2009

Representing the Promotional University: Undergraduate Student Recruitment Strategies in Ontario, 1997- 2007

Lindsay Carrocci
Western University

Representing the Promotional University: Undergraduate Student Recruitment Strategies in Ontario, 1997- 2007

(Spine Title: Representing the Promotional University)

(Thesis Format: Monograph)

by

Lindsay Carrocci

Graduate Program in Media Studies

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION

Supervisor	Examiners
Dr. Daniel Robinson	Dr. Anton Allahar
Supervisory Committee	Dr. James Compton
Dr. Sharon Sliwinski	Dr. Romayne Smith-Fullerton

The thesis by

Lindsay Carrocci

entitled:

Representing the Promotional University:
Undergraduate Student Recruitment Strategies in Ontario, 1997 - 2007

is accepted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Date_____

_____
Chair of the Thesis Examination Board

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the promotional activities of five Ontario universities, bringing together scholarly work in history, education, marketing, consumer culture, semiotics, representation, and ideology to consider how institutions portray themselves to prospective undergraduate students. Visually and textually, each institution now constructs a brand, positions itself competitively, and shapes the ways in which it desires to be perceived. In promotional materials, universities attempt to balance conflicting roles as both cultivators of culture and the liberal arts, as well as centers of innovation and training in the "knowledge economy." It is concluded that, in promotional materials, universities take the rhetorical middle ground, claiming to have the best of both worlds. They gloss over conflicting agendas, idealize the academic environment, and contribute to a "student consumer" mentality among prospective students by emphasizing convenience, credentials, and career prospects.

KEYWORDS: promotion, ranking, reputation, marketing, advertising, consumer culture, credentialism, student consumer, student recruitment, public relations, university, higher education, Ontario, Canada

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the course of this thesis I was in contact with many people working in the field of university marketing and undergraduate recruitment. I am indebted to all those I interviewed and from whom received materials; your enthusiasm for my project was truly motivating. Thanks are also due to my advisor, Dr. Daniel Robinson, from whom I received unwavering direction and constructive criticism. I am also grateful to my second reader, Dr. Sharon Sliwinski, for sharing her knowledge on visual culture and for her always useful feedback.

Thank you to my friend and colleague, Lia Gladstone. Without our study dates, writing marathons, and Quad Café Americanos, this experience would not have been the same. In addition, thank you to my dad for his home repair expertise and my mom for her endless supply of emotional support. Finally, I send heartfelt gratitude to Arlen, my intellectual compass and unfailing editor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

Number *Page*

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

During the initial months of Grade 12, secondary school students face the prospect of planning their futures. This is a formidable task for a seventeen-year-old who has been taught that we "are what we do," that "we are intelligent if we do something intelligent," and that "we are valuable if we do something valuable."[1] A university degree in particular is seen by students and their parents as the *sine qua non* for becoming a successful participant in Canada's "knowledge economy."[2] As students search for the right school, perfect program, and desirable location to pursue their studies, they are bombarded by promotional materials from universities. Such exposure to recruitment material is no longer confined to the high school guidance room; today, students are likely to encounter advertisements for universities on billboards and buses, in magazines and newspapers, and on the television, radio, or internet.

This student recruitment scenario is indicative of a "promotional" university.[3] Through advertisements and other forms of communication, the university works and reworks its identity according to the prevailing social and economic environment. In a sound bite, a picture, or a few carefully selected words, institutions attempt to communicate

---

[1] Glenn M. Hudak, "On Publicity, Poverty, and Transformation: Images and Recruitment in Teacher Education Brochures," *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture,* ed. Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber (New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 188.

[2] Peter F. Drucker, *The Age of Discontinuity: guidelines to our changing society* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 263. According to Peter Drucker, the knowledge industries produce "ideas and information rather than goods and services." Knowledge workers tend to be better paid and enjoy more job security.

[3] Andrew Wernick, *Promotional Culture: Advertising, ideology, and symbolic expression* (New York: Sage Publications, 1991).

their essence: what they are, what they do, and what they offer.[4] Promotional materials, usually devised as part of larger recruitment or fundraising efforts, now play a central role in establishing institutional identity and in circulating the university brand. They depict the contemporary university as a historically grounded, yet forward looking institution that is in-step with Canada's economic and social needs. In addition to representing the university, promotional materials also address prospective university students. Visually and textually, students are told that with the right credentials they can be transformed; promotional materials convey to the prospective student that he or she can "start here [and] go anywhere," "redefine the possible," and get "the degree that works" in today's job market. As such, university promotional materials can be considered a "dual commodity sign:" simultaneously representing something to be sold and a carrier of cultural messages which can be incorporated into individual self promotional efforts.[5]

This thesis explores the undergraduate recruitment activities of five Ontario universities (York University, The University of Western Ontario, University of Windsor, University of Guelph, and Lakehead University) from 1997 to 2007. The study is interdisciplinary, bringing together scholarly work in history, education, marketing, consumer culture, semiotics, representation, and ideology to consider how universities portray themselves to prospective students through promotional marketing campaigns. What modes, media, and messages are being employed to attract students, and to what end? As universities compete for students' attention in an oversaturated visual environment,

---

[4] Paul Farber and Gunilla Holm, "Selling the Dream of Higher Education," *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture,* ed. Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber (New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 119.

[5] Wernick, *Promotional Culture.*

what core messages about the value and purpose of education get included and, perhaps more importantly, which are left out?

The development of the Canadian university was closely connected to the changing political economic climate of the 20th century and, thus, also tied to the maturation of consumer culture as a shared way of thinking and acting. As universities incorporate the logic and language of business into their everyday administrative practices, they reinforce their role as an ally, rather than a critic, of broader social forces. University promotion in particular perpetuates consumer capitalism by naturalizing the use of consumer language and logic and by framing education as an individual investment that is necessary in order for students to be participants (producers as well as consumers) in the political economic system. Thus, as a relatively new phenomenon associated with the rise of capitalism and consumer culture, university promotion is also a significant point of reference for discussing the conceptual framework within which the university as a social institution is now understood.

Roger Simon, Faculty Director of the Centre for Media and Culture in Education at the University of Toronto, wrote in 2001 that there "is a paper begging to be written that would discuss the historical origins and contemporary inflections of the discourses that structure these exercises in university promotion and public relations."[6] In Canada and other developed countries there is a marked gap between those who address the "corporatization" of the university from a political and economic standpoint, and those who consider education marketing from an applied social sciences or business perspective.

---

[6] Roger Simon, "The University: A Place to Think?" *Beyond the Corporate University: Culture and Pedagogy in the New Millennium,* ed. Henry Giroux and Kostas Myrsiades (Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield, 2001), 45.

