because it

encourages critical theorists to agitate for change at the level of government policy: a strategy which leaves intact the micro-powers which enable the macro-power to exercise its power repressively.

That power is only repressive, that its only function is to reject, exclude, refuse, block, conceal or mask is the main tenet of “the negative relation”. According to Foucault, the negative relation defines power in a “strangely restrictive way” (1978:85):

...power [in the juridico-discursive model] is poor in resources, sparing of its methods, monotonous in the tactics it utilizes, incapable of invention and seemingly always doomed to repeat itself. Further, it is a power that only has the force of the negative on its side, a power to say no; in no condition to produce, capable only of posting limits, it is incapable of doing anything, except to render what it dominates incapable of doing anything either, except for what this power allows it to do.

It must be noted, however, that Foucault does not attempt to de-throne one theory in order to privilege his interpretation. In History of Sexuality: Volume I, he clearly states that he is not attempting to propose a new “theory of power”, instead, his work attempts to move toward a “...definition of the specific domain of power and toward the determination of the instruments which make possible its analysis” (1978:82). According to Dreyfus and Rabinow (1984:198), Foucault’s “analytics of power” is not meant to be a “...context-free, ahistorical, objective description”, nor is it intended to be applied as a “generalization to all of history” (184).

Nevertheless, Foucault’s proposed analytics of power has significant implications for researchers engaged in examining social relations. Foucault explains that his analytics of power will impact not only researchers’ questions, but the strategy and method by which they answer those questions:

If one tries to erect a theory of power one will always be obliged to view it as emerging at a given place and time and hence to deduce it, to reconstruct

its genesis. But if power is in reality an open, more-or-less coordinated (in the event, no doubt, ill-coordinated) cluster of relations, then the only problem is to provide oneself with a grid of analysis which makes possible an analytic of the relations of power (Foucault quoted in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983 :184).

This places the centre of focus back on the issue of the workings of power, rather than on the genealogy of thought/theory of power. That Foucault considers this to be an appropriate focus is apparent in his own studies. According to Macdonnell (1986:84), Foucault's study of madness does not begin with an examination of the nature of mental illness and then examine how it was grounded in classical studies/philosophy. Instead, it starts with an attempt to reconstruct the institutions which shut up the "insane" and assigned to them the same status as the poor and the unemployed. Not until he dispels the notion that confinement and psychiatric asylum reflect some eternal truth about the human condition, does he turn to classical thought.

Similarly, this thesis approaches the questions of the articulation of knowledge and power in public involvement programs by attempting to reconstruct the discourses in the Okanagan Water. Ultimately, the disinterred knowledges which this study brings to light will challenge the theoretical discourses of public participation in contemporary North American society. It challenges this theory in its search for truth, but it does not provide in its stead an eternal truth which is inflexible and unchanging. As Foucault (1980:131) explains "...truth isn't the reward of free spirits, the child of protracted solitude, nor the privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves." The truths in this paper emerge from a study which is local, contextual, and a researcher who is intimately positioned within the shifting network of "truths".

CHAPTER THREE:

Foucault's Power/Knowledge Construct

Foucault's strategy for reading texts is inextricably linked to his beliefs about truth, power and knowledge. His method strives to elicit an understanding of how truth, power and knowledge are articulated because "...truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power...truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power" (1980:131). Foucault explains that each society has its own "regime of truth" which distinguishes discourses which it accepts and allows to function as "true" from discourses which it does not accept and which are not accorded the status of "truth" (Foucault, 1980). According to Couzens Hoy (1981:129), Foucault does not attempt to search for "truth", instead, he strives to use the construct of power/knowledge as a device for "...studying the social and scientific practices that underlie and condition the formation of beliefs. He is offering an interpretation of how what counts as knowledge and power has historically come to be so counted." Foucault's methods were devised to map out the "episteme" so that it is possible to gain a strategic knowledge of how power is exercised through the power/knowledge construct.

The Futile Quest For "Truth"

A key to Foucault's understanding of the relationship between truth and power lies in his belief about the essence of truth. Foucault's beliefs about "truth" stand in stark contrast to those of his contemporary, Noam Chomsky, who also discussed the relationships between truth and power. Chomsky believed that "truth" exists. When asked: "What can people do to cut through this elaborate and ornamented framework of propaganda

and get at what is real, get at the truth?" Chomsky's reply signalled his belief that the ideal of truth is alive and accessible:

I frankly don't think that anything more is required than ordinary common sense. What one has to do is adopt towards one's own institutions, including the media and the journals and the schools and colleges, the same rational, critical stance that we take towards the institutions of any other power...take the first step of adopting a stance that is simply one of critical intelligence towards anything you read, in this morning's newspaper or tomorrow's newspaper or whatever and discover the assumptions that underlie it. Then analyze those assumptions and restate the account of the facts in terms that really are true to the facts, not simply reflections of the distorting prism of the propaganda system. Once one does that I think the world becomes rather clear (1992:12).

Noam Chomsky's comments seem to indicate that an objective truth exists and that facts can be emancipated from the grasp of ideology¹ by merely exercising one's critical faculties. Thus, applied to public participation, Noam Chomsky's comments appear to favour the ability of the "public" to see beyond attempts to sway their opinion.

Foucault would view Chomsky's suggestion's for finding the "truth" as overly simplistic. He states clearly that "...by truth I do not mean 'the ensemble of truths which are to be discovered and accepted', but rather the ensemble of rules according to which the true and the false are separated and specific effects of power are attached to the true" (1980:132). This is congruent with the post-modern project which seeks to "...refuse 'essentialist' tendencies of earlier theoretical systems with their claims to referential truth, scientificity, and belief in progress" (O'Sullivan et al., 1994). Thus, Foucault would suggest that as individuals, we are too immersed in the social apparatus of power to be able to clearly distinguish an essential "truth" from the continually shifting discourses. Consequently, for all intents and purposes, there is no such thing as "truth" and instead of searching blindly for what we can never see, we should attempt to understand the diverse

complexity of social forces which intersect to give credence to some forms of knowledge and marginalize other forms of knowledge.

[I]t's not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time (Foucault, 1980:133).

Foucault's strategy for reading texts assumes that there is a complex and constant "articulation of power on knowledge and knowledge on power" (1980:51) and that it is the "...exercise of power itself [which] creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information". In "Truth and Power" (1980:131) Foucault further clarifies this relationship between truth, knowledge and power by outlining five traits of "truth":

- truth is centred on the form of discourse and the institutions which produce it
- truth is subject to economic and political forces
- truth is diffused and consumed in diverse forms
- truth is produced and transmitted under the dominant control of a few great economic and political apparatuses (university, media, army).
- truth is at issue in ideological struggles, social confrontation and political debate.

Foucault suggests that while it is not productive to search for eternal truths, it is possible to study the structure of the apparatus which privileges some forms of knowledge over others. Closely linked to this approach is his concept of the "episteme" which "...is the [particular] 'apparatus' which makes possible the separation, not the true from the false, but of what may from what may not be characterised as scientific" (Foucault, 1980:197).

The Evolution of the “Apparatus”

Foucault places the *apparatus* at the centre of analysis. According to Phelan (1990:423), Foucault's notion of apparatus includes both discursive elements (such as laws and regulations, scientific and philosophical pronouncements) and non-discursive elements (including architectural designs and economies). Phelan (1990) explains that in the 1970s, Foucault's work increasingly emphasized and shifted toward analyzing the relationship of power to knowledge.

Foucault's genealogies strove not to trace origins and show progressive, continuous evolution, but rather to “...identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us” (Foucault, 1977:146). Phelan (1990:423) suggests that Foucault “...looks for the explanations for and development of those things that seem most obvious, most ‘natural,’ to us...” not in order to produce “objective truth”, but instead to question and challenge the “truth” that appears to be objective but “...in fact rests inescapably on language and its structures of understanding” (ibid).

This thesis draws its central concern from Foucault's work. This thesis attempts to examine both the exercise of power in public involvement programs which rely upon “public information/education” and the complex interplay of power/knowledge which occurs in these public participation processes. Phelan asserts, “[p]ower...is not opposed to knowledge or truth, but functions through it and the systems of meaning upon which it

rests. Power operates through discourses that define and legitimate its operation” (1990:424). In this era, characterized by power which is maintained and legitimized by “consent of the governed”, power operates subtly and the exercise of power/knowledge analytic is particularly intense within programs which inform and include the “public” in decisions about land use.

The study of power/knowledge in this thesis, then, is a study of the exercise of how the possibility of conduct was guided and the possible outcomes were ordered (Foucault’s definition of the productive exercise of power discussed in Phelan [1990:425]). The applied purpose of this theoretical approach to an understanding of the workings of power lies in an understanding of the most effective lines of resistance. If we understand the power is held in a central location and that it can be transferred like a commodity (Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation), that leads to attempts to force a transfer of the power from the perceived power holders to the public. This assumes that the public is not inherently powerful because conventional public participation theory is based on a juridico-discursive approach to power relations.

Foucault’s concept of apparatus has been described as an extension of Althusser’s conceptions of “ideological state apparatus” and “repressive state apparatus” which are the “material and institutional form taken by ideology in specified historical circumstances in class societies...by representing class interests as both natural and neutral” (O’Sullivan et al, 1994:143). However, whereas both “ideology” and “repressive and ideological state apparatuses” place power firmly in the hands of the state (or the powerful classes who control the state), Foucault’s notion of “apparatus” appears to be more

ambiguous. Foucault's "apparatus" refers to a fluid deployment of the tactics and strategies of power:

[Apparatus is]...essentially of a strategic nature, which means assuming that it is a matter of a certain manipulation of relations of forces, whether developing them in a particular direction, blocking them, stabilising them, utilising them, etc. The apparatus is thus always inscribed in a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain coordinates of knowledge which issue from it but to an equal degree condition it (Foucault, 1980:194/196) .

This places the site of struggle for the mechanisms of power at "...its capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives" (1980:39).

Foucault's Apparatus: Implications For Strategies of Resistance

Foucault differentiates his approach to resistance from that of Marxists who place their conception of "state apparatus" as the site of resistance. He suggests that the logic of Marxism which places special importance on the "State apparatus" as the site of struggle is based on a misunderstanding of the dynamics of power. According to Foucault, the Marxist revolutionary movements concluded that the key to social transformation was the capture of the "State apparatus", yet this belief was based on a misunderstanding of the mechanisms of power:

[Marxist theory claims that the State apparatus] must be undermined, but not completely undermined, since the class struggle will not be brought to an immediate end with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. ...[because] in order to operate these State apparatuses which have been taken over but not destroyed...one has to call upon the old class which is acquainted with apparatus, namely the bourgeoisie....one of the first things that has to be understood is that power isn't localised in the State apparatus and that nothing in society will be changed if the mechanisms of power that function outside, below and alongside State apparatuses, on a much more minute and

everyday level, are not also changed (Foucault, 1980:59).

Unlike his Marxist contemporaries, Foucault believes that the resistance to repressive forms of power does not need to come from *above* the social body, rather resistance comes from *within* it. He refers back to the eighteenth century power-shifts to explain how shifts in power at the “capillary form of existence” led to fundamental structural change (Foucault, 1980:39):

The eighteenth century invented, so to speak, a synaptic regime of power, a regime of its exercise **within** the social body, rather than **from above** it. The change in official forms of political power was linked to this process....It was the instituting of this new local, capillary form of power which impelled society to eliminate certain elements such as the court and the king. The mythology of the sovereign was no longer possible once a certain kind of power was being exercised within the social body (emphasis in original).

Although one could argue that Foucault himself is a member of the ruling elite and that therefore his ideas can only reinforce the dominance of the ruling classes, his active engagement in struggles of resistance indicate that it is possible to legitimize previously subjugated knowledges. For example, while he was able to employ his role as a leading intellectual in order to bring national attention to the state of prisoners in France, he refused to speak on behalf of the prisoners. Instead, he enabled the prisoners to create their own legitimate discourses. Foucault's life and work attempted to resist repressive power at the capillary level by “insurrecting subjugated knowledges” and creating “genealogies” which highlight the “...local, discontinuous, disqualified, illegitimate knowledges against the claims of a unitary body of theory” (Foucault, 1977:81-83). His methodology seeks to rediscover and lay bare struggles as captured in printed discourses found in documents created at the time.

Foucault proposes and practices a method of genealogical research which attempts

to unite erudite knowledge and popular knowledge in an effort to “insurrect subjugated knowledges” in order to reveal those knowledges which have either been “...buried or disguised in a functionalist coherence or formal systemisation” or have been “...disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy” (Foucault, 1980:82). Foucault calls the method for disinter-ring the subjugated knowledges “archeology” and he calls the project whereby discourse analysis is employed to liberate “...local, discontinuous, disqualified, illegitimate knowledges” from a “...unitary body of theory which would filter, hierarchise and order them in the name of some true knowledge...[thus rendering the subjugated knowledges]...capable of opposition and struggle against the coercion of a theoretical, unitary, formal and scientific discourses” (1980:85), genealogy.

The relationship between subjugated knowledges and formal, hierarchical knowledges becomes the central focus for a Foucauldian discourse analysis which attempts to “...produce an account of power which will enable and facilitate resistance and opposition” (Hartsock, 1990:168). Although discourses are not in themselves, “textual”, they are the tangible effects of power relations and thus textual analysis can be employed to follow the moves of the strategy and struggle between legitimized and disqualified knowledges (O’Sullivan et al., 1994). As Agger writes: “...every text is a life, a form of society through which power is transacted and accumulated” (1991:48).

Discourse Analysis and Power/Knowledge

The method of discourse analysis became central to epistemological debates in the 1960s and 1970s when postmodern and poststructural thinkers expressed their aversion to the sanitized constructions of positivist definitions and categories (Macdonnell, 1986: Agger, 1991: Lynn, 1994). Derrida's work on deconstruction was based on the "methodology of textual reading" in which "...every text is undecidable because it conceals conflicts within it between different authorial voices" (Agger, 1991: 27). Consequently, the method of discourse analysis was viewed as a strategy of raising embedded assumptions of the authorial voices to full view in order to invite readers into the construction of the text's meaning (Agger, 1991). Weedon (1987:24) explains that:

...we need to view language as a system always existing in historically specific discourses. Once language is understood in terms of competing discourses, competing ways of giving meaning to the world, which imply differences in the organization of social power, then language becomes an important site of political struggle.

Foucault himself discusses the importance of discourse as the site of struggle, yet he cautions us not to slip into the essentialist position of "...imagining the world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse...but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that come into play in various strategies" (1978:100). Therefore we cannot resist the exercise of oppressive power by merely legitimizing and presenting previously delegitimized knowledges, but that we must instead interrogate them according to their "tactical productivity" (1978:102). Consequently, it is not sufficient to merely exhume the knowledges which the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program "disappeared", it is also necessary to examine how both the "legitimate" and the "marginalized" knowledges which were created in response to

the OKWBSPIP were strategically employed. Foucault's approach to discourse analysis treats discourses as dynamic and unstable:

Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it (1978:101).

This method arose in opposition to the pervasive methodologies associated with positivism. Positivist methods are characterized by their objective stance, their use of hypothetical-deductive theory, their attempt to construct external law-like statements and their use of formal, precise language and their attempts to separate facts from meanings (Denzin, 1989). Post-structural and postmodern philosophy rebels against the empirical model whereby "facts" are understood as "speaking for themselves" and recognizes that "facts" are actually theory-based and shaped by the ideological beliefs of the researcher. Thus, postmodern methods attempt to make explicit "...the complex web of social relationships which formally and informally influenced" the creation of truth:

The research act...involves interpretation, the definition of social objects, formation and carrying out of lines of action. It is a dialectical act that turns back upon itself, negates itself, affirms itself and moves forward into uncharted fields of experience....When academics do research, they inevitably take sides for and against particular values, political bodies and society at large. That is, they act as agents for the State, for interest groups or for themselves. In doing so, they take sides, for it is impossible to do value-neutral research (Denzin, 1989:249).

Instead of accepting documents "at face value", those who engage in discourse analysis believe that every document represents "...the imprint of the organization that produced it" and strive to interpret each archival report within its own "situated context" (Denzin, 1989:253).

Thus practiced, discourse analysis is an inherently political act. By challenging the assumption that texts mirror an objective world, discourse analysis is employed to deconstruct the “artifice of science”. Through this method then, the ideals of democracy can be affirmed by opening science up to scrutiny and debate (Agger, 1991:25):

Postmodernism rejects the view that science can be spoken in a singular, universal voice (eg. Lyotard’s critique of grand narratives of western reason). Although this risks losing the global perspective of the Enlightenment (including Marxism), it enables readers to deconstruct the universal reason of the Enlightenment as the particular posture of Eurocentric rationality, which contains class, race and gender biases.

This approach suggests that discourses are the product of social, historical and institutional formations; they are a medium, upon which is recorded ideological struggles and resistances (O’Sullivan et al., 1994:94).

Post-structuralist discourse analysis approaches the question of meaning differently than structuralism/semiotics which asserts that experience is a property of language. That is to say, that “...both the world out there and individual consciousness are themselves comprehensible only as products, not sources of language/signification” (O’Sullivan et al., 1994:93)². In their book Language as Ideology, Hodge and Kress (1994:131) discuss the relationship between the text, discourse, meaning and power. They explain that meaning exists only in relation to discursive processes which are signifying systems that constitute relationships between people. Thus, they conclude that “...the operations of power can only be studied via texts” where the analyst can scan the written record for “...enigmatic traces of process frozen in texts, fossils of power preserved in linguistic amber”.

Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983: 51) explain that discourse analysis is not a “search for hidden messages”, but instead an analysis of how the messages appeared when and where

they did and why those particular messages appeared there at that specific point in time. These questions can be answered by identifying the institutions which created the discourse and by examining their propositions in relation to another, opposing discourse (Macdonnell, 1986:2).

Although Fairclough (1989) does not challenge conventional notions of power, his approach to the study of power mediated through discourse reveals fruitful avenues for analysis. He suggests that in order to examine power in discourse, it is necessary to distinguish between three types of constraints: contents (on what is said and done), relations (the social relations people enter into in discourse and subjects (the subject positions people occupy)). In addition, he distinguishes between discourse mediated through speech and discourse mediated through the written word:

In face-to-face interaction, participants alternate between being producers and the interpreters of text, but in [written] discourse, there is a sharp divide between producers...and 'consumers' (Fairclough, 1989:49). Fairclough's analysis of a newspaper article shows how power is implicitly exercised in various ways. He focuses on "causality" (who is represented as causing what to happen, who is represented as doing what to whom), "nominalization" (occurs when a process is described as a noun, as if it were an entity. This technique enables crucial aspects of a process to be left unspecified) and "content" (word choice which favours certain interpretations and excludes others).

Finally, Fairclough introduces the need to examine who has access to the discourse in order to understand power relations as mediated through discourse. He suggests that we should ask "who has access to which discourses and who has the power to impose and

enforce constraints on access?" In addition, he urges the reader to ask "how is access constrained?" It is clear that these questions are central to a study of how and to what extent the public can become involved in public consultation in environmental decision making.

Foucault's discursive analyses focus on the epistemic context which enabled certain bodies of knowledge to be accorded the status of intelligible and authoritative (Rouse, 1994). Although his premises differ significantly from those of Fairclough, Foucault asks similar questions:

[Foucault] argued that particular investigations were structured by which concepts and statements were intelligible together, how those statements were organized thematically, which of those statements counted as "serious", who was empowered to speak seriously...(Rouse, 1994: 93).

Rouse suggests that Foucault's analyses strove to examine how disputes among conflicting truth claims were resolved by the process whereby "...error and irrationality, that is, those statements that do not conform...were suppressed" (1994, 103). In their book Winning Back The Words: Confronting Experts in an Environmental Public Hearing, Richardson et al., (1993) argue convincingly for employing discourse analysis as a tool for "...understanding the dynamics and debating the efficacy, of a public hearing". In their chapter "Discourse and Counter-discourse", they argue that environmental public hearings are characterized by power imbalances and power struggles:

Limiting the terms of reference of a public hearing over the objections of the public is an obvious exercise of power, and as such, is dangerous for the government. There are other, more subtle ways that governments and project proponents can limit debate and legitimate the desired outcome of the hearing, including dress, demeanour, and a choice of words intended to indicate expertise, trustworthiness, objectivity, and concern for the well-being of society (Richardson et al., 1993:11).

Furthermore, they present discourse analysis as a means to understand how language

is "...used to influence the outcome of a public hearing, in a way that allows the hearing process to appear open, and not an arbitrary exercise of power" (ibid,12). In addition to linking discourses of public participation programs to power relations, by drawing on

Bruce Lincoln's work they expand the term discourse to encompass more than language:

Discourse supplements force in several important ways, among the most important of which is ideological persuasion. In the hands of elites and those professionals who serve them (either in mediated fashion or directly), discourse of all forms—not only verbal, but also the symbolic discourses of spectacle, gesture, costume, edifice, icon, musical performance, and the like—may be strategically employed to mystify the inevitable inequities of social order and to win consent of those over whom power is exercised, thereby obviating the need for the direct use of coercive force and transforming simple power into "legitimate" authority" (Lincoln quoted in Richardson et al., 1993:12).

This approach to discourse analysis enables the interpreter to affirm the importance of the context surrounding the inclusion of the "public" in environmental decision-making. Thus, discourse analyses begin to legitimately include qualitative experiences surrounding the actual words which are spoken or written. Therefore, in Chapter One, the description of the "public meeting" which occurred in Lakeview Heights appropriately includes not only an analysis of the way the discourse was structured, but also an analysis of how spatial dynamics, technology and gesture contributed to the dynamics of the discourse. In this way, if it had happened that a member of the "public" had strode to the front of the room and taken the microphone, then this would appropriately belong in a discussion of counter-discourse and resistance.

Fairclough's work in the field of interpretive discourse analysis shows that discourse analysis is a potentially liberating tool. However, because discourse analysis relies on the assumptions and beliefs which the interpreter brings to the analysis, it can also be

effectively wielded to confirm and support traditional juridico-discursive models of power as reflected in discourse. One could apply the method of discourse analysis to the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program documentation and conclude that there was a conspiracy to prevent the public from engaging in meaningful discourse. This would be congruent with the conventional “radical” assumptions in existing models of public involvement (Arnstein, 1969). However, Foucault’s work on power/knowledge provides a kind of “map” of strategic questions which yield alternative interpretations of the workings of power/knowledge. This thesis attempts to employ the tools of discourse analysis and the epistemological focus of Foucault’s power/knowledge without falling into the trap of viewing the effects of power as mere repression and associating that repression as dependent on the State apparatus because:

To pose the problem in terms of the State means to continue posing it in terms of sovereign and sovereignty, that is to say in terms of law. If one describes all these phenomena of power as dependent on the State apparatus, this means grasping them as essentially repressive...I don’t want to say that the State isn’t important; what I want to say is that relations of power, and hence the analysis that must be made of them necessarily extend beyond the limits of the State...(Foucault, 1980:122).

Foucault explains that power is not restricted to the State because the power which the State is able to exercise is based on a myriad of micro-powers of sexuality, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth. This has profound implications for those who study power in order to determine effective strategies for resistance. If power is everywhere, if it is ingrained in our very bodies, then how can we resist it? To try to include the diversity of micro-powers in an analysis of public participation is virtually impossible. Additionally, Foucault’s emphasis on micro-powers appears to frustrate attempts to locate repression outside of the self.

Power/Knowledge: A Useful Tool for Social Transformation?

For all of its explanatory value, is it possible to actually apply Foucault's analytic of power/knowledge in order to engage in positive social change? This is where Foucault's work has come under intense scrutiny. Weedon (1987:10) suggests that although post-structuralism "...offers a useful, productive framework for understanding the mechanisms of power in our society and possibilities of change", that the contribution of post-structural tools must be judged by their ability to be politically useful. How can scholars employ Foucault's work in order to deal with the major social issues? Is it possible? Or are those of us who engage with Foucault destined to remain locked in private debates which have little value for societal transformation?

In her article "Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women", Hartsock (1990:159-164) argues convincingly that Foucault's "theory" of power is a "...dangerous approach for any marginalized group to adopt" because it "...provide[s] an epistemology which is unusable for the task of revolutionizing, creating and constructing". Hartsock suggests that "...despite [Foucault's] stated aims of producing an account of power which will enable and facilitate resistance and opposition...[he] reinforces the relations of domination in society" and she supports her argument, providing a discourse analysis of Foucault's language.

As a result of this analysis, Hartsock concludes that Foucault's perspective forms the epistemological and ontological basis for a sterile description of power in which there are no subjects, no domination, and thus no tools which are usable to construct effective counter-discourses. Hartsock raises questions which challenge the efficacy of Foucault's

power/knowledge construct and the value which it has for societal change. This thesis will strive to answer Hartsock's challenges because an application of Foucault's work to studying processes of public involvement in environmental decision-making must lead to an understanding of the tactics which can be used to subvert dominant discourses and assert counter-discourses. Otherwise, this thesis has the potential to increase apathy, timidity and complacency among the "public", while simultaneously making explicit the strategies and tactics whereby power can be employed to guide "...the possibility of conduct" and "structure the possible field of action"³ of those who strive to manipulate public opinion and "manufacture consent"⁴.

Perhaps the answer lies in re-constructing what is considered to be the creation of counter-discourses, the subversion of dominant discourses and the tactics and strategies of resistance. Possibly Foucault's epistemology leads to the creation of an analysis which is ambiguous, the construction of a map of the "battlefield" without a specific strategy for how to "win". Nevertheless, Foucault's power/knowledge construct does not lead irrevocably to the conclusion that the "public" must play the role of passive victims, or not play at all. That would ignore the dynamism of the network of power relations and reaffirm the dominance of modernist dualisms.

Richardson et al.'s discourse analysis yields clear insights into the struggles over discourse and their use of literary tools such as critical examination of binary oppositions, metaphors, association, use of the passive voice and impersonal pronouns provides a powerful set of tools which can be used to deconstruct discourse and understand the power/knowledge dynamics.

The next chapter will begin the intensive examination of the analysis of the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program by presenting an in-depth description of the context which gave rise to the Study, outlining the evolution of the Public Involvement Program itself, and examining the process by which some “publics” were included and others excluded. Chapter Five will rely heavily on discourse analysis of study documents, transcripts and maps in order to determine where the boundaries of the discourse were drawn.

Endnotes

¹ In this context, "ideology" refers to "...any knowledge which is seen as any knowledge that is posed as natural or generally applicable, particularly when its social origins are suppressed, exominated or deemed irrelevant. Hence, and especially in more recent cultural/communication studies, ideology is seen as the practice of reproducing social relations of inequality within the sphere of signification and discourse" (O'Sullivan et al., 1994:140). As the theoretical concept of "ideology" comes from Marxism, there may be an apparent contradiction in its usage here. However, Foucault's ideas about power/knowledge do not merely challenge, but also extend and build upon those of Marx. This apparent contradiction is clear in Foucault's analysis of the factors influencing knowledges produced by intellectuals (1980:132) where he privileges "class position" and reverts to Marxist terminology to describe the different class positions ("petty bourgeois in service of capitalism or "organic" intellectual of the proletariat). This appears to contradict his searing criticisms of "essentialism" and his emphasis on the need to deconstruct classifications of identity.

² The idea that the reality which we experience is closely linked to the language in which we express our thoughts is not unique to "post-structuralist" or "post-modern" thought. In 1984, George Orwell presents a world where the production and distribution of language is tightly controlled in order to control the populace. If the people could not "think" thoughts which challenged the panopticon-like rule of Big Brother, then they could not engage in creative resistance. Consequently, one of the primary directives was to alter the meanings of potentially coercive words and delete others from the language. In other words, discourse became the site of the struggle.

³ Foucault, quoted in Richardson et al., 1993.

⁴ Phrase coined by Marshall McLuhan.

⁵ According to Dreyfus & Rabinow (1983:184), "Foucault is proposing what he calls an analytics of power, which he opposes to theory. He says, 'If one tries to erect a theory of power one will always be obliged to view it as emerging at a given place and time and hence to deduce it, to reconstruct its genesis. But if power is in reality an open, more-or-less coordinated (in the event, no doubt, ill-coordinated) cluster of relations, then the only problem is to provide oneself with a grid of analysis which makes possible an analytic of the relations of power'. Couzens Hoy (1981) explains that "analytics of power" refers to Foucault's historical method.

CHAPTER FOUR:

The Okanagan's Physical Context

The Okanagan Valley is the remains of a large glacial lake contained within the 128 kilometre length of Okanagan Lake. The Valley's other lakes (Swan, Kalamalka, Wood, Skaha, Vaseaux, and Osoyoos--see map p.147) were also originally part of the glacial lake which was created over 9000 years ago when the Pleistocene-era ice age retreated from the region. The Okanagan Lake is between two to five kilometres at its widest point and 160 kilometres in length. The lake system drains south through the Okanagan river into the Columbia River (Zuehlke, 1995).

The Okanagan area, which is focused on this deep north-south trench is below the Interior Plateau which is bordered by the Cascade Mountains on the southwest and the Monashee Mountains on the East. The climate is relatively dry and irrigation has been the key to agricultural productivity (Forward, 1987). Because of variations in runoff from snowmelt and rainfall from year to year, British Columbia is characterized by water resources which are extremely variable and the key to its economic development and population growth has been technological developments in flood management and irrigation (Shanks, 1983; Sewell, 1987). The Okanagan region remained relatively sparsely populated, ranching country until nearly the end of the nineteenth century, when irrigation systems were developed.

Water: A Key to the Okanagan Valley's Development

Irrigation of the lands led to the development of the Okanagan Valley through intensive immigration, encouraged by large scale land irrigation and development companies. By the 1920s and 1930s, a mature commercial fruit growing industry dominated the economic and physical landscapes (Forward, 1987). However, by the 1950s and early 1960s, the fruit industry was in decline. A survey of newspaper reports between 1950 and 1968 indicate that the fruit industry was under siege from water shortages, exorbitant cuts paid to middlemen, competition from low-priced US fruit, and a lack of aggressiveness in finding markets, and land speculation.

While fruit growers requested federal monies to assist their ailing fruit industry, newspaper reports indicate that the economic base of the Okanagan Valley was changing. There was a thrust toward rapid urbanization which was supported by services and industry. This is correlated by Forward's work which reveals that losses of agricultural land to urbanization were substantial during the 1950s and 1960s (1987:10). Wood (1987:144) writes that loss of land to urbanization, declining prices, production controls, foreign competition and dumping, high interest rates and consumer dissatisfaction remained significant issues for Okanagan fruit growers through the 1980s. It is within this larger economic context of change that issues of water quality and quantity in the Okanagan became increasingly important in the 1960s.

Water Quantity Control: Federal/Provincial Co-operation (1960s)

In 1960, the British Columbia government signed a joint flood control agreement with the federal government. This agreement provided for the construction of structural works which would permit fine-tuned regulation of water levels, especially high water (Shanks, 1983). Shanks' (1983:190) review of the hydrological records reveals the reason for the concern over water shortages. He explains that the fifty years of record indicated:

...wide quantity fluctuations with an inflow of less than 100 000 acre-feet in drought years to greater than 500 000 acre-feet in flood years with an average, under 1970 use conditions, of 332 000 acre feet. The average annual requirement in the mainstream system was estimated at 244 000 acre-feet.

The recognition of these wide fluctuations in water supply to the system led officials to be concerned that years of low inflow of the levels experienced in the 1929-1932 period could not be sustained in the Okanagan. According to Shanks, (1983:190), "...doubt was expressed as to the sufficiency of 'normal' supplies of water to meet all future demands including agricultural, municipal and industrial uses, plus fishing requirements." Consequently, officials began to determine the possibility of creating a large scale diversion of water from Shuswap Lake into the Okanagan Lake via a twenty mile long canal.

Water Quality Issues in the Okanagan (1960-1970)

Sewell (1987) explains that the explosive growth of population and polluting industries in the early- and mid-1960s had impacted the Okanagan Lakes adversely. Run-off from fertilizer-intensive agricultural practices had led to phosphate loading and the beginning of the eutrophication process in the Okanagan Lake system. The consequent growth of algae and weeds on the lakes provided a strong visual reminder to the Okanagan residents

that all was not well with their environment. Mactavish (1985) explains that the federal government had identified phosphates as a major cause of eutrophication based on the Great Lakes experiences and that it was not until 1976 that federal regulation of other pollutants became possible under the Environmental Contaminants Act. This, in part explains the preoccupation with phosphate loading.

The Federal Role in Water Management

In 1969, the federal government introduced the concept of comprehensive, multiple use water management to federal legislation. The Canada Water Act (CWA) replaced the Canada Water Conservation Assistance Act (which had been used to support the construction of flood control works). According to Mactavish (1985), the CWA was based on perceptions that demands on water resources were increasing rapidly and that pollution had become a significant threat to health, well being and prosperity. The remedy was to be found in comprehensive programs in cooperation with the provinces to undertake research and planning exercises. Cost-shared, jointly-planned comprehensive river basin planning experiments had been proposed already in 1967 by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources. In 1969, agreements had been negotiated, covering the Okanagan, Qu'Appelle and St. John basins (Pearse et al., 1985).