Neither group adequately considers the social and cultural implications of university promotion. Australian academic Colin Symes writes that the lack of critical scholarship on what he terms the "symbolic economy" of education is surprising "given the role that it plays in helping to frame the ways in which schools desire to be perceived."[7] Likewise, Bill Readings contends that "the image of students browsing through catalogues, with the world all before them, there to choose, is a remarkably widespread one that has attracted little comment."[8] The academic writing existing on the topic tends to accept uncritically or implicitly affirm the inherent benefits or need for marketing in higher education. What Simon refers to, and what I believe is essential to the discussion, goes far beyond commonplace "success-rate" evaluations of current practices. This project is therefore interdisciplinary, building on existing historical accounts of higher education marketing, administrative studies that evaluate recruitment practices, and critical research that considers the changing role of universities in society. In doing so, I present a unique analysis of the social and cultural implications of university promotion in Ontario.

Historiography of Higher Education Marketing

The Early History

Two key works from American scholars trace the early history of higher education marketing. Firstly, Arthur Glogau catalogued the use of advertisements by U.S. and U.K. universities prior to the 1900s.[9] Glogau concluded that university advertising predates a heavily cited 1870 ad by Harvard College in *Harper's* magazine. It is argued that

---

[7] Colin Symes, "Education for sale: A semiotic analysis of school prospectuses and other forms of educational marketing," *Australian Journal of Education* 42, no. 2 (1998): 133, http://find.galegroup.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca:2048/itx/start.do?prodId=AONE (accessed February 3, 2009).

[8] Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (London: Harvard UP, 1996), 27.

[9] Arthur Glogau, "Advertising Higher Education," *College and University Journal* (Spring 1964): 35.

education marketing is as old as higher education itself, evidenced by Greek sophists who generated publicity for their professional services through displays of knowledge and acquirements.[10] Educational advertising as we know it today, however, did not appear until the 18th century. In 1752, individual doctors advertised lectures in the *New York Gazette.*[11] In the late 18th and early 19th century, when proprietary professional schools were established, advertisements were placed in such newspapers as *The London Times* and *New York Times* to inform the public of programs, new school openings, faculty positions, requests for financial support, information on admissions, and a general sales pitch.[12] The numerous examples provided by the author suggest that print advertisements for higher education are at least as old as professional schools such as medicine, dentistry, and veterinary science.

Scott Cutlip documented the public relations and marketing strategies of American universities in the post-Civil War years.[13] For example, the University of Michigan established a publicity office in 1897 which, among other things, encouraged students to write home to their local papers about the merits and achievements of their *alma mater.* The development of formal offices, news bureaus, and bulletins used by universities to communicate with the wider public is referred to by Cutlip as part of the "Seedbed years" (1900 – 1917) for university public relations. At that time, universities improved prospectuses and advertised in magazines and newspapers. Notably, increased public relations activity by the American university generated many "sour reactions" from

---

[10] Glogau, "Advertising Higher Education"; Philip Kotler and Karen A. Fox, *Strategic marketing for educational institutions* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985).

[11] Glogau, "Advertising Higher Education," 35.

[12] Glogau, "Advertising Higher Education," 35.

[13] S. M. Cutlip, "Advertising Higher Education: The Early Years of College Public Relations (Part 1)," *College and University Journal* (Fall 1970): 23.

conservative scholars and writers.[14] In 1903, one such critic bemoaned the "trend towards the commercialization of our institutions and learning." In 1905, another commentator concluded that "many colleges are private corporations anyway; and perhaps we ought not to protest if their advertising methods are not more scrupulously honest than those of other corporations."[15] Despite examples of abuses and exaggerations, the public relations efforts of the university extended the reach of the institution and helped to shape the "patterns of promotion" used thereafter.[16]

Administrative Research

By the latter 20th century, marketing and public relations were formal administrative functions of the university. Researchers encouraged educational institutions to borrow management practices from business and government to more effectively promote themselves.[17] In 1973, Eugene Fram called for the transfer of marketing strategies from the corporate world to universities, advocating that schools adopt the "marketing concept" and produce services based on the known needs and wants of the customer.[18] In 1978, David Barton and David Treadwell likened the university president to a "chief marketing officer" and the admissions director to the "executive vice president for recruiting."[19] Other

---

[14] Cutlip, "Advertising Higher Education," 23.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Cutlip, "Advertising Higher Education," 23.

[17] A.R. Krachenberg, "Bringing the Concept of Marketing to Higher Education," *The Journal of Higher Education* 43, no. 5 (1972): 369 - 380; Philip Kotler and B. Dubois, "A Marketing Orientation for Colleges and Universities," Working Paper, Northwestern University, July 1972; Eugene H. Fram, "Marketing Higher Education," *The Future in the Making*, ed. Dyckman W. Vermilye (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973).

[18] Fram, "Marketing Higher Education," 58.

[19] David W. Barton, Jr. and David R. Treadwell, Jr., "Marketing: a synthesis of institutional soul-searching and aggressiveness," *Marketing Higher Education.* ed. David W. Barton, Jr. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978), 78.

academics cautioned that not all marketing methods could be applied to higher education; the blind transfer of marketing techniques led to a focus on persuasion rather than information dissemination and short-term goals over long-term planning.[20] Furthermore, marketing was thought to contribute to growing "student consumerism" and mistrust among faculty.[21]

It is widely argued that the "marketing explosion" began in the 1980s when professional assistance was sought out and private sector marketing techniques were employed by universities.[22] This period saw the emergence of higher education marketing associations, consortiums, and conferences.[23] Marketing "textbooks" tailored to the academic world emerged[24] and in 1988 the *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* was launched. Larry Litten added that, during the 1980s, articles on marketing and college admission appeared in the popular press. Furthermore, research firms began to promote survey services to schools and the *Chronicle of Higher Education* published ads for directors of marketing and admissions personnel with marketing backgrounds. Although the new vocabulary and logic of marketing "may stick in the academic throat," Litten

---

[20] Paul S. Hugstad, "The Marketing Concept in Higher Education: A Caveat." *Liberal Education* 61, no. 4 (1975): 504 - 512.

[21] D. Riesman, *On higher education: The academic enterprise in an era of rising student consumerism* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 1980); J. R Penn and R. G Franks, "Student consumerism in an era of conservative politics," *National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Journal* 19, no. 3 (1982): 28 - 37.

[22] Larry H. Litten, "Marketing Higher Education: Benefits and Risks for the American Academic System," *The Journal of Higher Education* 51, no. 1 (1980): 40 - 59; V. Buell, "The marketing explosion," *Marketing and Media Decisions* 21, no. 7 (1986): 176 - 177; M. Mackey, "The selling of the sheepskin," *Change* 26, no. 3 (1994): 28 - 33.

[23] Litten, "Marketing Higher Education," 40. For example, in 1976 the College Board held a conference on marketing and college admissions.

[24] Philip Kotler, *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975); Larry H. Litten, D.J. Sullivan and D.L. Brodigan, *Applying Market Research in College Admissions* (New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1983).

showed how marketing theory and practice gained momentum during the 1980s.[25]

By the 1990s the question was no longer "should universities market themselves?" but rather how to most effectively harness marketing practices within an academic setting.[26] Leslie Goldgehn surveyed 791 American college admissions officers to evaluate the effectiveness of 15 marketing techniques and found high use levels of marketing among administrations.[27] In the 1990s, it was widely argued that universities operated in an unprecedented competitive climate, requiring greater use of marketing techniques.[28] Specifically, how universities managed image-making efforts was of increasing interest to scholars. For instance, Thomas Hayes argued that universities have uncommonly high opinions of themselves and needed to learn how to communicate more effectively with their audiences.[29] Likewise, Robert Stevens evaluated and described the public's perception of university professors as being relatively low compared to other professions and addressed how institutions could best influence this image.[30] Furthermore, many

---

[25] Litten, "Marketing Higher Education," 40.

[26] T. Abrahamson and Don and Hossler, "Applying Marketing Strategies to Student Recruitment," *The Strategic Management of College Enrollments,* ed. D. Hossler et al. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990); G.C. Dehne, D. L. Brodigan, P. Topping, "Understanding the Marketing of Higher Education," *Marketing Higher Education: A Handbook for College Administrators,* ed. G. C. Dehne, D. L. Brodigan, and P. Topping (Washington, D.C.: Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education, 1991); Larry R. Brooks, and James O. Hammons, "Has Higher Education Been Using the Wrong Marketing Approach?" *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 4, no. 1 (1993): 27 - 48; Don Hossler, "Effective Admissions Recruitment," *New Directions for Higher Education* 27, no. 4 (1999): 15 - 30.

[27] Leslie A. Goldgehn, "Are U. S. Colleges and Universities Applying Marketing Techniques Properly and within the Context of an Overall Marketing Plan?" *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 3, no. 1(1990): 5 - 28.

[28] Tony Conway, Stephen Mackay and David Yorke, "Strategic Planning in Higher Education: Who Are the Customers?" *International Journal of Educational Management* 8, no. 6 (1994): 29 - 36; Jane Licata and Gary L. Frankwick, "University Marketing: A Professional Service Organization Perspective," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 7, no. 2 (1996): 1 - 16; Sandra S. Liu, "Integrating Strategic Marketing on an Institutional Level," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 8, no. 4 (1998): 17 - 28.

[29] Thomas J. Hayes, "Image and the University," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 4, no. 1 (1993): 423 - 425.

[30] Robert E. Stevens, "The Public's Image of University Professors," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 4, no. 1 (1993): 49 - 57.

researchers surveyed attitudes about higher education marketing.[31] For example, in 2002 Cynthia Newman concluded that even direct-sell marketing approaches were considered acceptable administrative practices.[32]

Finally, the effectiveness of marketing materials was also analysed. Jami Armstrong and Barry Lumsden evaluated the impact of print promotional materials on the college choice of American students.[33] In focus groups, students voiced concern over not seeing themselves depicted in Viewbooks, primarily as a result of images that were considered "cheesy," out of date, or unrealistic. Consequently, the authors recommended that universities continually update promotional materials based on student feedback in order to most effectively reflect student expectations of university life. In a content analysis of Viewbooks from U.S. universities and colleges, Klassen also discussed marketed images of higher education.[34] He found that the visual symbolism of top and lower ranked colleges and universities reflect the corresponding higher and lower academic expectations of students likely to attend such schools. Finally, university websites have also been analyzed concerning their usability and increasing interactivity and findings suggest that future trends in university promotion are likely to occur online.[35]

---

[31] Nicholas Kipkorir Lang'at, "University public relations strategies: A case study," Diss., University of Alberta, 1997; John McGrath, "Attitudes About Marketing in Higher Education: An Exploratory Study," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 12, no. 1 (2002): 1 - 14; and Cynthia M. Newman, "The Current State of Marketing Activity Among Higher Education Institutions," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 12, no. 1 (2002): 15 - 29.

[32] Newman, "The Current State of Marketing Activity Among Higher Education Institutions," 20.

[33] Jami Armstrong and Barry Lumsden, "Impact of Universities' Promotional Materials on College Choice," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 9, no. 2 (1999): 83 - 91.

[34] Michael Klassen, "Lots of Fun, Not Much Work, and No Hassles: Marketing Images of Higher Education," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 10, no. 2 (2000): 11.

[35] Bart Kittle and Diane Ciba, "Using College Web Sites for Student Recruitment: A Relationship Marketing Study," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 11, no. 3 (2001): 17 - 37; Ann Pegoraro, "Using university websites for student recruitment: A study of Canadian university home pages examining relationship marketing tactics and website usability," Diss., The University of Nebraska - Lincoln, 2006;

Critical Analyses

The unquestioned transfer of marketing principles to higher education created a significant amount of backlash from scholars both within and outside of the disciplines of marketing, education, and business. In 1989, Duncan wrote that to "think marketing" and apply marketing techniques to education "is to espouse [an] explicit value-base and essentially perpetuate a limiting role for education in contemporary society."[36] Others were less inclined to view marketing as compromising core values of the university. Larry Lauer argued that, used properly, advertising can assist students in making intelligent choices about their academic future, and thereby encourage a mutually beneficial learning environment.[37] Likewise, education marketer Ken Steele currently advocates that "ethical marketing does not fabricate untruths;"[38] however, Steele admits that there is a certain degree of "oversimplification" involved in university communications strategies in order for messages to cut across media clutter.[39]

According to Paul Farber and Gunilla Holm, there is something "disconcerting about the penetration of marketing techniques into the world of higher education, selling certain promises of satisfied desire as the basis of the institution's value."[40] Further, Paul Gibbs argues that if educational institutions are adopting strategies of consumer capitalism,

---

Karen Ayouch, "How colleges have responded to changes in student recruitment as defined by their level of Web definition on their official college Web sites," Diss., State University of New York Institute of Technology, 2007.

[36] J. G. Duncan, "Marketing of Higher Education: Problems and Issues in Theory and Practice," *Higher Education Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (1989): 177.

[37] Larry D. Lauer, "Advertising Can Be an Effective Integrated Marketing Tool," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 17, no. 1 (2007): 13 - 14.

[38] Ken Steele, "Selling the Academy Without Selling Out," *Academic Matters,* February/March 2009 http://www.academicmatters.ca/current_issue.article.gk?catalog_item_id=2078&category=/issues/MAR2009 (accessed March 26, 2009).

[39] Ibid.

[40] Farber and Holm, "Selling the Dream of Higher Education," 129.

their authority to step aside and then critique or question that culture is limited.[41] Certainly, the increased use of marketing for recruitment purposes to some extent reflects the "corporatization" of university practices and the internalization of marketing language and logic. Are universities selling, "rather than fundamentally question[ing] prevailing socio-economic and cultural arrangements"?[42] Or, are they simply responding to societal changes in order to stay afloat and remain relevant?

In addition, the perspective that students are consumers of educational products or services has been subject to academic debate. Patricia McDonough outlined how college applicants are socially constructed as consumers who require professional help in order to make the right choice.[43] Like McDonough, Janice Newson wishes to "disrupt" the student as consumer model, which categorizes students as "autonomous choosers" and precludes traditional notions of the university as a community of learners and knowers.[44] The degree to which students are being conceptualized as consumers is illustrated by university ranking systems which, according to Gordon Chang and J.R. Osborne, are part of the "spectacular" economy of higher education.[45] Increasingly, university reputation is trumping the importance of educational quality.[46] Furthermore, a corporate or managerial

---

[41] Paul Gibbs, "Does Advertising Pervert Higher Education? Is There a Case for Resistance?" *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 17, no. 1 (2007): 6.