The purpose of the CWA was “to provide for the management of the water resources of Canada including research and the planning and implementing of programs relating to the conservation, development and utilization of resources” (Mactavish, 1985:24). The CWA empowered the federal government to enter into agreements with the

provinces for water related planning and implementation projects “...with respect to any waters where there is a significant national interest in the water resource management thereof, from time to time to enter into agreements with one or more provincial governments to”:

formulate comprehensive water resource management plans...based upon an examination of the full range of reasonable alternatives and taking into account views expressed at public hearings and otherwise by persons likely to be affected by implementation of the plans;

design projects for the efficient conservation, development and utilization of those waters; and

implement any plans or projects referred to in [the paragraphs above] and establish or naming joint commissions, boards or other bodies empowered to direct, supervise and coordinate such programs (quoted from Depape, 1985:17).

Issues of Federal-Provincial Jurisdiction in CWA

The importance of water in economic, social and political realms has already been discussed above. Because water is so crucial in these areas, it is not surprising that water management in Canada is characterized by “...a complex web of overlapping and often ambiguous federal and provincial jurisdictions...characterized by jurisdictional conflicts and inter-governmental disputes” (Depape, 1985:1). The CWA attempted to address this by institutionalizing joint federal-provincial cooperation and providing for various types of cooperative endeavours, including joint consultative agreements and federal-provincial agreements to plan and implement water resource programs, however, this attempt at cooperation was viewed with suspicion from the provinces.

While federal-provincial co-operation in water resource management seemed to be a

solution to the nation's water management issues, Depape (1985:9) reports that some of the provinces viewed the federal water initiative as an intrusion. Woodrow's commentary (quoted at length in Shanks, 1983:195) supports this:

The province [sic] cited "inadequate financial support" as the main obstacle to undertaking water management and pollution control activities and expressed concern over any invasion of their constitutional authority in these fields. Specifically, the provinces argued that they should retain the sole right to initiate, develop and maintain water resources within their boundaries and they objected to the "increasing trend on the part of the federal government to move into the fields of water resources and pollution control with large amounts of money to run duplicate or parallel programs"...a tug of war between the federal government and certain provinces, primarily Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec, was clearly developing...

Shanks (1983) reports that it is well-documented that British Columbia viewed overtures from Ottawa as an invasion of its provincial sovereignty. This is not surprising, considering that the then-Premier of British Columbia, W.A.C. Bennett, has been referred to as the "western separatist". In a 1969 meeting with federal officials, Bennett proposed several initiatives which give a strong indication of his desire for British Columbia's autonomy:

In 1969 Bennett proposed that Canada be divided into economic regions rather than political units; argued that the constitution which gave stated powers to the provinces and the rest to the federal government should be reversed ie. the federal government should concern itself only with matters of international and inter-provincial importance, such as defence, inter-provincial shipping, treaties, and foreign affairs. Money and everything else were to go to the provincial government's control and all direct taxes should go to the provincial government, not the federal government (Neering, 1981:49).

Bennett had assumed power in 1952 as Premier of British Columbia and remained in power for eight terms until he was defeated by the NDP candidate David Barrett in 1972. During his tenure, W.A.C. Bennett embarked on an ambitious program of mega-projects: road, bridge and dam building. He successfully challenged the federal government's

policy of not exporting power to the United States and built a small empire based on resource exploitation and massive infrastructure projects. It is not surprising, then, that his attitude toward the CWA was one of suspicion. According to Shanks (1983:194), “...the Okanagan was but a single case in a general longer running constitutional disagreement respecting water resources between Canada and British Columbia which surfaced during the introduction of the Canada Water Act”.

As early as 1967, W.A.C. Bennett argued that regarding water management and pollution control, the federal government should mainly concern itself with research and improvement of technology and Woodrow (quoted in Shanks, 1983:195) reports, when the substance of the CWA was made public, the then-Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, Mr. Ray Williston, reacted angrily:

...the province of British Columbia, through its Minister of Lands, Forests, and Water Resources, Mr. Ray Williston, described the federal proposals as another Ottawa intrusion into the provincial field but indicated that his province would cooperate with the federal government, although only in the manner as “when someone points a revolver at your head”.

On October 29, 1969, the Okanagan Water Basin Study Agreement was signed by the provincial and federal governments. It was conceived to be a two million dollar framework plan study which was to be cost shared on a 50/50 basis. Initially it was scheduled for completion by October 1973, but this date was extended to March 31, 1974 by mutual consent (Shanks, 1983). Central to this Study was to be the specific consideration of the Shuswap diversion scheme which had been studied by the provincial government. The Shuswap diversion decision was to be delayed, pending the outcome of the federal-provincial study.

Public Involvement in the CWA

According to Depape (1985), the federal government expected that comprehensive river basin planning studies and their subsequent implementation would be the centre-piece for federal-provincial cooperation in water resources. Pearse et al. (1985) indicate that public involvement was formally provided for by the CWA's first clause quoted above and that this was a result of both a political climate which was receptive to innovations and the demand for public participation which “emerged with unprecedented force in the 1960s” (1985:175). Sewell's commentary supports Depape's conclusion:

Two social movements in the mid-1960s and the early 1970s, concerned with the environment on the one hand and with the involvement of the public in planning and policy making, on the other, also had an impact. These movements made it clear that the social context of resource management was changing and that its institutions would have to be altered too. More attention would need to be paid to the environmental effects of resource development, and a more direct role would need to be given to the public at large in shaping policies...

The social-political context necessitated the inclusion of the public in environmental decision making and this inclusion was officially provided for within the very CWA itself. Consequently, it was necessary to include a public involvement component in the Okanagan Water Basin Study in order to fulfill the terms of the Canada-British Columbia Joint Agreement. Public involvement was to be a significant component of the project of creating a comprehensive planning document which would lead to planning for the Okanagan River Basin.

The Okanagan Water Basin Study: From Conflict to Consent

The official report of the OKWBS Public Involvement Program, written by G.W. Sinclair, the final PIP Coordinator, Technical Supplement XI (1974:15), reports that while there had been several initiatives to alleviate deteriorating water quality in the Okanagan Water Basin prior to 1969 (including the formation of a “Kelowna and District Executive Committee for Okanagan Pollution Control”, and a “Okanagan Watershed Pollution Control Council”), it was a concern for water quantity which prompted the OKWBS:

Water quantity supply in the Okanagan was also becoming a local concern, both to the Provincial Government and the Okanagan Chambers of Commerce. There was expressed doubt as to the availability of sufficient supplies of water to meet all future demands including agricultural, municipal and industrial uses, plus fishery requirements. Out of this, the Okanagan Water Resources Committee was formed in 1968, *basically to support a diversion scheme. Already in 1967 an anti-diversion response had led to the formation of the Shuswap-Thompson River Research and Development Association (STRADA)* [my emphasis].

While these events remain only in the memories of a few people, the discussions which I had with officials at the Ministry of Environment indicated that the OKWBS did not initially include public involvement in the terms of reference. According to O’Riordan (1976:179), the initial Canada-BC OKWBS agreement’s commitment to public involvement was rather vague, indicating only that “...the comprehensive plan be truly responsive to the wishes of the people for which it is designed”. O’Riordan (ibid:180) explains that while studies in hydrology, limnology, economics and fisheries biology were launched immediately according to well-tested techniques and approaches, the public involvement program “...floundered because of lack of practical precedent in program development” and additionally that the Consultative Board (which was overseeing the OKWBS) was reluctant to formally include public involvement because it did not wish “...to accept a

program with which it had no experience and over which it had little direct control” (ibid:180) This decision was changed when STRAADA powerfully opposed the diversion of water from the Shuswap-Thompson Rivers to the Okanagan Water Basin.

The events of that time appear to support this. Interestingly, Sinclair's final report implies that the first major public participation effort occurred as a major public meeting in Salmon Arm. In fact, the Vancouver Sun (“Shuswap-Thompson Rally Opposes Water Diversion”) reports on November 7, 1970, that the meeting of over 500 members of the public was initiated by residents of the Shuswap-South Thompson River region who met to unanimously oppose diversion of their water to the Okanagan. At the meeting, Kamloops Provincial Court Judge Stewart Van Male told the Consultative Board of the Federal-Provincial Okanagan Water Study Agreement (represented by Dr. A.T. Prince, Co-Director of the Consultative Board and Director of the Federal Inland Waters Branch; and M.C. Marr, Chief Engineer for the Provincial Water Investigations Branch) that there was “...general mistrust about what the governments are doing and there appears to be misunderstanding about what's going on”. Prince was reported as replying that if the Study finds that “...an insufficient supply of water for [the Okanagan Valley's] growth and expansion, then the diversion of water from the outside must be examined.”

It is possible that the Shuswap water diversion to the Okanagan was proposed to appease the economically-stressed agriculturalists in W.A.C. Bennett's home riding. This would explain why Mr. Barrett employed the controversy to gain support in light of the upcoming Provincial election. On May 20, 1971, he visited the Shuswap area and the Vancouver Sun reports (“Shuswap Diversion Won't Be Solution”) that he appeased the

people of the Shuswap by supporting them in their “...fight to the bitter end” against the proposed diversion.

Although he does not provide a time-line of when the official public involvement program began, O’Riordan (ibid:181) explains that the Public Involvement Program developed incrementally and that, initially, emphasis was placed on more conventional techniques such as public meetings, public seminars and questionnaires. Public meetings were held in each major community, attracting over 600 written and oral statements which indicated wide-ranging concerns, such as: the need to focus on maintaining a high quality environment, the need for stricter controls on economic development, support for agricultural and tourist industries, the need for a valley wide planning authority, need to improve lake water quality, and the need to control consumptive uses of water in order to decrease conflicts with non-consumptive users (ie. recreation, fishing) (ibid:182).

Next, a “broad cross-section of the community” was surveyed to assess whether the statements delivered at the public meetings were representative of the “public at large”. O’Riordan (ibid:182) reports that “...in most respects, the survey results backed up the opinions expressed at these meetings” and that “...although respondents were generally aware of water resource problems, in most cases they had not communicated these concerns to any level of government” and that many people indicated that they felt alienated from the government planners which was associated with a “...general distrust of the planning process and lack of optimism concerning the Okanagan study” .

With reference to Fairclough's discourse analysis which examines, among other things, “casuality” (ie. who is representing what to happen, who is represented as doing

what to whom), it is interesting to note that two years into the Study, a consultant was hired and "...given a broad mandate to communicate with all public interest groups identified earlier in the program" . The Vancouver Sun reports on September 24, 1971, that W.J. (Bill) Horswill, a former hostel director for Inner City Services in Vancouver, had been appointed to the staff as the "Public Involvement Leader". The Study Director, Murray Thomson, was quoted as saying that Horswill's job would be to "...ensure that plans for the management of water resources in the Okanagan Basin are consistent with the desires of the inhabitants of the area". However, this first attempt at the formal inclusion of public involvement was not totally successful. According to O'Riordan (1976:183):

He quickly set to work identifying and mobilising local groups, familiarizing them with the technical issues and assisting them to conceptualize regional goals. After nine months or so it became clear that he was no longer facilitating the process but was manipulating public opinion. This view was shared by many citizens and local press as well as the Okanagan Basin personnel. Consequently his contract was not renewed (ibid:188).

In another article "The Public Involvement Program in the Okanagan Water Basin Study", O'Riordan provides details on how this consultant was "manipulating public opinion":

By the spring of 1972 it became obvious that the program was far from meeting its objectives. The program coordinator began to identify with specific interest groups, notably those with conservationist and strong environmental philosophies. Consequently, public opinion was being manipulated, broad areas of community interests were ignored, and the media were not being utilized to inform the unorganized sectors of the community. Furthermore, there was a real danger that the technical planning studies would forge so far ahead of public awareness that public feedback would be sporadic and ill-informed (ibid:183).

In O'Riordan's articles, the first PIP Coordinator is represented as having "caused" the manipulation of community response. Yet, it could be possible that the episteme could

not allow the knowledges which Horswill facilitated to be considered as “legitimate knowledges”. In a report by the Vancouver Sun, (“Okanagan Study Team Resigns”, March 11, 1972), Horswill is reported to have been fired for “political reasons” after less than seven months on the job and on April 19, 1972, Horswill is quoted as saying that he was fired because “...he was too successful at his job and had aroused public participation so much [that] the committed didn't like it”.

The Consultative Board (represented by Jon O'Riordan of the Water Management Service Department of the Environment) said that Horswill's contract was terminated because “...[t]he Board felt it needed someone other than Mr. Horswill to provide a well-managed and representative program. The present program is not as well-managed as it might be. It was not being tackled the way we wanted”, claiming that the program was “...slanted towards unorganized groups concerned with the environment in general...” (quoted in Vancouver Sun, March 11, 1972). The choice of the second PIP facilitator is also interesting. The Vancouver Sun Reports on October 23, 1972, that the Okanagan Basin Study hired “...an Edmonton public relations officer to involve the Okanagan Valley residents in the water-use study program”(“Valley Residents to Give Views”).

Apparently, it was necessary to marginalize the knowledges which Horswill's public involvement program produced, by claiming that he manipulated public opinion. It is also interesting to note that this major shift in the PIP was downplayed in the formal report. In Sinclair's Technical Supplement XI does not report any significant “changing of the guard” or disjuncture within the PIP process, other than noting that:

[I]n the spring of 1972, the Study again reviewed its position regarding public involvement....The Study began to perceive a need to continue expanding its energies towards gaining broader public input. A “Public Participation Pro-

gram” was established in mid 1971 and a consultant was retained from the fall of 1971 through to the Spring of 1972”. He and his staff devoted several months to develop a more “broadly based public involvement program (Sinclair, 1974: 16).

This passage reveals two interesting uses of language. The “nominalization” (Fairclough, 1989:49) of “the Study” leads the reader to assume that all the people involved in the Study were unified on the decision that the way the public had been involved for the previous two years was inadequate or inappropriate. The term “*broader* public input” implies that the input which the public had been giving up until that point was biased and not representative of the population. The way this passage is written effectively obscures the fact that there had been a consultant prior to the one hired Fall of 1972 and it implies that the public participation program only began with the new consultant. This word choice (Fairclough’s “content”) favours an interpretation which represents the public involvement process as a smooth, consensual process; implying that all of the public were unified in their responses.

A subsequent passage reveals more about who had been involved in the first public involvement effort:

It was felt that two major components needed to be inserted into any further effort at gaining public input to the planning process: There was a need to gain feed-back from a *wider cross-section of the community than just the environmentally aware groups and individuals*. As well, there was a *need for more discipline* within the process, it was necessary that the public input part of the Study meet Study deadlines in order that the thoughts of the citizenry could be integrated with the technical reports at the most appropriate times and stages (Sinclair, 1974:17 emphasis mine)

In this passage, it is the use of the passive tense which neatly removes the actors and decision-makers from the process and implies that there was consensus for the decisions taken. This passage reveals that the first public involvement efforts strove to include environmentally aware groups and individuals. This begs the question “was it inappropriate

ate to include environmentally aware people in a public involvement program which was focused on environmental (water) issues in the Okanagan?” and leads the interpreter to wonder who the second public involvement facilitator believed would be more representative. The second passage also indicates that the second consultant was expected to manage a *more controlled* public involvement process than had previously occurred. The use of the term “discipline” is particularly interesting in light of Foucault’s work which explores discipline as a method of social control.

What types of “inappropriate public involvement activities” did the first PIP Coordinator engage in? From the way that Technical Supplement XI is written, it is difficult to surmise at what stage the first public participation consultant became involved, but some of the activities which occurred before the second consultant was retained are recorded in Technical Supplement XI (Sinclair, 1974:16):

Six public meetings in Vernon, Penticton, Osoyoos, Enderby and Princeton during Spring/Summer 1971 which attracted almost 600 people, plus 110 written and oral briefs.

Early 1971: Participation Seminar held in Penticton

Spring/Summer 1971 survey undertaken to “identify major public interest groups in the valley to note the prerepresentativeness [sic] of their membership and their potential involvement in the Study.

Fall of 1971 “systematic questionnaire survey of a cross-section of Okanagan households was undertaken”.

Selected conclusions from these efforts were included. However, it is difficult to distinguish between conclusions which the first consultant reported and the conclusions which the second consultant selected. The presentation of the process of public involvement is not chronological, it merges the prior to mid 1971 with the subsequent efforts to include public participation.

Nevertheless, the introduction to Technical Supplement XI clearly indicates what kind of public participation was to be avoided:

Certain protests may reflect a rather narrow band of the social spectrum. As well some political decision may only affect certain people...Ad hoc presentations to the government on specific issues, while beneficial, may not reflect the interests of the majority of the community (ibid:9).

The post-mid 1971 public involvement program (PIP) is presented in Technical Supplement XI as being a more representative process than the public involvement efforts which preceded it. In this Technical Supplement, the author (second consultant G.W. Sinclair) suggests that his methods successfully involved a representative public in the OKWBS. Yet, at the same time, Sinclair is quick to point out that anyone evaluating his PIP should have “realistic” expectations:

In developing any mechanism that is directed at getting as extensive a degree of involvement as possible, realistic objectives must always be borne in mind. Success of the mechanism should not be evaluated so much in the number of people involved as in the opportunity for involvement and the degree to which those that are involved represent a wide cross-section of the community. Sheer numbers can be deceiving: certain issues might on the surface affect only one group, yet affect it to such an extent that almost all those initially involved would respond. Any solutions these people might propose would be biased and , more importantly, it is likely that without the involvement [sic] of a greater cross-section, many issues or different perspectives on the same issue would be overlooked (ibid:9).

Conception and Evolution of the Public Involvement Program

According to the Main Report of the Consultative Board written as part of the Canada-British Columbia Okanagan Basin Agreement (published in March, 1974), it was recognised from the inception of the study that “...planning cannot be undertaken in a vacuum, insulated from the residents of the Okanagan Basin” (v). The 1974 report is explicit in noting that the OKWBS’s commitment to facilitating public involvement was

especially significant because previously "...public input to the planning and management of water and related resources in the Okanagan, as elsewhere in Canada, appears to have occurred in a rather haphazard basis" (ibid: 271). Consequently, the Public Involvement Program which the Okanagan Study pioneered was presented as both "...an experiment in techniques as well as a real attempt to gain public participation in the planning process". Sinclair writes (1974:13) that the purpose of the Study was also to "...be a pilot project for the testing of theories regarding involving the public in planning".

Although this is the "official" knowledge which is presented in the OKWBS documents. Timothy O'Riordan suggests that inclusion of the public in the study had not been planned for. O'Riordan (1976:182) writes that public participation in the Study was incorporated "hesitatingly" and that while the senior government officials permitted the inclusion of public involvement in the original terms of reference, they did not consider it to be of major importance:

[The senior officials] initially assigned it a low budget, intended to be used for public presentation of technical data and final recommendations. The original concept of public participation appeared to be a well-meaning form of public relations.

This approach to public involvement in the OKWBS is reflected in the arguments for public participation which are found in "Chapter One: The Case for Public Involvement in Planning" in the Public Involvement in the Planning Process (Technical Supplement XI):

Many citizens need a good deal of education themselves as to the complexities of dealing with modern society in general. Therefore, any mechanism designed to improve the public's input channels to the planning process should also contain provisions to improve the channels of education to the public....Planning exercises can become fairly involved in regard to some of the more technical aspects. Often decisions are required to determine the viability or acceptability of certain research findings within these areas. In

such technical matters public involvement is not crucial in terms of input because few members of the community will have the technical competence to understand all the intricacies. But the public must be education [sic] to be aware of the kinds of problems faced, or the scope of potential solutions (Sinclair, 1974: 8).

This discussion of the necessity to educate the public calls to mind Foucault's construct of power/knowledge. Educating the public involves creating knowledge. This knowledge, the metaphors, the use of language and syntax, the framing of the discourse all influence the "public's" response. Wynn (quoted in Richardson et al., 1993:21) explains that "...public opinion is open to persuasion by experts and expert discourses...language, including technical analysis can tacitly guide people into seeing the world in certain ways". In this way, textual discourses in public involvement programs are used to build public support for predetermined decisions. This use of information is discussed explicitly in Technical Supplement XI (Sinclair, 1974:9):

...once a layman begins to develop an understanding for the way a technical expert must operate and once a layman begins to communicate with a technical expert, that layman often will begin to develop a sense of identity with the expert at least to the point of assigning to him the right to make technical decisions. This is, in the end, what the technician likely desires anyway; however, by going through a public involvement process whereby the individual is given a reasonable basic education in field any significant degree of suspicion or ignorance is removed and replaced with understanding and support. If continually nurtured, this understanding and support can be strengthened and can become a valuable aid for the civil service in a wide range of activities.

This passage elucidates one way in which power was mediated through the creation of knowledge and legitimized discourses in the OKWBS PIP. The technical experts were assigned a powerful role and occupied a subject position of authority. While the next chapter will more intensively examine the power/knowledge dynamics inherent to the information-out component of the Public Involvement Study, the next section will outline

and discuss the way that the second PIP Coordinator structured the public involvement process.

The second public participation facilitator, G.W. Sinclair, adopted what he termed "...an interest-based planning model" in order to implement "...mechanisms both for the organizing and structuring of public input and the development and execution of community education" (ibid:17). This process had two major components: (1) to seek out a cross-sectional representation of the community and to involve this selected group in an intensive participation process which included evaluating data, reviewing alternatives and developing a comprehensive package of recommendations which could provide a framework for future planning and (2) to educate as much of the community as possible about the problems and complexities of present water management and to enlist the help of the community to find solutions to those problems (ibid:17).

The "interest-based planning model" PIP's terms of reference were drawn up in the Spring of 1972. The stated goal of the PIP was "...to report to the Okanagan Study Committee the preferences of the Okanagan Valley residents for water management based on their educated consideration of the economic, social and environmental implication of various alternatives" (ibid:19). This goal was to be achieved by meeting three objectives:

To assimilate the results of various technical studies conducted under the Okanagan Basin Agreement.

To acquire, through cooperative involvement with the evaluation team, a thorough understanding of water management alternatives for the Okanagan Basin.

To develop positive interaction between the valley residents and the Study Committee such that the residents become meaningfully involved in the

Study, while the Committee becomes aware of the perspectives of the residents (ibid:19).

The method by which the PIP was to achieve these objectives was to occur in four steps (ibid:20/21):

Acquiring technical information from Study personnel and Task Reports.

Disseminating technical information to the public (“information out”). Mediums included: public news media, published documents, audio-visual aids and seminar-workshops.

Receiving responses from the public (“information in”). Mediums included: open line media programs, speaking engagements with question/answer sessions, postage paid response postcards.

Communicating results of the public feedback to the Study Committee.

According to Sinclair (ibid:22), the “...core element to interest-based planning is the Task Force—a grouping of a cross-sectional representation of the community’s lifestyles”. This cross-section was drawn from “various interest groups in the Okanagan Valley”. In this context, the term “interest group” was defined as including “voluntary organizations, private corporations, governmental agencies, political structures, ad hoc committees, and other identifiable interests within a ‘community’ including unaffiliated citizens” (ibid:20). In the OKWBS, the various interest groups included:

- local political structures (ie. municipal council, regional districts)
- the Okanagan Basin Water Board
- irrigation districts
- service organizations (ie. Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.)
- agriculturalists (ie. orchardists, cattlemen, dairymen, vegetable growers)
- conservationists-ecologists (wildlife associations, fish & game clubs, park groups)

- Chambers of Commerce
- industrialists (ie. manufacturers, mining and logging, food processing)
- unions (ie. glass workers, wood workers, etc)
- tourist associations (ie. hotels, motels, campgrounds)
- professional groups (ie. engineers, planners, teachers)
- religious institutions
- interested, non-affiliated citizens

The membership for the task forces was selected by the PIP Coordinator who chose “...one person from each of the identifiable interest groups, including the political structures...this meant that a task force would have about a dozen potential members, and then to provide a bit more balance a couple of members would be selected from the community at large” (Sinclair, 1974:24). Four task forces were chosen to select geographic regions within the Valley, a fifth task force contained technical experts, a sixth. local politicians and finally Task Force Seven which was comprised of representatives from all six Task forces and whose mandate was to “...pull the views of the entire valley together” (O’Riordan, 1977:187) to develop specific recommendations.

Task forces only allowed a small fraction of the Okanagan “community” to participate directly in the planning process and because “not everyone could be a member of a task force even if they wanted to” (Sinclair, 1974:26), a public information program was developed to “...educate the general public on major study findings, to secure as much response as possible and to ensure that the task force recommendations did in fact reflect the preferences of a majority of residents” (O’Riordan, 1976:178). Seminars, workshops and informal visiting were the forums used to collect public input. These events were created because “...since there was not the opportunity for every organization, who might be initially interested, to participate on a task force [so] it was necessary that the oppor-

tunities be made available to allow these associations of people the opportunity [to contribute their input to the planning process" (Sinclair, 1974:28).

The Process to Facilitate "Public Participation"

The Public Involvement Program relied on the news media for the majority of its "public participation". News coverage, public service announcements and advertising provided the three major communication channels (Sinclair, 1974:26). In addition, background information was synthesized and summarized for public consumption and distributed to people who were listed on comprehensive mailing lists (ibid:27). Other public involvement activities included: an "interest-card", "info-locales", "white papers", a "zenith line", speaking engagements, school activities, hearings and "public booths".

The "interest card" was a postage paid postcard which was sent to all the people on the PIP mailing list and distributed at PIP speaking engagements from September to December 1972 (ibid:38). These provided "direct access" without forcing the reader to prepare a "brief". The "interest cards" provided a vehicle for a quick notation of beliefs, ideas and questions. According to Sinclair (ibid:39), "...this was the way the vast majority of respondents did reply".

"Info-locales" was the name given to drop-off points for Study information-out documents. These locations "...where people had to sit and wait (eg. banks, barbershops, waiting rooms)" (ibid:39) were judged to be successful because of "...the increasing numbers of people who wished to be added to the PIP mailing lists and by questions being raised at the PIP speaking engagements".

“White papers” were newsletters which “...described through pictures and words, the scope of the Study and the major questions that needed to be answered, to guide the planners as to local preferences regarding potential management options” (ibid:39). These were four page papers which enabled the reader to “...focus his [sic] thoughts on specific components of the problems involved in water management [and to] appreciate the many aspects that needed to be considered in any attempt to build a comprehensive plan for better water resource management” (39). The “white papers” were distributed to all people on the PIP mailing lists, to info-locales, and at PIP speaking engagements and school presentations. These publications also left some space for brief replies by readers:

While several groups did avail themselves of the opportunity to forward their collective views on the issues raised, it was mainly individuals who took time to send their replies to the PIP office. Some found there was not enough room on the White Paper and therefore prepared letters outlining the responses they felt to be important...these responses were made available to the Task Forces (ibid:39/40).

The “zenith line” was established to permit anyone in the Okanagan Valley to call the PIP office toll-free. People used this number to learn of upcoming events and also to provide “...their ideas or reflections on what the future should be. When people did which to present ideas or questions, the PIP staff attempted to note as accurately as possible, a synopsis of the conversation” (ibid:40).

Speaking engagements and school visits frequently included question/answer sessions in order to provide feed-back mechanisms and the hearings provided “...an opportunity for the more vocal people to come and discuss with PIP those issues which they felt needed special attention” (ibid:41). There were a series of eleven public hearings scheduled throughout the Valley in May of 1973 after the majority of Task Force Seven’s

recommendations had been completed. While these hearings were scheduled to give an input mechanism to "...any person who disagreed with the published tentative recommendations of Task Force Seven...most of the individuals who attended the hearings expressed agreement with the thrust of the recommendations and raised only minor disagreement with either wording or priority in certain particular cases" *ibid*:41).

The "public booths" were information and interaction booths which were set up in the summer of 1972 during major public activities such as the Kelowna Regatta, the Armstrong Fair and the Penticton Grape and Harvest Festival. These "ad hoc" interactions "...gave people a chance to talk to PIP officials about their feeling concerning water management or the Study or the trade-offs between economics and the environment" (*ibid*:41).

In addition to these methods of public involvement in the PIP, technical reports and background working papers were made available through the information-locales and mailed to individuals upon request. In addition, ten "data bulletins" were created by particular research divisions within the Study. These "data bulletins" were brief technical summaries which "...portrayed both pictorially and by the written work, major points of concern or significance to the future decision making" (*ibid*:45). However, the "technical information quandry" became an issue with these bulletins as "...there was some concern voiced in the community as to the degree to which layman's language was utilized in these documents, and some felt that they were still too technical" (*ibid*:45).

All of the "information-in" which these methods facilitated, was then "synthesized" by the PIP Personnel and communicated to Task Force Seven: "...the various ideas,

questions, and proposed solutions from the public were brought together, and channelled into the Study in the hopes of achieving the common goal of a preferred plan for the development and management of water resources in the Okanagan” (ibid:46). The Public Involvement Program Coordinator explained that the process of synthesis was necessarily “subjective”:

The Okanagan Basin Study’s PIP found that a good deal of subjectivity was necessary to translate the feelings of the public into a language the technical people could understand and vice-versa....Evaluation cannot be done without some subjectivity. The important thing is that those people involved in such integration processes do have the confidence not only of the public but also of the technical personnel...the technical experts in water quality, quantity, limnology, socio-economics or whatever must be willing to submit to the Public Involvement staff their writings, their thoughts, and their subjectivities in order that these too may be checked and evaluated for the benefit of all concerned with the study (ibid:45/46).

These comments explicitly show that the information which the public submitted was processed before Task Force Seven received it. On one hand, this appears to be harmless enough—common sense tells us that the members of Task Force Seven could not possibly manage to absorb all of the public input through all of the channels discussed above. However, upon closer examination, it appears that the role of the PIP Coordinator was much more than a facilitator of messages, rather his role also took on additional responsibilities. He became a “filter” and “consensus builder” not only between “the public” and Task Force Seven, but also between the technical “experts” and the “public”. The above quote implies that this is the proper role of a public involvement officer, to edit and sculpt the writings of the “technical experts” in order to prepare them for “public” consumption. Thus, this was one means by which access to the public involvement discourse could be rigidly controlled and the creation of “knowledge” could occur.

Language to Influence: Imprecision, “Community” and Filtering

Fairclough's work (1989) suggests that in order to examine the exercise of power as mediated through discourse, one may distinguish three types of constraints: contents (on what is said and done), relations (the social relations people enter into in discourse) and subjects (the subject positions people occupy). The disqualification of the first PIP Coordinator's work as non-representative indicates that the OKWBS PIP had at least one clear incidence of constraint on contents. The creation of technical documents and the presentation of technical personnel as “experts” provides a clear example of constraints on both relations and subjects (ie. technical information was separated from its underlying subjective values and presented as “truth”, the technical experts were presented as those who held “legitimate truths”). In addition, this chapter has provided examples of how the OKWBS PIP was strictly controlled and how the final report represented the process as legitimate through use of “causality”, “nominalization” and “content”.

In addition to these examples of how power is exercised through discourse, the final technical report's writing style provides a study in how power can create and mold official knowledge. Throughout the report, language is employed in a manner which obscures vital information about the PIP process. For example, Sinclair's liberal use of passive verb tenses effectively removes the actors from the act and “smooths” over questions of identity and process [egs. “...communication channels were developed” (ibid:29) , “...task forces were not intended to be environmental study groups” (ibid:47), “...a common agenda was developed” (ibid:25)]. In these examples, decision-makers are removed from the scene and the reader is left trying to understand what actually occurred.

In addition, the author's use of adjectives lead to imprecision: "serious input" (ibid:99), "more individuals" (ibid:89), "many groups" (ibid:27) "adequate time", "certain issues" (ibid:9), "...the layman should not be rushed unless it is absolutely necessary" (ibid:97), "as much of the community as possible" (ibid:17), "numerous community happenings" (ibid:21), "progressive nature" (ibid:25) are all vague terms. What is "serious input"?—Is it to be understood as opposed to "frivolous input"? Numerous, adequate, more, many...these adjectives replace hard facts and actual numbers and obscure what really occurred. Either the PIP personnel did not keep proper documentation of their efforts, or the author is being deliberately vague. Regardless of the motivation, the result of this use of language is a report which is difficult to access and to understand—a strange sub-text for a Public Involvement report, if the "medium is the message".

In addition to Sinclair's use of language, the "public" identity, as reported in Sinclair's report is, to say the least, a *fluid* construct. When the first Public Involvement Co-ordinator included too many "publics" who had expressed a strong environmental perspective, the "Okanagan Basin personnel" decided that he was "manipulating public opinion" and dismissed him (O'Riordan, 1977). The incoming Public Involvement Coordinator, G.W. Sinclair, revamped the entire program to represent a more "legitimate" public. The process centred around the responses of task forces which were created by G.W. Sinclair and which were not open to the "general public".

One interpretation of why this "changing of the guard" occurred could be based on the context of the Okanagan Water Basin Study itself. As summarized at the beginning of this chapter, the Study was a response to the demand of some influential groups (Cham-

bers of Commerce, business groups) that water be diverted from the Shuswap Lake system into the Okanagan Water Basin. It appears that the first PIP Coordinator engaged with the “reactive publics” (STRAADA) and in so doing, rather than diffusing conflict, he created more controversy. This would present a problem for the study organizers who had planned for public involvement to be an exercise in benign “public relations” (ibid, 1977).

Sinclair does address “protests” in the introduction to his report and indirectly gives his rationale for excluding “protesters” from the taskforce membership:

Certain protests may reflect a rather narrow band of the social spectrum. As well some political decisions may only affect certain people. In any case, political leaders should make every effort possible to gather as wide a consensus of ideas as possible before making any major decision. With such efforts the critical facet is the attempt to gather the opinions of a reasonable cross-section of society. Ad hoc presentations to the government on specific issues, while beneficial, may not reflect the interests of the majority of the community. It is necessary to develop a mechanism capable of bringing together and organizing public input from as broad a cross-section of the community as possible and channelling this into governmental planning. In other words, a structure must be introduced, whereby public involvement becomes an integral part of planning rather than the result of sporadic ad hoc efforts of the group protest (Sinclair, 1974:9).