[42] Randle Nelson, *Schooling as Entertainment: Corporate Education Meets Popular Culture* (Kingston, Ontario: Cedarcreek Publications, 2002), 139.

[43] Patricia McDonough, "Buying and selling higher education: The social construction of the college applicant," *The Journal of Higher Education* 65, no. 4 (1994): 427.

[44] Janice Newson, "Disrupting the 'Student as Consumer' Model: The New Emancipatory Project," *International Relations* 18, no. 2 (2004): 230.

[45] Gordan Chang and J R. Osborn, "Spectacular Colleges and Spectacular Rankings," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 5, no. 1 (2005): 338 - 364.

[46] Daniel Lang, "'World Class' or the Curse of Comparison," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 35, no. 3 (2005): 27 - 55.

ethos now circulates in the university, encouraging the re-conceptualization of education as an investment and the university as entrepreneurial.[47]

Some cultural commentators view the "commodification" of higher education as a semiotic and discursive process that is perhaps most obvious in promotional efforts.[48] According to such authors, the rhetorical devices used by universities in public relations strategies are historically, culturally, and socially situated and reveal the changing nature of higher education. Notably, Edgerton et al. describe the ways that we think about and visualize the university as a result of publicity images and popular cultural outlets.[49] In the late 1990s, Symes argued that promotional materials of Australian universities reveal the "degree to which schooling...continues to be shaped by market forces" and are indicators of the values attached to higher education. [50] This insight is equally as relevant for discussing the contemporary Canadian university. Like Symes, I employ a semiotic framework for case study analyses of university promotion.

---

[47] Joan Mount and Charles Belanger, "Entrepreneurship and image management in higher education: pillars of massification," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 34, no. 2 (2004): 125 - 140; Susan Talburt and Paula Salvio, "The Personal Professor and the Excellent University," *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture*, ed. Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber (New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 117 - 130.

[48] Sandra Ragan and Jill J. McMillan, "The Marketing of the Liberal Arts," *The Journal of Higher Education* 60, no. 6 (1989): 682 - 703; Norman Fairclough, "Critical Discourse Analysis and the Marketisation of Public Discourse: the universities," *Discourse & Society* 4, no. 3 (1993): 133 -168; Colin Symes, "Education for sale"; Colin Symes, "Selling Futures: A new image for Australian Universities?" *Studies in Higher Education* 21, no. 2 (1996): 133 - 146; Colin Symes, "'Working for your Future:' the rise of the vocationalised university," *Australian Journal of Higher Education* 43, no. 3 (1999): 241 - 256; Simon Marginson, "Education and the Trend to Markets," *Australian Journal of Education* 43, no. 3 (1999): 229 - 240; Gerlinde Mautner, "The Entrepreneurial University: a discursive profile of higher education," *Critical Discourse Studies* 2, no. 2 (2005): 95 - 120.

[49] Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber, eds., *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture* (New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005).

[50] Symes, "Education for Sale," 133.

Methodology

Selection of universities

This thesis examines five Ontario universities, including two large universities with a total student population of over 30,000 students (York University and The University of Western Ontario), two medium sized universities with a population size between 15,000 and 25,000 students (University of Windsor and Guelph University), and one small university comprising less than 10,000 students (Lakehead University). Located in various urban and rural locations across Ontario, each university has unique characteristics. For example, Windsor is located on the Canadian/American border and has strong ties to regional industries in both countries. On the other hand, York is situated in Toronto and must distinguish itself among other local institutions such as the University of Toronto and Ryerson University. According to the *Maclean's* magazine method of categorization, Western is categorized as "Medical-Doctoral" because of extensive graduate programs, research facilities, and professional schools in medicine and dentistry. Guelph, Windsor, and York are considered "Comprehensive" universities due to their wide range of undergraduate and graduate degrees, alongside research and professional programs. Finally, Lakehead is a "Primarily Undergraduate" institution that focuses on degrees at the undergraduate level, with minimal graduate studies or professional programs.

In addition, each university has a unique heritage, representing distinct historical moments in the development of the Ontario university system. In some cases, the universities evolved from religious institutes to become public institutions. For instance, Western was founded in 1878 as an Anglican institution and secularized in 1908. It has long been affiliated with a number of denominational colleges, including Huron College in

London (established in 1863), and Assumption College in Windsor (established in 1857). Assumption College, a Roman Catholic institution, secularized to become the University of Windsor in 1962. Furthermore, two of the universities in consideration for this project were formerly colleges. Lakehead evolved from a technical institute (established in 1946), to become the Lakehead College of Applied Arts and Science and Technology (1956), then achieved status as a degree-granting university in 1962. Soon after, Guelph was constituted (1964) from three existing institutions: the Ontario Agricultural College (1874), the Ontario Veterinary College (1862) and the MacDonald Institute (1903). Finally, like many other Ontario universities, York University (1959) was founded during a period of university sector growth, primarily in response to population increases in Toronto.

Universities active in marketing were chosen to allow for a wide range of promotional materials for analysis. All five universities conducted major recruitment, reputational, and/or fundraising campaigns between 1997 and 2007. In every case, this included the design of a new corporate logo to replace the traditional university crest, a (re)branding campaign and positioning strategy, as well as the placement of university advertisements in print and online publications, broadcast media, and in outdoor spaces such as transit stations and billboards. Finally, each university in this study has had an online presence since 1997, with several subsequent website redesigns.

Collection of promotional material

The study focuses on the design and implementation of promotional strategies for the purposes of undergraduate recruitment. Specifically, I analyze the 2008 Viewbook (used during the 2007 recruitment season) from all five institutions. In addition, I address the changing online identity of each university based on homepage screen shots from the

month of September for 1997 through to 2007.[51] From these online homepages, I obtained the university symbols (logos, taglines, crests, and wordmarks) used over the years. The *Maclean's University Rankings* editions from 1997 to 2007 were also used as a source of university advertisements.[52] In addition, photos of each university's display at the Ontario Universities' Fair (OUF) were analyzed.[53] Other promotional materials (images and sound and video files) were obtained through university news releases and websites, as well as from news articles in the mainstream media (for example, the *Globe and Mail, London Free Press,* and *Maclean's).* In cases where materials could not be found, a request was made to the appropriate department at each university.

Semi-structured Interviews

A major part of this project included semi-structured interviews with a university communications officer from each of the five institutions. These 30-minute discussions were recorded, transcribed, and used as the foundation for a historical timeline of promotional efforts presented in Chapter Two.[54] Conversations with communications officers also allowed for insight into the current education marketing landscape and on how administrative perspectives on marketing have changed over time. In addition, I conducted a 60-minute phone interview with education marketer Ken Steele Senior Vice-President at Canada's only marketing firm specializing in higher education, Academica Group, Inc.