While this diplomatically written paragraph appears to be focused on adequately representing the public's interest, the “public” seems to refer only to *some members* of the public. The sub-text could be interpreted to read “protesters are malcontents who, although vocal, do not represent the interests of the community. It is necessary to avoid their influence by engaging a majority of other community members to balance out their voice”. It could also be interpreted to read “Okanagan Water decisions should be made by people from the Okanagan. People in the Shuswap have been influencing the government in ways which will affect people in the Okanagan adversely”.

This would also explain why, despite the importance of this study to the “publics” of the Shuswap, the second PIP Coordinator’s task forces virtually stop at Vernon (see map p.147). This geographic boundary effectively excluded all of the “public” in Salmon Arm from the PIP process. In addition, the majority of Task Force members who were chosen by Sinclair represented business, agricultural or political interests.

In the introduction to his report, Sinclair’s commentary seems almost defensive. He has anticipated criticisms of his public involvement program which point to the small number of people who contributed directly to the “public’s response”:

In developing any mechanism that is directed at getting as extensive a degree of involvement as possible, realistic objectives must always be borne in mind. Success of the mechanism should not be evaluated so much in the number of people involved as in the opportunity for involvement and the degree to which those that are involved represent a wide cross-section of the community. Sheer numbers can be deceiving: certain issues might on the surface affect only one group, yet affect it to such an extent that almost all those initially involved would respond. Any solutions these people might propose would be biased and, more importantly, it is likely that without the involvement of a greater cross-section, many issues or different perspectives on the same issue would be overlooked. Representation from all “interest” areas should be sought on as equal a basis as is reasonable, or feasible, in order to prevent any “stacking the deck”. Equalizing the representation should ensure that no one need feel it is a minority and therefore should keep quiet (Sinclair, 1974: 9).

This selection appears to be speaking to those groups from the Shuswap who had galvanized resistance to the water diversion proposals. In it, Sinclair represents organized resistors as a negative force which groups together in order to bias decisions in their favour. The “public” is presented in opposition to these reactive groups.

The democratic process itself is invoked to legitimize Sinclair’s PIP process by explaining that the logic of maximum participation violates the inherent rights of individuals in a democracy:

Another reason why it is important not to be concerned with numbers alone when establishing a formalized effort at public involvement is that, once begun, no goal would be acceptable until 100% of the population was participating. It would be completely unrealistic in a democratic society where each citizen has, among several basic rights, the right not to get involved, to remain apart from the rest of society (ie. one doesn't have to be a joiner). Individual citizens must retain the right to choose those activities in the society in which they will invest their time and talent. This does not mean any citizen should be ignored—all must be given the choice to at least keep informed, but pressure to participate should not be applied too heavily...(Sinclair, 1974:10).

As the appeals for democracy often contain convincing justification for public involvement, Sinclair again invokes the democratic process. In the following passage, “special interest groups” take on a sombre tone and are clearly not the same “special interest groups” which are integral to Sinclair’s PIP:

...It should be noted that not even in elections throughout Canada is there 100% turnout and so, technically, a politician must operate from a support base that is less than total. On certain occasions, when there are more than two candidates contesting a particular electoral race, it is entirely feasible that the winning candidate will not gather even 50% of the votes. While it is regrettable that more people do not exercise their franchise, the governmental system does not cease to function because all the voters haven't been heard from. At the same time, there is the question as to what extent a cross-section of his [sic] constituency supported the winning candidate. Numerous examples could be cited where a “dark horse” candidate won an election because two popular candidates split the vote and the special interests behind the “dark horse” were just sufficient to give this candidate a plurality...(Sinclair, 1974:10).

Again, this passage reads as a defensive justification for an “interest-based planning process” which relies on a non-representative public for its input. In order to understand the structure of the OKWBS PIP, this chapter has outlined the context and the structure of the Okanagan Water Basin Study PIP and it has presented an interpretation of why the process may have evolved as it did, how the terms “public” and “special interest groups” were used to legitimize some forms of input, while marginalizing others. In addition, it

has shown how Sinclair employed the classic “technical information quandry” in order to position himself as the arbitrator/interpreter of knowledge. Finally, it has demonstrated how Sinclair’s use of language effectively removed the actors from the actions and left the reader with an imprecise understanding of specifically what occurred.

Chapter Five seeks to determine who had access to and control of the Public Involvement Process discourses. Deconstructing the actual operationalization of the PIP, it relies heavily on discourse analysis of study documents (including visual discourses: see figure p.147) and, transcripts in order to locate the boundaries of the discourse.

CHAPTER FIVE:

The “Public” in the Public Involvement Program

According to O’Riordan (1976:183), Sinclair’s “...interest-based planning model was developed to handle information exchange with the public in an efficient and concise manner.” This form of public involvement attempted to bring together members of a range of community interest groups in the form of “citizen task forces” (ibid:193). O’Riordan provides a concise summary of the preparation of these task forces:

Careful preparation was required in forming these task forces. At this point in the study, there were two major conflicts within the valley community. The first consisted of contrasting viewpoints and philosophies between various interest groups: chambers of commerce and conservationists; industrialists and recreationists; rod and gun clubs and land developers. The second was associated with competition between regions within the valley over economic development and provision of community services. Consequently, emphasis was placed on developing consensus between interest groups within each region. Once this was achieved, it was hoped that a single valley-wide task force could be established to spread consensus throughout the community (O’Riordan, 1976:184).

Six community task forces were formed. Four of these task forces were regionally based, one in each of the major economic units within the valley. One was a political task force, composed of elected officials from various municipalities and regional districts. The sixth was a technical group of locally-based federal and provincial government officials and other individuals with technical experience in water resource management in the basin (ibid:184).

Members of the technical and political task forces were selected through invitation, so that the most senior people or their designates were represented on these working committees. More democratic methods were used to choose members of the four regional task forces. Each major interest group was asked to select a member from its ranks to represent the group. Most responded readily to this approach, though in a few instances the program coordinator was forced to choose a member. A number of concerned individuals who had contacted the study office to offer their services were also invited to participate in these regional task forces. Finally, to ensure that a broad range of interest

groups were incorporated into these task forces, the program coordinator invited representatives of community interests not already covered by the organized groups or concerned individuals in a given region (O'Riordan, 1976:191).

Each member of the task forces was provided an agenda, *a 60 page document which presented a range of water management alternatives, together with supporting technical and economic data of a draft plan for 1980 levels of demand*. Task force members were asked to rank their preferences and identify any alternatives or data required to complete the 1980 framework plan. To provide time for review, each task force met once a month for a six-month period to discuss each of the five major components of the plan—economic growth projections, management of water quantity, water quality, municipal and industrial wastes and water-based recreation (ibid:185 emphasis mine).

The style, content and intent of these task force meetings contrasted sharply with the public meetings held earlier in the study. Whereas public meetings allowed individuals free reign to expand on personal philosophies and lobby groups to dominate, task force meetings were carefully designed to avoid dominance by any single interest group. In addition, *each member was required to read and digest the appropriate section of the agenda each month, and members who attempted to dominate the discussions with empty rhetoric tended to be disciplined by other members anxious to work through the subject matter within the allotted time constraints* (ibid:186 emphasis mine).

*This type of discipline was not suited to all members, and absenteeism grew during the six month period. Generally, the first few meetings were well attended, but attendance then dropped, and in three task forces, including the political task force, membership remained below 60 per cent throughout the remaining sessions....*Because of this absenteeism, the theory behind the interest-based planning model was not borne out in practice, for *there was seldom a complete spectrum of interests around the table...* (ibid:186 emphasis mine)

Task Force Seven became institutionalized as the major voice of the Okanagan community for developing a water management plan to 2020. The task force met seven times throughout the remainder of the study. Each meeting was attended by several study personnel who could provide information and answer technical questions (ibid:189).

Since the PIP report did not go into detail about the process of forming Task Force Seven, this section will rely heavily upon two of the intensive interviews which I undertook with three of the members of Task Force Seven. Because of the limited sample (in the intervening years, many people had moved away or passed away) and because of the issue of memory loss, this section is obviously limited in its ability to present firm conclusions. Nevertheless, the interviews did yield interesting information and they “disinterred” some of the knowledges which the report effectively subjugated. As noted earlier in Chapter Four, Sinclair’s official report of the Public Involvement Process is written to appear as though the process was smooth and that the “public” who were included, participated actively in the creation of the final recommendations. For example, the final report indicates that the members of Task Force Seven had all been members of previous task forces and it did not indicate that there had been any shifts in membership, other than to note that “alternates” were chosen to substitute when members could not attend meetings.

This obscures the extensive shifting of the membership reported by O’Riordan (see above) and that by the end of Task Force Seven’s program, “[a] process of attrition occurred and again only the hard-core ‘professional participants’ remained” (O’Riordan, 1977:193). One interview participant (member of Task Force Seven) could be described as a “professional participant”. He indicated to me that he had been chosen because he had been active in civic issues during the time of the OKWBS. With respect to whether the members of Task Force Seven had any difficulty creating consensus among themselves, this participant’s reply which indicates what kind of “special interests” were

represented on Task Force Seven:

...generally the goals and aspirations of the people were similar, partly because this was a first process and most of the people who had been chosen to sit on it were from irrigation districts or agricultural groups or citizens groups that were already structured. So most of the people who came, I would have said, were semi-professional, and working on that kind of process. There were very few people that had never been part of the process at all....So basically, there might be a difference of opinion where you thought the money should have been spent, but you really didn't have any input on where it was spent anyway, so those discussions were not applicable to what we were supposed to come up with...(interview a, 1995).

When asked to remember at what point he became involved in the PIP, this participant's response indicates the inclusion of Task Force Seven into the general Public Involvement Process:

The public participation program was the last part of the study. That was started about...within six months of the conclusion of the overall report. Now there are probably meetings prior, too. But I was not involved in those. I became involved in this group of people that...compiled our report to go into the overall study (ibid).

When asked how he became part of the study, this participant responded:

...I believe I was appointed...I believe it came from my involvement with the fruit industry is how my name came up and I got a phone call asking if I would serve. So basically my name was submitted to Glen Sinclair and I gather they chose people from the names that were submitted (ibid).

This corresponds to the information contained in Sinclair's report. The participant was likely chosen to serve on Task Force Seven because he represented the interests of the fruit industry. Perhaps of greater significance, though, is the indication that the process of participant selection was *closed*. From this participant's recollection, it appears as though the PIP Coordinator chose his representative public from a small group of referrals.

“Structure”: The Boundaries of Public Involvement

When asked how he reported back from Task Force Seven to the BC Fruit Growers Association, the interview participant's answer indicates a process which did not strive to include the public in any substantial manner. It appears, from the participant's comments, that the significant work of setting the parameters for the public discourse had already taken place before the public were involved:

Once or twice to board meetings, just stating what I was doing. Nothing in depth because there was very little that you could shape because by then all the tasks had been assigned and all the studies that were going to be done with monies from the Federal and Provincial government had been committed so this was really a tag-end, in my opinion, effort at public involvement....This process should have taken place prior to the assignment of the tasks, but it was done at the end of the study...I know the task force members that I talked to felt the same thing was that all of the studies had been arrived at and commissioned prior to our involvement (ibid).

The second respondent's comments also indicate that the parameters of the discourse had been defined prior to the public's involvement and correlate with those of the first respondent:

But the atmosphere was that we were concerned and very critical of a lot of things...the way the resources were being managed, the things that weren't being done, and the things that were left out of no efforts to include groundwater. Well, groundwater is very, very important, and to carry on this whole study without including that...(interview b, 1995).

However, it was not just the limited frame of reference which affected the discourses/recommendations of Task Force Seven, the process of facilitating the members' involvement was also tightly controlled. In response to my question “could you tell me how a typical meeting would run?”, the participant replied:

It was structured, it had to be structured...it was done by Glen Sinclair and an agenda would be sent to you prior to the meeting and all the material that could be assembled for you was sent to you at least a week in advance of the meeting...basically the process was quite structured because there was no other way in the short time span to do it any other way than to have it structured (interview a, 1995).

The first interview participant focused on different aspects of the meetings than the second respondent, but the second interviewee's impressions implied that there was not always an atmosphere of consensus and collaboration between the "public representatives" on Task Force Seven, and the technical/government experts. This tension was reflected within the structured agendas, however it was a major characteristic of the meetings which one Task Force Seven participant recollected:

...periodically, some representative would come up from the provincial government and they would sit and we would talk at them, and it was very interesting because my memory is that...they felt under attack because the way it would go, all the public participation people would be grouped together and then across from us would be the civil servants, preparing, you know, for the onslaught...They were technical people and these were local people who knew the history and geography and so on. And there was usually this atmosphere of confrontation....I think they felt quite a bit attacked (b, 1995).

While the first respondent had a more pragmatic understanding of the role of the technical experts at the Task Force Seven meetings, both respondents' comments speak to the power which the "technical experts" wielded at the meetings :

...you would have reports where they were on the Study. Particularly if you were discussing a particular topic...someone would be there to give you the technical advice of where and what was being studied, but not, you didn't have the opportunity to change the direction....They would give us a short report on what was being studied and the progress and why they were studying it...then we asked questions, but basically as laymen you don't have a lot of very scientific questions to ask...[and in response to my question "Did you find that you were able to give them feedback on things?" The respondent became slightly impatient] ...No, because I think as I've tried to say before, by the time we were involved, they were already halfway through their projects and they really weren't looking for public input on that aspect (a, 1995).

It is important to note that there is an inconsistency between the interview participants' recollection of the process, and the process as reflected in Sinclair's official report. While there is a record of "minutes" taken for Task Forces 1-6 which were based on information

presented in the publication “Whither Dost We Go?”, these minutes record only a comparison of decisions or statements without presenting any of the questions, presentation of information or discussion which led to the decisions. This way, in the final report, each Task Force is presented as maintaining a unified consensus.

However, it is possible to identify some of the parameters for the discussion by tracing back from the reported responses. For example, as recorded in the minutes of the third meeting of the Task Forces, the topics under consideration are: “basic general alternatives”, “comparison of environmental quality and economic growth”, “retention of orchard land and green belts for agriculture”, “setting aside areas for parks”, “halting of certain agricultural and urbanization practices that affect water quality”, “consideration of fluctuation [of water levels]”, “flood plain zoning”, “importance of water resource management to the future of the Okanagan”, “effects of economic growth on the quality of the environment”, “ranking of factors that affect economic growth and environmental quality”, “concern with regional differences”, “effects of poor environmental quality on attraction of clean industry and population”, “debate as to whether Okanagan economy growth during the past decade should be considered”, “acceptability of present quality of life”, “projections significant in affecting future environmental quality”, “potential means to altering the projections”, “sectors wherein growth should/should not be encouraged”, “sectors wherein improvements are/are not necessary”, “expenditures in energy and resources and money accruing to the Valley community”, “structure of the Okanagan economy”, “environmental value of orchards”, “small farm issue”, “significance of agricultural products”, “retail and service sectors”, and “growth patterns”. This represents

a significant amount of issues to cover in a meeting which lasted approximately two hours. It is difficult to understand how these issues could have been properly discussed and debated within such a short time frame; according to the interview responses, they were not.

Additionally, the “agenda” of the third meeting appears to have attempted to encompass much more than direct water issues, it is designed to enable the participants to engage in broad-minded, future visions, rather than “water specific”, action oriented recommendations. Writing of the PIP in the OKWBS, O’Riordan explains:

...to ask citizens to conceptualize notions, to provide broad policy statements and to dream up future designs is of course useful, and in some senses necessary. But it is also fairly harmless. No commitments need be made, no specific proposals need to be discussed, there is no substantive threat to the political process (1977: 170).

However, if the minutes of the third meeting appear to be too broad to be effective, the minutes of the fourth meeting seem to engage the participants in technical issues which the “public” normally wouldn’t be involved in.

The minutes of the fourth meeting record the participants making rather technical recommendations, such as the following which was agreed to by all task forces:

The main objectives for the tributaries management would be that consumptive use be programmed in for all tributaries. However, in Mission, Trout, and Equis, non consumptive uses (primarily the enhancement of fish spawning) should be programmed for as well. Moreover, due to potential multiple-use recreational activities in the Powers, Trepanier and Shorts Creek tributaries these creeks should be considered for consumptive and non consumptive uses also.

It is interesting to note the use of language in this selection, which is the language of technical experts and not that of the public. It seems, then, that the primary function of the Task Forces was to ratify the conclusions presented by the technical experts. This is

supported by an examination of the agenda sub-titles for the fourth meeting. These titles themselves follow a logical pattern, leading the participants to pre-determined conclusions. For example, the question: "Should we give consideration to the control of waste discharges to the ground?" is followed by "Do we consider it worthwhile to upgrade existing septic tank systems". The second question, implies that the answer to the first question should be "yes", otherwise the second question would be irrelevant . In addition to the information provided to the Task Force members, the dualism of economy vs. the environment was prominent. The following selection comes from the "Primary Agenda for Task Force Meetings: Whither Dost We Go?":

There are three basic general alternatives that we must answer initially as these provide the framework thrust for all of the options we may need to consider:

1.(a)Do we wish to continue the present pattern of life in the Okanagan into the future with either

(i)No concern for continued deterioration of the environment; or(ii)The provision that the existing environmental quality will not be allowed to deteriorate further?

(b) Do we wish to increase our rates of economic growth at the possible expense of our environment with, either

(i)No concern for the continued deterioration of the environment; or
(ii)The provision that the existing environmental quality will not be allowed to deteriorate further?

(c)Do we wish to increase the quality of our environment at a possible expense of economic growth with, either

(i)No concern for the possible deterioration in the economic situation; or
(ii)The provision that the existing economic situation would not be permitted to decline?

(d)Should we give consideration to increasing the quality of our environment

while at the same time enhancing economic growth?

2.How do you compare environmental quality and economic growth? (In other words, do you consider the one to be more important than the other? If so, in what ratio?) (Sinclair, 1974: 242).

First of all, by presenting these questions at the beginning of the material to be considered, the “dualism” of environment/economy sets the agenda for material to follow. In addition, by removing these questions from a particular context, they subtly lead the reader to agree to some principles which then lead to natural conclusions which can then be applied in specific contexts.

The participant would have to be rather “irksome” to choose option (i) in any of the questions. Who wants to sound like a person who has “no concern” for the environment or the economy? It is particularly unlikely that anyone who is actively participating in an involvement program would agree to a statement that implies that they are “not concerned” about two major forces shaping the Okanagan Valley. Consequently, the reader is likely to answer (ii) for every question. Once the reader has answered these questions in principle, the next section presents “a number of questions and alternatives...in generalized form” (ibid:242):

3.(a)How can orchard land be retained or green belts developed in the face of demands for land for sub-division?
What methods might be acceptable to present land owners?

Should large areas within the Basin be set aside for Provincial or National Parks to assist in maintaining or improving environmental quality? (242).

These questions imply that consensus has already been reached on some issues, such as the need for the preservation of orchard lands and that the issue that remains for the

public is to determine *how* to protect the fruitlands from economic forces. This follows logically from the participant's agreement that the overriding issue in question is one of "environment vs. economy" and that the environment must be preserved (it is also of interest to note here, the use of a constructed dualism in order to gain agreement). The third question which calls for the preservation of land through Park programs is again a question of principle—agreement has been pre-structured and consensus is likely...unless there is a specific instance wherein the actual complexities can be examined. A participant who has agreed that Park programs are worthy, in principle, will not likely risk incongruency by opposing the creation of a park (which allows *all* recreational activity, including motor-cross bikes) on land which is currently wilderness. The next set of questions is also vague and calls for agreement in principle, which would likely come under more intense scrutiny in application:

(b) Should certain agricultural practices be discontinued in areas where it is indicated that this will lead to a continuing decline in water quality?

Since the participant was led to answer in favour of "concern for environmental deterioration" (question 1), then the participant would likely answer question 3(b) affirmatively. Again, this question is vague and does not explain the specific types of "agricultural practices" nor does it even imply an impact on the agricultural practitioners. This type of agenda continues for approximately 40 pages. Perhaps the most interesting point to note is that the PIP did *not* attempt to generate consensus supporting the "economic interests" of the Okanagan Valley. The construction of "knowledge" appears to have been in the interest of the "environment". However, this approach of discussing issues in principle was not action-oriented enough to effect meaningful change.

Another way that consensus was “facilitated” was to only note which Task Forces *agreed* to a recommendation. There is no notation of those who disagreed with it, nor is there any written record of reasons why they did not agree, or arguments which did not favour the recommendation. There appears to have been a lack of applicable discussion—perhaps “time constraints” caused the task force members to only superficially address significant issues and to spend time only on areas where consensus could be quickly reached.

This process ultimately led to the creation of the report of Task Force Seven which is titled “To Our Children’s Children”. The major recommendations of this report are summarised by O’Riordan (1977:169):

[The] final report was a synopsis of the region’s views on the future of the basin. Its major recommendations were to place environmental quality above economic growth, to ensure adequate recreational facilities for local residents, to limit projected population and tourism and, most important, to establish a basin-wide planning authority responsible not only for comprehensive planning but also for tax sharing and an ongoing participation programme.

While O’Riordan is confident that there was “...no question that the final report of the Joint Canada-British Columbia Consultative Board took the views of Task Force Seven very much into consideration” (O’Riordan, 1977:169), one interview respondent’s recollection is significantly different:

But the whole task force, the whole exercise broke down, as far as I was concerned, when we came to the final end and when we wanted to establish what the public—what our task force felt there should be was an Okanagan Basin Water Authority. Instead, I think there was something like, well, right in Vernon there were three jurisdictions over the water, and we felt there should be more a—instead of a hierarchical set-up of government....So, we went in very strongly for the Okanagan Basin Water Authority and we had a fair amount of cooperation on that point. We put it in our report as the first recommendation of our report. But then we had a meeting with the local politicians from up and down the Valley and they just wouldn’t touch it at all

(interview b, 1995).

In addition to the Task Forces, there was a comprehensive public education/input campaign which Chapter five outlined. The next section of this chapter will turn to a discourse analysis of some of the discourses within the public outreach program.

The Public Information Program: Shifting Boundaries

Sinclair's report contains transcripts of the "multi-media seminars" (radio phone-in shows) which yield interesting insights into how the public was invited to participate in evaluating the alternatives presented in the planning process. The following excerpt is from a two and a half hour live radio forum co-hosted by Frank Robertson of CKOV and Glenn Sinclair which occurred on November 30, 1972. This radio forum was broadcasted on five valley radio stations and it is interesting to note how the listener/participants' questions were answered or redirected. One interesting tension which arose occurred when callers attempted to discuss issues which were not part of the Okanagan Water Basin Study's mandate. The first caller to the program used the "multi-media seminar" as a forum to discuss the need for controlling immigration to the Okanagan Valley:

I would like to speak in support of the idea that we don't need any more people in Okanagan Falls or in the Okanagan Valley. One of the experts on the panel said there was no way to bar people from free movement. I would suggest that there is an easy way to bar people from free movement, for example the provincial government just now is establishing green belts in agricultural lands saying you may not sub-divide this land. The governments say you may not build an industrial plant here, you can't build an apartment there, you can't dump your garbage there, so why can't we have provincial or municipal laws which say no industry here, no residences there; in other words, people cannot live in certain areas of the Okanagan..(174).

The response to this query, which is only marginally related to water use issues, was not that it was outside of the scope of the parameters of the discussion. In fact, immigration

control was tacitly included by the PIP Coordinator's reply:

...What about this gentleman's idea that we do not need more people in the Okanagan, that we should take planning alternatives towards green-belted and no industry etc.? (ibid:174)

However, in response to a later caller's request for a concerted effort to study the alternatives for land use, Sinclair draws a firm boundary around the scope of the OKWBS:

[caller]: I would like to see a very concerted effort on the alternatives of land use, what can be done in terms of architecture in terms of land use planning...I would like to see these things very clearly presented so that there is no doubt in any citizen's mind as to what decisions we're making for the future. I think all we get fed is a lot of statistical data that is very hard to draw any conclusions from.

[Sinclair]: One question I would like to ask you right now is are you suggesting now that while the Okanagan Basin Study has been set up as a water management study, that really there should be hand in hand a land management study as well?

[caller]: Yes, I think so. Because on the television program earlier this evening they said that they were here to improve the quality of life in a comprehensive way.

[Sinclair]: As it affects water management, though?

[caller]: Yes, they qualified this after awhile but I just don't see how you can consider water management without considering land use because all the problems of water management come from land use.

Jon O'Riordan was sitting on the panel as a "socio-economics" expert and he expressed dissatisfaction with the way the discussion was being structured. He explains his conception of the parameters of the public discourse within the Study:

One thing we have to clarify is that this water study will not provide all the answers to all the problems in the Okanagan in the near future. What we will do is provide most of the answers in terms of water management and some but not all of the answers in terms of land management or population growth or agricultural development or forestry or all the other questions that are

being raised tonight. These latter are very exciting but we are already spending 2 million dollars on a study examining water resources and if there was to be a similar type of study on land it would likely require an additional 2 million dollars. And at the time when the agreement was signed, the scope of our studies was limited to water...

Later in the program, the PIP Coordinator, Glenn Sinclair again addressed the issue of the parameters of the study and attempted to re-expand the OKWBS's boundaries:

One thing I would like to mention at this time Frank, is that I have been happy with the level of questioning tonight. We have been keeping to the broader issues, looking at the valley and its various component parts. And I think if we can get these other questions then we could provide even more of a comprehensive answer.

What is the significance of these different parameters for the OKWB Study being drawn by major Study-direction influentials, such as Sinclair and Jon O'Riordan? It could indicate that there was a lack of consensus or understanding of the parameters among the study personnel themselves. This interpretation reaffirms the notion that power was not exercised in a conspiracy-like fashion by a group of unified power-holders.

As I point out in this chapter, the structure of the documents led the participants to affirm the importance of the environment, but they were not encouraged to take their concerns beyond the level of normative principles, and where they made specific recommendations, the recommendations had been determined by technical experts and their role was to ratify. The discourse analysis could be extended to an examination of the "data bulletins" etc. that were generated for public consumption and examine them, using the discourse analysis techniques discussed in Chapter 4. This analysis would have to include the maps which were reproduced and distributed for public consumption. The maps show the Okanagan Valley in isolation from the other water systems (notably, the Shuswap Water Basin) and the northern communities which had members which voiced

concern about water diversion schemes were left off the map.

It is necessary to summarize the insights which this discourse has yielded.

Macdonell's (1986:95/6) explication of Foucault's discourse analyses suggests that for

Foucault, discourse could be identified by a set of rules which:

...form modes of speaking enunciations...by...deciding who is "accorded the right and the status" to make medical statements, and from what "institutional sites", such as the hospital and the laboratory that statements may come.

Chapters Four and Five have sought to account for the knowledges which were created throughout the OKWBS PIP in order to account for the positions and viewpoints which generated those knowledges. By disinterring the "subjugated knowledges" (eg. the repressed knowledge about the STRAADA anti-diversion protests), the research presented here provided a more complete context to understand why public involvement became a significant part of the Okanagan Water Basin Study. This context clarified why the geographical boundary of the public involvement program was drawn at Vernon, excluding "public" from the Shuswap-Thompson from participating. In addition, this context enabled an understanding of the disjuncture within the PIP between the first Public Involvement Coordinator who was dismissed for identifying with "special interest groups" and the second PIP Coordinator who managed a tightly controlled process with selected "publics".

The discourse analysis of the document prepared by the second PIP Coordinator provided an understanding not only of how the inclusion of the "public" was controlled, but also of the "...institutions which prompt people to speak...and which store and distribute the things that are said" (Foucault quoted in Macdonell, 1986:2). The "task forces" were provided with information which had been prepared by scientists from the provin-

cial ministries. Not surprisingly, the options presented, or excluded, clearly led the task force participants to pre-determined conclusions. This creation of “knowledge”, together with the amount of data and short deadlines resulted in the public merely ratifying pre-determined decisions. The discussion in Chapter One about the use of this “public” response to the scientific discourses which were presented for their consumption yields insights into the reasons why (and perhaps more importantly, *how*) the governmental environmental institutions stored and distributed the public's responses. In a democracy, the ability to say that the populace was consulted and their wishes acted upon, provides an extremely powerful discourse/rationalization for actions which have been taken.

The conclusions of the OKWBS PIP were basically that the Okanagan should pursue a “low growth” strategy which would ensure that there would be sufficient water quantity and quality for the Okanagan residents to the year 2020. This conclusion was politically tenable, considering that the Barrett NDP government had come into power in British Columbia, and considering the institutional changes in federal water policy. The Barrett NDP government had a significantly different philosophy than W.A.C. Bennett, toward massive resource development projects. The NDP government had a more conservationist philosophy and one of the legacies which they have left to British Columbia is the preservation of key agricultural regions with their Agricultural Land Reserve policy. It would not have been congruent with their philosophy to pursue the water diversion scheme, especially after David Barrett had campaigned against it.

Changes in the institutional and funding structures for water projects at the federal level also may have worked to legitimize Task Force Seven's conclusions. According to

Shanks (1983: 196), by the mid-1970's (the OKWBS concluded in 1974), the Canada Water Act had significantly shifted from focusing on water resource management to pollution control, leaving a vacuum regarding federal water management policy. Institutionally, the regulatory bodies in charge of water resource management also shifted. Pearse et al. (1985) explains that in 1971, Environment Canada was created from the Department of Fisheries and Forestry, and various units and branches from a number of other departments, including Energy, Mines and Resources. These organizational changes left the Inland Waters Directorate responsible for the remaining provisions of the Canada Water Act , *with declining funding levels for its planning agreements*. This is corroborated by Depape (1985) who explains that fiscal restraint for river basin planning studies had become significant by the 1970s and that funds for planning were allocated away from joint federal-provincial river basin studies and toward other projects and programs.

Clearly, these changes meant that significant funding for projects like the proposed Shuswap diversion would not come from either provincial or federal coffers. It would not have been politically feasible for the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program to have raised Okanagan residents' expectations for more provincial-federal funded projects. Consequently, there were to be no changes to increase water quantity in the Okanagan Valley and any changes to water quality would have to have their associated costs shifted away from the federal and provincial levels.

Jon O'Riordan's comments about the lack of implementation of the recommendations of the study become clearer within this context. Based on his conclusion that the municipal politicians did not significantly participate, nor act on the recommendations of

the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program, the Assistant Director of the Special Projects Unit, Environment and Land Use Committee, British Columbia, Jon O'Riordan recommended in 1976 that:

The separation of power between the public and the politicians should have been communicated at the outset of the program. The public can participate in the planning process and make recommendations for managing a specific resource, but politicians make final decisions involving trade-offs between resource management and other needs for the community within budget constraints. If this distinction had been clearly made, perhaps [municipal] politicians would not have felt their positions threatened and would have been more objective about the program (1976:195).

In the Okanagan Water Basin Study, the local politicians did not support the public involvement program, as they argued that the public was “non-representative”. But perhaps more interesting, is to note how provincial representative Jon O'Riordan's comments effectively remove the province from responsibility by indicating reasons for the *local* politicians' lack of commitment to the recommendations made by the public in the OKWBS PIP.

Chapter Six will provide a summary and conclusions of how this work has contributed to an enhanced understanding of the complex processes of public involvement and discuss the methodological and philosophical issues which this thesis has raised. The Afterword invites the reader to recognize that this thesis, itself, is a discourse which has been created in response to contextual dynamics of power/knowledge and, as such, is impacted by the constraints imposed by not only the researcher, the field and the epistemological assumptions, but also by the university apparatus itself. It attempts to present keys to understanding how a particular intersection of social, political and ideological processes led to the construction of meaning presented in this dissertation.

CHAPTER SIX:

Summary

Public participation has been considered to be a process integral to the exercise of democracy. Yet, public involvement processes are neither simple, nor free from the exercise of power. Whereas the modern period was characterized by the exercise of power through physical force, today's era is characterized by the exercise of power through the manipulation of information and knowledge. While it is true that public involvement in decision making is a necessary process, conventional approaches to the theory and practice of public participation rely on a simplistic view of power, identity and knowledge. This thesis demonstrates that public involvement processes involve complex, refractive relationships between power and knowledge. Consequently, this dissertation discusses and applies Foucault's work on power/knowledge in order to contribute a greater understanding of how discourses are created, strategically deployed, employed and suppressed in public involvement programs. This work is held together by the tension between the theoretical concerns and the applied analysis. Chapters Two and Three focus more on the theoretical challenges which Foucault's work on power/knowledge has for existing public participation theory and Chapters Four and Five centre on an applied, contextual analysis of the articulation of power/knowledge which occurred in the process of including the public in the OKWBS PIP from 1970-1974.

Identity, Community and Power/Knowledge

Chapter Two's review of the post-1960 growth and development of public involvement theory demonstrates that public involvement has been theorized and promoted as one way of achieving the ideal of participatory democracy. However, much of the theoretical literature has been described as "...prescriptive [and] rhetoric, resting on unanalyzed premises and assumptions" (Wengert, 1976:24). One of the most significant areas of weakness in existing public involvement literature is the lack of critical analysis of the terms which are central to the discussion; specifically, the terms "public" and "community" are employed uncritically as groups of unified identity. This uncritical adoption of terms of identity is particularly problematic in a body of literature which emphasizes power to such a great degree. According to Clegg (1989:151) understanding the dynamics of identity politics is vital for an adequate understanding of the shifting matrices of power in modern society. He explains that "...membership in a category [ie. in this case, 'public', and/or 'community']...is regarded as the effect of devices of categorization".