---

[51] Screen shots were obtained through the Wayback Machine (http://www.archive.org/web/web.php).

[52] *Maclean's* magazines were accessed in the periodicals at DBW Weldon Library, The University of Western Ontario.

[53] Photos were obtained on official OUF website (http://www.ouf.ca/about_photos.shtml#/)

[54] Please see Appendix 1 for a sample interview guide. Interviews took place on the phone (Lakehead, York, and Guelph), via email (Windsor), and in-person (Western).

This unique insight into the professional world of higher education marketing was invaluable to my study.

Analysis of Materials

This thesis documents the changes in university promotional practices throughout the last decade and closely examines the meanings and messages constituted in promotional texts through a semiotic and discursive analysis. Conveying key information about the institution and its academic programs will always be a central purpose for university promotional materials; however, just as important are manifest ways that the university communicates to students. By treating education marketing materials as a representational system, we can better understand the sometimes deliberate, but often unintentional, social assumptions that underlie texts.[55] Employing a "social constructionist approach," I recognize that cultural meanings are formed and circulated through university promotional materials.[56] Problematically, advertisements are especially prone to being "glossed over" because they are so prevalent in consumer capitalist society, and university advertisements are no exception.[57]

A semiotic approach is therefore appropriate for the study of university promotion since the method allows for an investigation of the way that meaning is constituted within advertisements.[58] Moreover, a semiotic analysis goes beyond the "ready to read" meanings that are "waiting to be internalized by the viewer" and uncovers how signs are organized in

---

[55] William Leiss, Stephen Kline and Sut Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising: consumption in the mediated marketplace* 3rd ed (New York: Routledge, 2005), 200.

[56] Stuart Hall, *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997), 8.

[57] Robert Goldman, *Reading Ads Socially* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 2.

[58] Leiss, Klein, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising* 3rd Ed., 200.

relation to each other and to society more broadly.[59] Furthermore, semiotics can help to uncover how promotional materials work by "peeling back the layers" of meaning constituted within them.[60] Roland Barthes' discussion of myth is an important aid in revealing how university advertisements naturalize images which are historically contingent on idealized notions of enlightenment, the "knowledge economy," and reflexive personal growth. This study exposes gaps in the rhetorical framework of promotional materials, revealing narratives that are "without depth," devoid of historical context, and seemingly free of contradictions.[61]

Like all social practices, higher education marketing also has a discursive aspect that shapes and influences how social actors inside and outside of the university conduct themselves. According to Foucault, discourse constructs a topic; it rules in and rules out ways of meaningfully speaking, writing or acting.[62] Both the discursive and semiotic practices of university promotional materials can be considered ideological. Louis Althusser argued that ideology is a system of representation that interpellates people, hails them to assume a predefined subjectivity. Indeed, through promotional materials the university not only speaks *of* itself, but also *to* an audience of socially constructed prospective high school students, calling on them to actively participate in the world of higher education.

---

[59] Leiss, Klein, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising* 3rd ed., 201.
[60] Goldman, *Reading Ads Socially*, 2.
[61] Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," *Mythologies*, Trans. Annette Lavers. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 150 - 159.
[62] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Pantheon, 1977).

Chapter Breakdown

As we evaluate the university's place in society, what standards (new or old) can be used? Chapter One addresses the issue of how the university affects and is affected by societal changes. In the last century, academia has shifted from an elite, sequestered space to a formidable pillar of democracy and accessibility. Importantly, just as the university has changed, so too have public attitudes. The constant tension between the function of the university and societal expectations has generated a considerable amount of academic scholarship. This chapter chronicles the history of Canadian universities, particularly Ontario universities, according to three main discussion points: 1) the cultural and utilitarian functions of universities, 2) university "corporatization" and a service-orientation, and 3) university responsiveness to societal changes.

In Chapter Two, I focus on the underdeveloped topic of how market logic affects university administrative practices and communications strategies, leading to a university which acts as a business in its institutional self-representation and rhetoric. Using five Ontario universities as case studies, I chart the historical emergence of marketing, focusing on the introduction of a formal organizational culture for marketing higher education beginning in the 1970s and blossoming in the 1980s. By the late 1990s, universities in Ontario were *promotionalized* and no longer relied on "natural" reputation to direct recruitment efforts; rather, they strategically planned promotional efforts in tandem with institutional missions and mandates.

Universities now actively position themselves within a competitive educational marketplace, while managing an institutional brand. Brand association can easily translate into institutional reputation, which is especially important for ranking exercises. Rankings,

such as those by *Maclean's* magazine, encourage universities to produce quantitative results by placing each institution in a competitive hierarchy. Combined with performance indicators and other accountability initiatives, rankings contribute to a consumer-orientation among students which is predicated on misleading notions of freedom of choice and consumer sovereignty. For the Millennial generation, born in the mid-1980s onward, higher education credentials are essential for participation in the "knowledge economy;" the promotional university contributes to a cycle of credentialism by employing commercial marketing techniques which emphasize vocational aspects of university education.

Chapter Three begins with a theoretical discussion of how marketing materials are linked to identity formation and acts of consumption. Following this, I look closely at recruitment material from two universities: The University of Western Ontario and Lakehead University. Previous American studies of university marketing materials have revealed that institutions are placed in a "rhetorical dilemma" when they promote themselves, conflicted between a traditional cultural role based on classical, liberal arts education and a more pronounced utilitarian and vocational function that has a direct relationship with the "knowledge economy." I conclude that this "rhetorical dilemma" exists in Ontario and is useful in delineating the multiple, evolving roles of the university. It is also important for identifying how tensions and contradictions are glossed over in promotional materials (for example, the university is portrayed as simultaneously accessible and "excellent"), contributing to the perpetuation of ideological myths.

Rhetorically and visually, universities have not simply done away with their traditional cultural role; instead, they have combined narratives of tradition with those of

technological progress. This perspective of the university as both traditional and progressive is naturalized in promotional materials. However, when this imaging is closely scrutinized, the complex and contradictory agenda of the Canadian university environment becomes more evident. Overall, idealized imagery and universalizing discourses can be considered counterproductive to the recruitment process. They inaccurately represent the university environment, frame higher education as a type of investment, rather than a process of discovery and learning, and do little to prepare the prospective student to expect a rigorous and challenging university experience. Recruitment materials that mimic advertising strategies of consumer products and services in an effort to resonate with prospective students' expectations therefore have the potential to promote, rather than discourage, a "student consumer" mentality.

University promotion therefore encourages conformity to, rather than reflection on, the existing consumer capitalist system. Specifically, universities are perpetuating a culture of consumption and credentialism by framing education as a prerequisite for both personal advancement and employment in the "knowledge economy." Although higher education has never been immune to outside forces, the extent to which Canadian universities now actively participate in the consumer capitalist system is significant. As evident in the case of university promotional materials, the logic and language of capitalist consumption has widened its reach in terms of the sheer number institutions which now think only in terms of exchange value, and deepened its reach in terms of the degree to which we use acts of consumption to make sense of our lives.

CHAPTER ONE: Historical Background

Introduction

There is a general uncertainty "as to the role of the University and the very nature of the standards by which it should be judged."[1] Academics, policy makers, and the general public often evaluate Canada's relatively young universities based on ideals of liberal education which have existed for centuries. At the same time, the university is also assessed in light of its professional training capacity and the credential requirements of a "knowledge economy." In this sense, Canadian university education is viewed as both a process (an endeavour with intrinsic social value, but no clearly definable or limited goal) and an end product (a visible utilitarian service exemplified by the reproduction of a qualified workforce and research and development initiatives). Many Canadian academics have discussed the interplay of these two views.[2] Few historians of universities would deny that preparing graduates for the working world has been a key purpose of Canadian

---

[1] Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (London: Harvard UP, 1996), 1.

[2] Bercuson et al., *The Great Brain Robbery: Canada's Universities on the Road to Ruin* (Toronto: McClelland and Steward Limited, 1984); Bercuson et al., *Petrified Campus: the Crisis in Canada's* Universities (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1997); Janice Newson and Howard Buchbinder, *The University Means Business* (Toronto, ON: Garamond P, 1988); Neil Tudiver, *Universities for Sale: Resisting Corporate Control over Canadian Higher Education* (Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 1999); Peter Emberley, *Zero Tolerance: Hot button politics in Canada's universities* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996); James Turk, ed., *The Corporate Campus: Commercialization and the Dangers to Canada's Colleges and Universities* (Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 2000); Paul Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars: Politics, Economics, and the Universities of Ontario 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982); Axelrod, Paul, Paul Anisef, and Zeng Lin, "Against all odds? The enduring value of liberal education in universities, professions and the labour market," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 31, no. 2 (2001): 47-77; Janice Newson, "The Corporate-Linked University: From Social Project to Market Force," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 23, no. 1 (1998). http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/1026/932 (accessed May 1, 2009); Janice Newson, "Disrupting the 'Student as Consumer' Model: The New Emancipatory Project," *International Relations* 18, no. 2 (2004): 227- 239; James E. Côté and Anton Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

universities since their inception.[3] However, the extent to which vocational aspects of the university have been increasingly emphasized has some academics wondering whether the Canadian university has lost its traditional *raison d'être.*[4]

This chapter explores the significant political, economic, and cultural forces which have helped to shape the contemporary university in Ontario. It is not possible or desirable to envision a university based solely on nostalgic ideals of erudition which tend to favour the humanities, restrict admission to an elite group, and fail to account for social change. Nonetheless, it is useful to outline how utilitarian and vocational aspects of education are now at the forefront of university and government agendas. Moreover, I illustrate how the university has become entrepreneurial and service-oriented, corresponding to a related increase in "student consumerism." Combined, this historical analysis lies at the foundation of a discussion of the contemporary promotional university presented in Chapter Two.

Nineteenth Century: Emergence of Canadian Universities

An ideal, liberal pursuit of knowledge for its own sake has been a central tenet of higher learning since the founding of the first European universities in the 13th century. In this sense, the university is evaluated qualitatively, according to its contribution to the universal search for truth and a deeper, more critical understanding of humanity. Liberal arts education aims to "cultivate knowledge of the broadest possible kind to make learning a

---

[3] Donald Fisher and Kjell Rubenson, "The Changing Political Economy: the Private and Public Lives of Canadian Universities," *Universities and Globalization: Critical Perspectives,* ed. Janice K. Currie and Janice A. Newson (Minneapolis: SAGE Publications, Incorporated, 1998), 85-86.

[4] Newson, "The Corporate-Linked University."

way of life that in the first place is pleasurable and then rigorously critical."[5] While preparing students for employment is undoubtedly a function of the university, a more central concern is the provision of "a liberal education with its emphasis on cultural heritage, critical thinking, communication skills, qualities of the mind and spirit, and education for citizenship."[6] Moreover, rather than training students *for* their career, the mandate of liberal arts education has traditionally been to prepare them *against* their future occupations through critical scholarship on a wide range of subjects.

In addition to offering broad liberal arts programs, these mediaeval universities were centers for professional training in fields such as medicine and law. Universities have therefore always been required to meet the economic needs of society by preparing students for professional careers. During the Enlightenment, the training function of the university was further emphasized. In addition, universities became focused on research, science, and ties with the nation-state. Founded in 1809, the University of Berlin was the leading model for the modern research-intensive university. The Enlightenment period also marked a significant increase in disciplinary specialization, as well as the foregrounding of the sciences, graduate studies, and professional programs at the expense of the arts and humanities.

The Canadian university model draws from established British and European institutions, as well as the American land-grant system; it is "an amalgam of universities

---

[5] Stanley Aronowitz, *The Knowledge Factory: Dismantling the Corporate University and Creating True Higher Learning* (New York: Beacon P, 2000), 161.

[6] Ann I. Morey, "Globalization and the emergence of for-profit higher education," *Higher Education* 48, no. 1 (2004): 143.

past."[7] In Scotland, universities emerged in the 18th century as socially engaged institutions, "not only centers of learning and scholarly inquiry but institutions that bridged such pursuits with public life and debate."[8] In Canada, industrialization and a growing middle class in the late 19th century highlighted the need for increased access to higher education. According to George Fallis, "[w]herever industrialization and nation building were interconnected national priories, as in Canada, the Scottish model was influential."[9] Upper Canada's first university, King's College in Toronto, was established in 1827 as a symbolic and practical move to protect the Crown, preserve its cultural heritage, and train future colonial leaders.[10] King's College had close ties to the Church of England, but also received public funding from the government of Upper Canada. The introduction of Queen's College in Kingston, a Presbyterian school, and Victoria College in Cobourg, a Methodist institution, brought about issues of "denominational favouritism" in government funding.[11] King's College secularized in 1849, becoming the University of Toronto; however, it was not until 1868, a year after confederation, when the Ontario government announced that only secular institutions (Toronto, Western, and Queen's) would be eligible for public funds. Provincial funding for secular institutions was established and carried through into the next century; however, the government-university system still lacked a formal decision-making process and structured rules for governance. The *Flavelle Commission* of 1906 proposed a bicameral system of governance, including an academic

---

[7] George Fallis, "The Mission of the University," *CSSHE Professional File* 26, no. 1 (2005): 6.
[8] Craig Calhoun, "The University and the Public Good," *Thesis Eleven* 84, no. 1 (2006): 13.
[9] George Fallis, "The Mission of the University," 13.
[10] Glen A. Jones, *Higher Education in Canada: Different Systems, Different Perspectives* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 137.
[11] Ibid., 138.

senate and an appointed board of governors, enabling universities to remain autonomous yet publicly funded and accountable.