This thesis has demonstrated that one key to understanding the exercise of power/knowledge in the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program lies in deconstructing the identity of the "public". The first Coordinator's inclusion of "public" from the Shuswap region and his inclusion of community members with environmental interests was criticized for favoring "special interest groups" and for encouraging a process characterized by "protest" rather than "consensus". The context of the OKWBS PIP necessitated a form of public participation which discouraged the public protests which had already begun in the Shuswap region; a reaction to the idea of water diversion.

This *unstated* goal of the OKWBS PIP was accomplished by G.W. Sinclair, the second Public Involvement Coordinator who strategically embraced the potential of identity politics in order to facilitate a tightly controlled process. Sinclair effectively repositioned the initial “publics” who were involved in the study as self-interest driven, parochial groups who did not have the interest of the “general public” at heart. In a political system which is based on rule by representation, the ability to re/construct the “public's identity” is a powerful weapon. The ability to effect change is closely related to the ability to manage the creation and distribution of “legitimate knowledges” by delineating and delegitimizing the identities of those creating alternative knowledges. Indeed, the entire categorization of who comprises the constituency of any group changes, according to whose needs are being served by the definition. This is congruent with Foucault's cryptic description of the categorization of identity as contextual, unstable and constantly shifting.

The form of the public involvement determined not only the identity of the public, but also the technical discourses which were created and distributed for the public's consumption. It would have been neither practical nor feasible to produce the sixty page technical documents for a more “general” public's perusal. While the radio call-in programs were facilitated in such a manner as to allow free-ranging discussions which strayed far from the realm of water management (ie. discussions of attempts to control population in-migration), the task forces' agendas were closely managed. Ultimately, it was the voices of the technical experts speaking through the members of the task forces, which were legitimized and recorded. The structure of the apparatus privileged the form

of knowledge created by the task forces on the basis of the technical recommendations. The episteme of the OKWBS PIP separated the scientific statements of the technical advisors over the more undisciplined input of the “general” public through call-in radio programs, the initial public meetings and unsolicited letters and comments and assigned the latter less power. This type of analysis is congruent with Foucault's work (elucidated by Rouse, 1994:93) where “...particular investigations were structured by which concepts and statements were intelligible together, how those statements were organized thematically, which of those statements counted as ‘serious’ [and] who was empowered to speak seriously”.

Implications of Power/Knowledge for Public Involvement

Conventional critiques of public involvement have been based on a juridico-discursive approach to power which conceptualizes power as a finite, scarce commodity which must be transferred from “powerholders” to “citizens” in order for authentic public participation to occur. This approach to understanding power in public involvement leads to a mere condemnation of the process of public involvement, as practiced, and a retreat into theory. It is generally concluded that the naive public were manipulated and that the power was usurped by powerful interests. This type of analysis is interesting, but it does not articulate *how* we can move from one side of the dichotomy which Young (1990:315) has described as the “...impure, inauthentic society we live in” to “...the pure, authentic society we seek to institute”. This implies not only that the theories of public involvement need to have their categories of identity (ie. citizens, public, powerholders, community, industry) deconstructed but also that the notion of power needs to be re-examined.

Foucault's conception of power, however, leads us to pose different sorts of questions. Instead of asking "was there an effective transfer of power?", an analysis based on Foucault's constructs leads us to ask questions which deconstruct the creation of knowledge and the exercise of power within the public involvement processes themselves. Instead of trying to determine whether the public was granted enough power, we attempt to ascertain the answers to questions such as: "how did the exercise of power produce knowledge and discourses?", "what types of knowledge were produced and by whom?" and "where were the parameters of the discourse established, and why?" These questions are more practically useful because they lead to a concrete understanding of the strategies underlying the exercise of power in a specific context.

When Foucault's analytic of power/knowledge is applied to public involvement efforts, it enables a view of power as a force which does much more than repress, it *produces*. Power creates knowledges and provides the dynamic for the episteme which determines legitimate knowledge from disqualified, illegitimate knowledge. Foucault cautions us about the implications which the conventional juridico-discursive view of power holds for critical social theory. He asserts that the notion that power can be possessed leads to attempts to locate power in a centralized source. This assumption sets up dichotomies of powerful/powerless, thus obscuring an entire network of micro-power relations. The prescriptive public participation literature is based on concepts of ideology and repression which Foucault explains are unrealistic: "...behind the concept of ideology, the nostalgia for a quasi-transparent form of knowledge, free from all error and illusion, and behind the concept of repression, the longing for a form of power innocent

of all coercion" (1980:117).

The study of power/knowledge in this thesis, then, is a study of the exercise of power, a study of how the possibility of conduct was guided and the possible outcomes were ordered. The applied purpose of this theoretical approach to an understanding of power lies in an attempt to uncover the most effective lines of resistance. If we understand that power is held in a central location and that it can be transferred, like a commodity, we are led to determine way to force a transfer of power from the "powerholders" to the "public"--the uncritical use of terms and the understanding of power would not likely lead to effective social change or resistance.

Implications of Power/Knowledge for Resistance

Weedon (1987:10) suggests that although poststructuralist works offer "...a useful, productive framework for understanding the mechanisms of power in our society and possibilities of change", that the contribution of post-structural tools must be judged by their ability to be politically useful. Hartsock directly challenges Foucault's conception of power as "...unusable for the task of revolutionizing, creating and constructing" (1990:159). This thesis strives to answer Hartsock's challenges because an application of Foucault's work to studying processes of public involvement in environmental decision-making potentially leads to an understanding of tactics which can be used to subvert dominant discourses and assert counter discourses.

While it is true that Foucault's epistemology leads to the creation of an analysis which is ambiguous; to the creation of a map of the "battlefield" without a specific pre-

scription for how to “win”, it would be incongruous for Foucault to prescribe tactics because his view of power is contextual and dynamic, rather than eternal and static. This means that what would be an effective strategy in one context would fail miserably in another. The tools which Foucault provides will not lead directly to social change or effective resistance. Their skilled use, however, will lead to an effective strategic assessment. As Lao Tsu explains in the Chinese classical text The Art of War, “...the military has no constant form, just as water has no constant shape--adapt as you face the enemy, without letting them know beforehand what you are going to do. Therefore, assessment of the enemy is in the mind, observation of the situation is in the eyes” (1988:55).

Foucault did explain that discourse is the site of struggle, yet he cautions us not to slip into the essentialist position of “...imagining the world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse...but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that come into play in various strategies” (1978:100). Therefore we cannot resist the exercise of oppressive power by merely legitimizing and presenting previously delegitimized knowledges, but that instead, we must interrogate them according to their tactical productivity (1978:102).

Whereas this thesis has explored the use of discourse as an “...instrument and an effect of power”, (1978:101) in the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program, it is necessary to recognize that discourses can also be employed as “...a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy [because] [d]iscourse transmits and produces power, it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it”

(1978:101). This thesis does not seek to provide any strategies which could be or could have been used in the OKWBS PIP, however, it has provided an understanding of how power/knowledge were articulated to create a particular form of public involvement. This application of Foucault's work can be used as a framework of strategic issues or questions in contemporary public involvement efforts and the knowledge created in this thesis can serve as the beginning of resistance where the OKWBS PIP is invoked to justify contemporary decisions.

The documents produced by the OKWBS PIP are “regulatory truths” in that they have been invoked to legitimize controversial decisions which have impacted the region's water resources. It is not surprising that such effort should have gone into the creation of the OKWBS PIP, for, as Sewell (1987:199) points out, “...more than almost any other natural resource, water acts as a powerful conditioning factor in economic, social and political affairs. Its availability has played a critical role in shaping settlement patterns, the structure of economic activity, relationships among various levels of government...” Indeed, the discourses contained within the OKWBS PIP were determined by the meta-discourses which surround both democracy and water rights. Embedded within the documents are assumptions about the right to own private property, the right to enjoy economic development, the right to participate in a democracy and the right to control migration in a democratic country. The OKWBS PIP is a truth which became authoritative--this thesis strives to reveal the processes and the context which produced that truth.

Methodological Issues

This methods of this thesis were literature reviews, intensive interviews and discourse analysis performed on documents contained within Sinclair's final "official" report of the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program and contemporaneous newspaper reports. One of the challenges of this project was to adequately capture the "...operations of power [which] can only be studied via texts", my method of discourse analysis sought to search for "...enigmatic traces of process frozen in texts, fossils of power preserved in linguistic amber" (Hodge and Kress, 1994:131). While Macdonnell (1986:2) argues that it is possible to analyse how and when particular messages appeared by simply identifying the institutions which created the discourse and examining their positions in relation to another, opposing discourse, this method would not be congruent with Foucault's project.

Foucault cautions us not to imagine the discursive realm divided into two, opposing groups and suggests that we examine the multiplicity of discursive elements (1978). For example, if we were to examine the discourses of the radio call-in program and the exchanges between the callers, Sinclair and O'Riordan according to Macdonnell's approach, it would be tempting to try to present Sinclair and O'Riordan as "government representatives", collaborating to confuse the public by shifting the parameters of the discourse. However, it is necessary to examine each individual player's strategic location within the process, without dividing the discourse creators and receivers into dualistic categories. From this perspective, Sinclair can be seen as establishing the parameters of the discourse to suit his needs as Public Involvement Coordinator of the OKWBS, and O'Riordan's

comments can be viewed as a challenge to Sinclair's approach to facilitating the public involvement. Consequently, it is necessary to recognize that discourse analysis is *interpretive* by nature and that the conclusions which a discourse analysis reveals are intimately connected, not only with the researcher's choice of discursive materials, but also with the researcher's theoretical stance.

This study has relied on "official" documentation of the Okanagan Water Basin Study, with correlation by O'Riordan's publications, subsequent government studies, a small number of intensive interviews, newspaper reports and historical political analysis. However, it is the need to determine effective limitations to this thesis which has also led to the intense contextualization of the public involvement process of the OKWBS. While this focus may be seen as having been done at the expense of a more in-depth historical-political contextualization of the municipal, provincial and federal formal structures of government, it is important to recognize the importance of maintaining focus. This thesis is concerned with determining *how* discourses are created, strategically deployed, employed and suppressed *within public involvement programs* in response to changing institutional structures, funding levels and political climate. Because the focus of this study is to understand the *analytics of power*, the question is not merely "*why* did the public involvement program get handled in that particular manner", but also "*how* was power/knowledge exercised within the PIP?" "*How* were some discourses created, and others suppressed while simultaneously affirming the role of (certain) publics in environmental decision making?"

The existing literature on public involvement has never defined key terms, such as

“public”, “power”, or “participation”. It has focused instead on employing these terms in order to create prescriptions for “better” public involvement and to attempt to determine whether a particular public involvement program was a “failure” or a “success”. Additionally, it has relied on the juridico-discursive model of power in order to explain the relationship between the “public” and the “powerholders”. This thesis provides a theoretical contribution to the existing literature on public involvement because it has demonstrated that it is possible to deconstruct processes of public involvement and categories (ie. “public”) in order to yield strategic knowledge which can potentially lead to resistance.

Foucault's conception of the analytics of power indicates that effective resistance requires a view of power as a force which produces knowledges. This thesis has examined the process by which some of the “PIP” knowledges were produced in the OKWBS PIP and, in so doing, has delineated some of the terrain of the battlefield. Although water decisions are still being justified on the basis of the public involvement program of the OKWBS, this thesis has challenged the legitimacy of the OKWBS PIP. It is the beginning of an understanding of how power/knowledge is created and employed in order to maintain citizen control while simultaneously affirming democratic ideals of freedom and independence; knowledge and understanding of these dynamics are the beginning of an effective resistance.

AFTERWORD:

The Evolving Research Process

Our choice of intellectual inquiry is not “what can I know” but rather “how have my questions been produced?” “How has my path of learning been determined?” Not “What ought I to do?” but rather “How have I been situated to experience the “real”?” “How have exclusions operated in delineating the realm of obligation for me?” Not, “what may I hope for?” but rather “what are the struggles in which I am engaged?” “How have the parameters for my aspirations been defined?” The point of such shifts is to free thought from a search for formal structures and place it in an historical field where it must confront the singular, contingent and arbitrary (Bernauer, 1990:18/90).

The concerns associated with doing research are usually ignored and accounts are produced from which the personal is banished. However, research is a process not just a product. Part of this process involves reflecting on, and learning from past research experiences, being able to re-evaluate our research critically, and, perhaps deciding for various reasons, to abandon a research project (Kobayashi, 1994:74).

Since I have been steeped in post-structuralist thought for the past three years, it is not surprising that one of my major preoccupations with this thesis is “what kinds of questions have I produced and what is the relationship between these questions and myself?” As O’Sullivan et al. (1994:234) point out, these concerns are common in post-modern analysis which is “...often marked by forms of writing that are more literary, certainly more self-reflexive, than is common in critical writing”. In this chapter, I strive to place myself and my subjectivities at the centre of analysis so that the reader can understand and interpret how the textual discourse of this thesis emerged in response to “...the historical circumstances of time, place and structure” (O’Sullivan et al., 1994:310). By “subjectivity”, I am referring to subjectivity as the “...site of consciousness or unitary

identity which then appears as the *source* of meaning and action rather than their product...a contradictory mix of confirming and contending identities” (O’Sullivan et al, 1993: 309/10).

The purpose of this chapter is to make explicit the contradictions and the textual boundaries which are inherent to this thesis and to create a space where I can, as author, reveal how my assumptions and my context have determined this thesis’ questions, parameters, process, and struggles. This “afterword” itself is an act of resistance. By including myself and my personal experiences in the text of my thesis, I am challenging the notion that research must be “objective”. Therefore the act of writing this section reaffirms the poststructural nature of this project which is characterized by attention to “...the relationship between the systems, relations and forms that make meaning possible in any cultural activity or artifact” (O’Sullivan, et al., 1994:302). Further, by attempting to elaborate the process of and constraints on the production of knowledge in this thesis, I am creating a text which can be deconstructed in order to “...tease out the repressed, marginalized and absent in the chosen discourse” (O’Sullivan et al., 1994:304).

Subjective Research: The Private and the Political Realms Merge

As I discussed in Chapter One, the boundaries between my everyday life and my fieldwork are blurred. At a most basic level, I am currently living in Kelowna, BC and drinking the water which was at the centre of the public involvement discourse during the Okanagan Water Basin Study. Thus, the relationship between myself and my research is practically seamless. In August of 1996, when the cryptosporidium outbreak occurred—I

had to boil the water for my family to drink. When I take my son swimming in Lake Okanagan, the water in which we submerge our bodies, is the same water which receives septic-tank seepage, fertilizer run-off, and molybdenum traces from the surrounding human activities. Whose life is inextricably bound to these environmentally degrading practices? Mine. My son's. My family's. For example, when I turn the television on to the evening news and I watch complex issues of the relationships between the economy and the environment reduced to binary oppositions of "jobs" vs. "environment", I cannot help but reflect on Foucault's discussions of power/knowledge and discursive practices. When we accept the conventional discourses which describe the relationship between environment and economy as one of continual and inherent conflict, we are forced into a lose/lose argument. If we are to feed our families, we must compromise our environment--and ultimately the health of our families. This particular discursive dualism effectively serves the needs of a powerful minority.

How does this intimate relationship between myself and my project affect this thesis? Reinharz et al. (1992:258) have suggested that while mainstream research has traditionally assumed that the personal experiences of the researcher "contaminate" the research project's objectivity; "objectivity" is nonexistent. Reinharz explains that it is necessary for researchers to study phenomena which affect them on a personal level and that the inclusion of personal experience repairs a project's pseudo-objectivity. Consequently, Reinharz argues convincingly for an explicit discussion of the researcher's motives, beliefs and personal research process to form a significant component of the research text.

Katz has discussed the need for researchers to attempt to delineate the boundaries between “everyday life” and “research”; “the fieldwork” and doing fieldwork; the “field” and that which is not the field; and the “scholar” and the “subject” (1994:74). In explaining why this is important, Katz (1994:76) suggests that as researchers, we are “multiply positioned actors” who have a responsibility to “...be aware of the partiality of all our stories and the artifice of boundaries drawn in order to tell them.”

Challenging Assumptions: The Development of the Thesis

As I indicated in Chapter One, when I initially began this research project, I designed it so that I could interweave applied studies, community based research, and an examination of power/knowledge. At the same time, I wanted it to be specific enough to be meaningful, while general enough to draw conclusions which could be applied elsewhere. Additionally, I had planned to do participatory research (Koltermann, 1994:1). At the time, I had just completed my course work and my mind was overflowing with ideas about how research *should* be conducted in order to be socially responsible and I wanted to use every available method to accomplish my aims. Consequently, an applied, pre-scriptive/normative approach to my thesis design is evident in my proposal (Koltermann, 1994:1).