Early Twentieth Century: A Combined Economic and Cultural Mandate

The *Flavelle Commission* reinforced the university's dual function as a centre for intellectual culture and professional training.[12] The latter role became more pronounced as industrialization advanced in the late 19th century and, correspondingly, the need for white collar workers grew. Former farm and trades workers adapted to this new system by seeking education for employment in high demand areas such as business, managerial work, engineering, teaching, sales, and clerical work.[13] Traditional professions such as medicine, law, clergy, civil service, dentistry, and pharmacy established professional associations for accreditation as demand for services multiplied in urban areas. Universities were tasked with providing the costly training facilities for such professions.[14]

Despite an increasing focus on vocational training, the university still demonstrated a strong cultural function by cultivating students' character through the study of literature, languages, and philosophy. Even as students were recognizing the increasing importance of the professions and fields such as agriculture, business, and commerce, over half were still choosing to enrol in traditional arts and science courses between 1900 and 1930.[15] Furthermore, as Paul Axelrod shows, the advent of mandatory public schooling in the mid-1920s lengthened the period of institutional supervision over young Canadians.[16] The

---

[12] Paul Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars*, 45.

[13] Paul Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada During the 1930s.* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1990), 7.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 12.

[16] Ibid., 15 - 16.

university's role in shaping minds with common cultural values and morals was ever more important to Canada's growing youth population. While university education during the early 1900s was reserved for less than five percent of eligible young adults, the majority came from the "modest middle-class," rather than the elite and extremely wealthy.[17] The university not only trained students for careers, but also prepared citizens for entering or re-entering the middle class, in accordance with a British cultural heritage.

Significantly, WWI highlighted the need for "educated citizens, skilled workers for the industrial era, and public research institutions that could rival other countries." Axelrod documents the 1916 creation of the National Research Council, which promoted scientific research and was indicative of an increase in "public awareness of the need for sophisticated advances in the industrial sector" to compete globally in and out of wartime.[18] Furthermore, the emergence of new disciplines such as economics, academic psychology, commerce, politics, and sociology contributed to the rising use of experts to advise policy makers. At this time, "the academic pursuit of reason and the scientist's pursuit of truth were ...thought to be reconcilable with activity in government."[19] Universities demonstrated their utilitarian function during WWI and, later, during the Depression, when economists from universities worked in tandem with policy makers.[20]

Many students enrolled in commerce and business administration courses, hoping to advance their careers in the private or public sector. The number of students enrolled in commerce degrees in Canadian universities rose from 334 to 1065 during the time period

---

[17] Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class*, 24.
[18] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars,* 12.
[19] Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class*, 59.
[20] Jones, *Higher Education in Canada*, 141; Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class,* 42.

of 1922 to 1941.[21] Sentiments toward the university were increasingly allied with its vocational and utilitarian function. In 1938, Governor General Lord Tweedsmuir declared that "[a] university must fulfill a utilitarian purpose. Its work must serve some recognizable social needs. A smattering of general culture will be of little use to a young man if he is going to starve."[22] The Depression did not completely transform the nature of student life; liberal arts courses were still required in most programs, extra-curricular activities continued to thrive, and enrolment in Canada remained steady, increasing only slightly from 31,576 to 34,817 between 1930 and 1940.[23] What was evident, however, was a continuing emphasis on developing business and applied social science programs, in addition to professional fields, for the purposes of job advancement.

Although the utilitarian function of the university advanced during WWI and the Depression, the culture of credentialism had not fully set in. The private sector was particularly sceptical of university graduates, viewing them as idealist, opportunist, less likely to take orders, and unwilling to work their way up from the bottom of the company.[24] Universities actively tried to reverse this attitude by incorporating the "pervasive spirit of pragmatism" into their philosophy of higher education.[25] Universities remained cultivators of moral, political, and ethical values, but they were also in-tune with the economic realities of Canada, both in and out of wartime. They would produce graduates who were educated, well-bred, and equipped with the problem solving and

---

[21] Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class,* 59 - 60.
[22] Ibid., 42.
[23] A. B. McKillop, *Matters of Mind: the University in Ontario, 1791-1951* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 319.
[24] Ibid., 60.
[25] Ibid., 42.

critical analytical skills necessary for any career. Thus, the university itself had a critical role in promoting a vocational identity and pragmatic function during the early 1900s.

The Second World War heightened the importance of university-based expertise. This time, however, the global nature of WWII emphasized the importance of university research and development to national security.[26] The post WWII influx of nearly 37,000 former soldiers as a result of the 1945 *Veterans Rehabilitation Act* added to the approximately 40,000 students already enrolled in Canadian universities.[27] This legislative move represented the first of many interventions by the federal government over what has been considered since 1867 a provincial authority and further reinforced the view that universities were a "natural resource" that could greatly benefit Canadians. After WWII, Canadian standards of living continued to rise, the Baby Boomer generation was born, and universities took on a new meaning based on their social and democratic role in society.

Mid-Twentieth Century: Government Supported Expansion

Beginning in the 1950s, a rising population and ground swell of support from governments and the public propelled the expansion of Ontario's relatively small university system. By 1950, the Ontario higher education system consisted of only three public universities, several denominational private colleges, and some smaller specialized institutes for technical, professional, or occupational training.[28] The Ontario provincial government had firmly established a policy of nondenominational support, and granted its public institutes a

---

[26] McKillop, *Matters of Mind,* 563.
[27] Tudiver, *Universities for Sale,* 20.
[28] Jones, *Higher Education in Canada,* 141.

high degree of autonomy in allocating funding.[29] University autonomy prior to the 1950s was more directly a result of government indifference (with not one legislative vote on higher education between 1917 -1950), than concerted support for academic independence.[30] In the 1940s the number of bureaucrats in charge of all of higher education was still in the single digits and a higher education ministry had not yet been established.[31] However, as universities secularized, as the Baby Boomers matured, and as Canada became increasingly intertwined with the American economic and cultural "imperial orbit," it became clear to the Canadian federal and provincial governments that proactive measures needed to be taken in regards to higher education.[32]

The clearest example of increasing government involvement in the university sector is the 1951 *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences,* chaired by Vincent Massey, which addressed the future of higher education in Canada. The commission's report recommended a stronger cultural function for the university as "nurseries of a truly Canadian civilization."[33] In addition, the *Massey Commission* argued for federal government support via per capita provincial grants, which would be distributed by the provinces based on full-time enrolment. The federal government agreed and almost immediately began allocating funds. In 1954, Ontario received $2,523,000; these resources continued to increase, and by 1967 public funding for post-secondary education in Canada reached 71 percent of all university expenditures.[34] Notably, the *Massey Commission* also

---

[29] Jones, *Higher Education in Canada*, 142.
[30] Tudiver, *Universities for Sale*, 28.
[31] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars*, 77.
[32] McKillop, *Matters of Mind,* 563.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., 564.

recommended the formation of a Canada Council to support arts, humanities and social sciences, which later materialized in 1957.