The research was designed to be relevant. I was intrigued by the relationship between “applied geography”, the “relevance movement” and the birth of “radical geography” which has been traced to the American Association of Geographers Conference in 1971 (Boston). In 1993, I wrote a paper on this which began to grapple with the issues of power/knowledge and scholarship. The radical geographers who challenged the construct

of power relations which defined legitimate academic study were my inspiration because they were the pioneers who explored the implications of the research process and began asking the questions which I would later learn were common in feminist scholarship. Feminist scholarship is characterized by an intent focus on the impacts which the researcher has on the researched and the implications which methodology has for theory (Driscoll and McFarland, 1989; Du Bois, 1983; Duelli Klein, 1989; Dumont, 1989; England, 1994; Fraser and Nicholson, 1990; Harding, 1990; Kirby and McKenna, 1989). McCormack (1989) explains that many feminists entered the social sciences in the 1960s at the height of the post-liberal period which criticized the methodologies associated with logical positivism and deemed the differences between the liberal and conservative epistemological traditions to be irrelevant. As she explains:

Against this intellectual background, the insider's knowledge acquired a special privileged status. Authenticity became more important than truth claims....A new kind of knowledge which did not attempt to be objective, and was no longer attempting to "predict and control," knowledge without social causation and without looking for regularities that might lead to "laws", would obliterate the line between subject and object and create a richer knowledge and more ethical one. Knowledge would be more consciousness-raising for both the people who carried out the studies and those who were studied. The investigator was also the one investigated, the interviewer became the respondent, and we could not objectify others because we could not objectify ourselves. Thus feminists were not only creating a distinctive epistemology, but providing a prototype for other epistemologies (McCormack, 1989:15).

McCormack goes on to assert that the new feminist methodology was a quantum leap, a Kuhn-ian passage from one paradigm to another. She likens the emphasis which feminist methodologists put on subjectivity to the emphasis which Luther put on inner voice. Feminist scholars Staeheli and Lawson (1994:97) have discussed the need to problematize the relationship between the scholar/researcher and the field and to affirm

the important role which social forces have in shaping the research process (ie. what counts as an object of study, relations between researcher and researched, what constitutes “data” and “legitimate sites of study”). In their article “A Discussion of ‘Women in the Field’: The Politics of Feminist Fieldwork”, they explain that the relationship between the researcher and the field must be problematized by being explicit about the “...power relations that define academics and the people and places we study” (1994:98).

This concern with laying methodological and theoretical assumptions bare is taken up by England (1994:81) in her article “Getting Personal: Reflexivity, Positionality, and Feminist Research” where she positions feminist and postmodern methods in opposition to the “methodological hegemony of neopositivist empiricism”. England explains that neopositivist empiricism specifies a strict dichotomy between object and subject as a prerequisite for objectivity:

The neopositivists' professional armor includes a carefully constructed public self as a mysterious, impartial outsider, and observer freed from personality and bias...part of the feminist project has been to dismantle the smokescreen surrounding the canons of neopositivist research—impartiality and objectivist neutrality—which supposedly prevent the researcher from contaminating the data (and presumably vice versa). As well as being our object of inquiry, the world is an intersubjective creation, and as such, we cannot put our commonsense knowledge of social structures to one side (1994:81).

The neopositive “objectivity” also contrasts with Duelli Klein’s (1983) approach to research which affirms the need to be explicit about how the researchers chose a particular method and what problems occurred during the research project. In addition, she cautions against the propensity for a feminist researcher to “...believe in her position as the distant ‘expert’ who investigates a certain trait/disposition/variable out of ‘objective’ interest” (1983:91). Quoting Mary Brown Parlee, she explains that this sort of methodol-

ogy strips the research of its context, consequently “...concepts, environments and social interactions are all simplified by methods which lift them out of their context, stripping them of the very complexity that characterizes them in the real world” (ibid: 92) and suggests that the knowledge that this sort of scholarship creates is not useful for positive social change.

Duelli Klein reviews several effective feminist research projects which successfully created knowledges which went beyond “mere academic reports”. These researches (by Mies, 1978 and Westkott, 1979) replaced the “value free objectivity” with “conscious subjectivity” which is a characteristic of a methodology which enables the researcher to engage in an interactive process without the artificial object/subject split between researcher and researched. This “intersubjectivity” permits, even encourages, the researcher to constantly compare her work with her own experiences as a woman and a scientist and to share it with the researched. Duelli Klein (1983:95) asserts that scholars need to recognize that the “complication” of having to negotiate “relative” truths, rather than searching for and presenting “Truths with a capital ‘T’” is really an indication of “how exciting and far-reaching a new methodology is that dares to open up questions where the answers might have to be recorded in an interactive rather than linear way”.

Her vision of engaged scholarship is based on the assumption that there should be an intimate dialectical relationship between researcher and researched which is mediated by the scholar’s resources of “...intuition, emotions and feelings both in ourselves and in those we want to investigate”. She explains that these subjectivities are powerful tools when they are used in conjunction with “...our intellectual capacities for analyzing and

interpreting our observations...this open admission of facts and feelings might produce a kind of scholarship that encompasses the complexity of reality better than the usual fragmented approach to knowledge”.

Feminists’ concern with challenging “objective truth claims” and with exposing the disjunctures of the research process is congruent with Foucault’s work and is therefore of central concern to this thesis. Points of agreement and similarity between postmodern and feminist projects have been discussed at length (Diamond & Quimby, 1988; Martin, 1988; Welch, 1988). Diamond & Quimby (1988: vi) explain that “[b]oth Foucault and feminists have pointed to the ways in which friendship provides a model for non-hierarchical, reciprocal relations”. Additionally, Diamond & Quimby (1988) point out that Foucault and feminism share similar approaches to the study of power:

...[both Foucault and feminism] point to the local and intimate operations of power rather than focusing exclusively on the supreme power of the state. Both bring to the fore the crucial role of discourse in its capacity to produce and sustain hegemonic power and emphasize the challenges contained within marginalized and/or unrecognized discourses.

In the postmodern vein and congruent with feminist theory, Foucault’s work also challenges the notion that “truth” is universal and timeless. His comments (quoted in Phelan, 1990:424) indicate a sardonic disrespect for “truth” claims: “...truth is undoubtedly the sort of error that cannot be refuted because it has hardened into an unalterable form in the long baking process of history”. Phelan (1990:424) concludes that “...without the veil of truth as a simple presence, a thing prior to and independent of social systems, we see revealed the play of power”. This is the central reason for this chapter’s reflexive analysis. It attempts to provide the tools for the reader to disinter the knowledges which I have inadvertently subjugated and to recognize this thesis itself as a discourse which

must itself be recognized as the product of the interactions of power/knowledge.

However, in so doing I am potentially challenging the academic “episteme” and Duelli Klein has warned eager researchers that this form of knowledge creation, however, will not necessarily be considered legitimate. She explains that politicized research (research which admits to working for change) which requires conscious subjectivity and which acknowledges the scholar’s subjectivity is not always taken seriously in academic circles. This type of research can be robbed of its academic power by a simple twist of the “identity tool”—it can be labelled “journalistic” and “popular” rather than “scholarly”. Ultimately Duelli Klein (1983:97) asks questions about feminist scholarship which are inextricably bound up with the core concerns of this thesis: “...if feminists want to have our say in the generation and distribution of knowledge, what strategies should we use to be able to do what we want to do?” and “how do we get power inside academia?” These questions are reminiscent of the power/knowledge theme which pervades this thesis. It could equally be asked “...if we, as members of the public want to have our say in the generation and distribution of knowledge, what strategies should we use to be able to do what we want to do?” and “how do we get power inside public involvement programs?” Thus, resistance, another core concern of this thesis, is implied in these questions as well. Perhaps the conclusions which this thesis yields about power/knowledge and resistance will extend Duelli-Klein’s discussion.

Harding asserts that the best feminist analysis places the researcher on the same critical plane as the overt subject matter “...thereby recovering the entire research process for scrutiny in the results of research” (1987:9) and asserts that it is necessary to “...avoid

the 'objectivist' stance that attempts to make the researcher's cultural beliefs and practices invisible while simultaneously skewing the research objects' beliefs...." (1987:9). Nevertheless, she also explains that despite the fact that "...politically guided research projects have been able to produce less partial and distorted results of research than those supposedly guided by the goal of value-neutrality" (1993:49), feminist discussions about methodological objectivity/subjectivity have occurred for nearly two decades. Further, she asserts that "...it is a delusion...to think that human thought could completely erase the fingerprints that reveal its production process" (ibid: 57). Her discussion of "strong objectivity" indicates that the process of creating knowledge must be as critically examined as the knowledge itself because the researcher's work is influenced by the methodological decisions which are taken. This tension is taken up by Leigh-Stae (quoted in Reinharz et al, 1992:241):

...feminism is, in essence, a method—a method of strategic heresy. A method for understanding, from a marginal or boundary-dwelling perspective, one's own participation in socially constructed realities, both politically and personally, both socially and cognitively....[F]eminism, viewed methodologically, is an emergent scientific method—one which begins with the death of the subjectivity/objectivity dichotomy and which involves questioning the very bases of socialization and perception.

Kobayashi (1994:74) explains that this reflexivity has, in the past, been misunderstood and relegated to "...a confession to salacious indiscretions", "mere navel gazing" and "even narcissistic and egotistic", implying that the researcher "let the veil of objectivist neutrality slip". She asserts that *it is necessary* to recognize that reflexivity is a necessary part of academic rigor:

...reflexivity is self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self conscious analytical scrutiny of the self as researcher. Indeed reflexivity is critical to the conduct of fieldwork; it induces self-discovery and can lead to insights and

new hypotheses about the research questions. A more reflexive and flexible approach to fieldwork allows the researcher to be more open to any challenges to their theoretical position that fieldwork almost inevitably raises (ibid:74).

Harding concurs with Kobayashi that instead of viewing reflexivity as a “perpetual problem”, sensitive researchers transform it into a resource (1993:73):

This is because culturewide (or nearly culturewide) beliefs function as evidence at every stage in scientific inquiry: in the selection of problems, the formation of hypotheses, the design of research (including the design of research communities), the collection of data, the interpretation and sorting of data, decisions about when to stop research, the way results of research are reported, and so on. The subject of knowledge—the individual and the historically located social community whose unexamined beliefs its members are likely to hold “unknowingly,” so to speak—must be considered as part of the object of knowledge from the perspective of scientific method.... Thus, strong objectivity requires that scientists and their communities be integrated into democracy- advancing projects for scientific and epistemological reasons as well as moral and political ones (Harding, 1993:69).

This quote indicates the extent to which the process of science-making is shaped by culture-wide assumptions and constraints. Du Bois (1983) confirms that it is necessary to emphasize the process by which the research took place. She explains (ibid: 105) that “...science moves within culture, and only slowly expands the limits of its own vision” and she cautions that “...the closer our subject matter to our own life and experience, the more we can probably expect our own beliefs about the world to enter into and shape our work—to influence the very questions that we pose, our conception of how to approach those questions, and the interpretations we generate from our findings”. This is certainly important to recognize, particularly in this research work which, as I have discussed above, has become intimately bound up with an almost seamless web with the questions and experiences of my own life.

This thesis is a study of the articulation of power on knowledge and knowledge on

power, consequently it is necessary to examine how the power/knowledge analytic is at work in *the creation of knowledge within the thesis itself*. Even the choice of selecting Foucault's approach to power is subjective. Couzens Hoy (1981: 124) explains that the concept of power itself is hotly contested in the social sciences. To explain this, he refers back to Steven Lukes work, Power: A Radical View, in which power is a concept that is "ineradicably value-dependent" and "essentially contested" and Mary Hesse's assertion that "...theory choice in the social sciences is even more relativistic than in the natural sciences, since the principles used to select social theories would be guided by a variety of values". So how do we determine which research design is "legitimate"? (Hoy, 1981: 125). Du Bois explains that what makes science "legitimate" is often determined by societal models of "reality":

Our models of inquiry, of science-making, are also models of reality: they reflect how we conceptualize what is, what is to be known, and how it is to be known. The beliefs we hold about the nature of reality and of human beings are ways in which we organize and make meaning out of experience and information; beliefs, too, are ways of knowing. This history of science is a long history of organizing information, observation and experience. And that history contains many instances of so-called "scientific" fact or knowledge being proven later to have been little more than the dominant beliefs of the culture itself (1983:105).

Will this examination of power/knowledge in the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program merely serve to reinforce dominant cultural beliefs or will it challenge them? Likely both. Yet, applying Foucault's analytic of power/knowledge to an analysis of public involvement, the reader is enabled to move beyond the conventional juridico-discursive view of power in public involvement efforts. This will potentially lead to alternative forms of resistance. However, while this thesis stretches the boundaries of conventional science, it simultaneously silences the voices of the women who were

involved in the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program. Chapter Four discusses the politics of identity definition with particular respect to the term “public”. I challenge the reader to similarly expose the artifice of the categories and names which I employ in my attempts to make sense of the workings of power/knowledge in the OKWBS PIP. For, in revealing some truths, I necessarily conceal others. As Katz (1994:67) explains “[e]ach focus, of course, excludes as well as includes. What it excludes or why is rarely addressed in ethnographic inquiry”. It is necessary that the reader recognize that the definitions of identities which are employed in this paper (ie. “environmentalists”, “developers”, “agricultural elites”, “technical experts”) do not provide final answers. For, as Elam explains:

Definitions threaten to function like final answers which erase the fact that there were ever any questions asked in the first place; their status becomes unshakable, almost natural, and rarely if ever interrogated...short hand definitions, while practical at times, can easily lead to caricature, dismissal, and unnecessary limits placed on thought and political action (1994:4/5).

Consequently, the research contained in this thesis is necessarily unfinished, tentative and subjective. It must not be taken as “Truth” but as a door which enables the reader to step through and interpret the truths which are contained within it for themselves.

Foucault himself explained that his work consisted of elaborate “fictions”. Commenting on his method, Dreyfus and Rabinow explain that “interpretation starts from current society and its problems. It gives them a genealogical history, without claiming to capture what the past really was” (1983: 204) and they quote Foucault who himself asserts that his labour was not to free truth from power:

I am fully aware that I have never written anything other than fictions. For all that, I would not want to say that they were outside the truth. It seems plausible to me to make fictions work within truth, to introduce truth-effects within a fictional discourse, and in some way make discourse arouse, “fabricate,”

something which does not yet exist, thus to fiction something. One “fictions” history starting from a political reality that renders it true, one “fictions” a politics that does not yet exist starting from a historical truth (Foucault, quoted in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983:204)

Thus influenced, I too, recognize that “...no social scholarship is independent of political action and, like Katz, I am personally committed to acknowledging my research as political” (Katz, 1994:78). However, generally this social change and political action is undertaken within the research design (Reinharz, Shulamit and Davidson, 1992). Since this research has the Foucauldian characteristic of focusing on historical documents in an attempt to “disinter subjugated knowledges”, there has been no ostensible creation of new relationships, better laws or improved institutions. And while this research was originally designed to be “action research” which would lead to my personal involvement with either political institutions which regulate water use or with academic studies of water in the Okanagan Water Basin, these original objectives have yet to be met. Have I then created an emasculated project? Where are the “action goals” in the final iteration of this analysis? Is it possible to create a “relevant” thesis which is at once applied and theoretical? Can this research be criticized for avoiding action? (Reinharz, Shulamit and Davidman, 1992). At the point of defence, this thesis will not have engaged anyone to collaborate in applying the knowledge contained within directly to questions of environmental water quality degradation in the Okanagan Valley. Is “action-research” compatible with Foucauldian methods? These questions pose serious challenges for a researcher concerned with informed social action and change. One response to these challenges stems from Reinharz, Shulamit and Davidman’s presentation of the “demystification” rationale:

In the demystification framework, researchers believe that the very act of

obtaining knowledge creates the potential for change because the paucity of research about certain groups accentuates and perpetuates their powerlessness...the study of certain groups [ie. the creation of the "public identity" in this thesis] is political because it demystifies. Feminist research "raises consciousness" when those in power are taken aback by the audacity of a feminist research project, especially if the very questions asked challenge vested interests (1992:191).

This thesis strives to demystify knowledge and identity creation in public involvement programs and consequently invites the reader to engage in transformative acts of resistance based on the truths/fictions presented in the context of the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program. This attempt to initiate transformative action is similar to that of Kathy Ferguson's study of bureaucracy:

By exposing the contradictions and manipulations contained within a bureaucratic society, one can demystify the theory and practice of that society. Since the organizational society is maintained in part by creating and perpetuating the appropriate ideology, one that both reflects and distorts the reality it describes, a different form of understanding is in some ways also a form of action...I do believe that political theory can be transformative, reshape our possibilities, and resist the official definition of reality (quoted in Reinhartz, Shulamit and Davidman, 1992:192).

At this point, this is the extent of the "action" of my research.

FIGURES

Figure 1: Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969)

Figure 2: The Okanagan Water Basin As Geographically Presented in the Okanagan Water Basin Study Public Involvement Program

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