During the 1950s, the perceived importance of universities rose, contributing to the expansion of existing institutions, as well as the creation of many new universities. According to McKillop, the *Massey Commission*'s recommendations (especially increased state funding) were "applauded by universities and accepted by government and public alike, [and] suited the expansive and generally optimistic atmosphere of post-war Canada."[35] University enrolment was expected to more than double over the next decade as a result of a growing youth population who had come to view higher education as essential to obtaining employment.[36] Indeed, the 1957 *Report on the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects* concluded that both personal security and individual progress was, in the public's mind, secured by a university degree. According to Glen Jones, "by 1960 there was no longer a question of whether the infrastructure for higher education in Ontario should be expanded; the issue was how to do it. Evidence of the public need and desire for university expansion was coming from all directions."[37] Furthermore, "human capital theory" – a justification for increasing investment in human resources such as education based on a concomitant increase in standards of living – took hold of academics and policy makers alike.[38] For example, the Economic Council of

---

[35] McKillop, *Matters of Mind*, 564.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Jones, *Higher Education in Canada,* 14.
[38] Paul Anisef and Paul Axelrod, "Universities, Graduates and the Marketplace," *Transitions: schooling and employment in Canada,* ed. Paul Anisef and Paul Axelrod (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 1993), 104.

Canada produced a report stating that a post-secondary education increased the earnings of a man by 30 percent.[39]

During the late 1950s and 1960s, the number of Ontario universities grew significantly, due primarily to a rising population, economic prosperity, and Keynesian economic policies. In response to regional needs, universities secularized (e.g., Carleton in 1952), colleges were awarded degree granting status (e.g., Lakehead University in 1965), and satellite campuses were established (e.g., the University of Toronto opened campuses in Scarborough and Erindale). Furthermore, several universities were launched: University of Waterloo (1957), Waterloo Lutheran University (1959, later renamed Wilfred Laurier University), York University in Toronto (1959), Laurentian University in Sudbury (1960), the University of Windsor (1963), Trent University in Peterborough (1963), Brock University in Saint Catharines (1964), and the University of Guelph (1964, an outgrowth of the Ontario Agricultural College).[40]

Even though, as Axelrod explains, university expansion was based on economic needs relating to a growing service-oriented workforce, it was promoted to the public as a democratic project allowing for increased accessibility. Similarly, Newson and Buchbinder explain how a liberal vision of the university guided the construction expansion of the university system. They see this liberal vision not in abstract terms, but as a real material blueprint for social progress: increasing social mobility, access to education, diversity within the university, and the breadth of studies available.[41] Canada was a "meritocratic

---

[39] McKillop, *Matters of Mind*, 26.
[40] Ibid., 566.
[41] Howard Buchbinder and Janice Newson, "Corporate-university linkages in Canada: transforming a public institution," *Higher Education* 2, no. 1 (1990): 355 - 379.

democracy, and all citizens should have an equal chance at class mobility."[42] University enrolment in Canada grew by 300 percent in the years between 1955 and 1968 compared to only a 45 percent increase in population.[43] Consequently, expenditures increased 600 percent between 1960 and 1970.[44] The government facilitated this expansion not just by providing funds, but also by developing a government body of fulltime policy development and research personnel.[45] By the 1970s, universities were supervised by a new ministry specific to higher education, the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities, which employed approximately 900 bureaucrats.[46] Furthermore, universities were able to maintain a high degree of institutional autonomy by banding together through organizations such as the Council of Ontario Universities, where presidents meet regularly to discuss matters of common concern such as government funding.

Late Twentieth Century: Corporate Collaboration and the Service University

The expansion of Ontario universities slowed in the 1970s, a response to declining enrolment, rising unemployment rates, a shift to neoliberal policies, and economic downturn. The recessions of the 1970s and 1980s disrupted the "unqualified faith in the value of higher education" evident in the previous decades.[47] The university was no longer seen as "the great equalizer;" instead, the general public began to view the university as a fundamental part of the economic problem, consuming public resources at an alarming

---

[42] Bercuson, *Petrified Campus*, 47.

[43] Tudiver, *Universities for Sale,* 44.This growth can also partly be accounted for by a rising population of female students in the education system, an increase in part-time students, and improved financial assistance to aid students with financial difficulties.

[44] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars,* 54.

[45] Jones, *Higher Education in Canada,* 144.

[46] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars*, 77.

[47] Anisef and Axelrod, "Universities, Graduates and the Marketplace," 104.

rate.[48] Gallup polls revealed that, in 1965, 89 percent of Canadians believed that more money was needed for the higher education system; however, by 1971, 49 percent of Canadians thought that the costs of running universities were too high.[49] Likewise, in 1971 the Economic Council of Canada reversed its position, stating that the return on investment for higher education was significantly lower than before system expansion.[50] The Canadian public now questioned, rather than championed, the role of the university: "Like a ship without a rudder, it was seen to be paralyzed in the face of fiscal problems it was ill equipped to manage and to be lacking a sense of purpose in a rapidly changing society."[51] If the university was to survive as a public resource and private right, it must prove its own worth in the market. In the words of the then Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities, John White, universities must seek "more scholar for the dollar."[52]

In addition, due to the struggling youth labour market, students of the 1970s were less concerned with democratic education for the citizenry and more interested in chasing the "elusive career opportunities once taken for granted in the 1960s."[53] Similarly, faculty discontent in the 1970s and 1980s centered mainly on individual salaries, departmental policies, and curriculum, rather than on institutional policies. This decline in communal goals and planning to direct the university is characteristic of growing individualism in an expanding consumer society.[54]

---

[48] Jones, *Higher Education in Canada,* 147.
[49] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars,* 146.
[50] Ibid., 145.
[51] Newson and Buchbinder, *The University Means Business*, 54.
[52] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars,* 147.
[53] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars,* 201.
[54] Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 1997), 8.

The 1980s saw a stepped-up "corporate agenda" for universities in Ontario. [55] Canada's major research granting councils, university administrations, and provincial and federal governments argued strongly that greater cooperation and collaboration with industry was necessary.[56] In 1981, Ottawa reduced funding in the Established Programs Financing arrangement and redirected funds to programs in research and science to meet the economic needs of the country and, in effect, to support the social project of consumer capitalism. The same year, the Ontario Board of Industrial Leadership and Development was set up to match industry grants for university research. Later, in 1987 the Liberal government in Ontario set up an incentive project to further encourage industrial participation with academia. Also, in 1987, Centres of Excellence for Scientific Research were established on campuses across Ontario. The federal government encouraged similar practices through the introduction of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research in 1982, as well as through the Corporate Higher Education Forum (CHEF) in 1983. CHEF produced one of the boldest arguments for collaboration with industry, stating that "universities in Canada have a crucial role in facilitating economic recovery and assisting in the transition into the hightech era."[57] By the 1990s, corporate collaboration was a routine administrative strategy among Canadian universities, encouraged by a conservative agenda at both the federal and provincial levels.

The increased "corporatization" proposed by CHEF was realized more fully as a result of changes in the federal funding formula for universities. In the mid-1990s, the

---

[55] Buchbinder and Newson, "Corporate-university linkages in Canada," 355.

[56] William Bruneau, "Shall we Perform or Shall we be Free?" *The Corporate Campus: Commercialization and the Dangers to Canada's Colleges and Universities,* ed. James Turk (Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 2000), 164.

[57] Buchbinder and Newson, "Corporate-university linkages in Canada," 360.

federal government cut transfer payments by $10.6 billion over four years, and then shortly after began reinvesting money strategically, so as to encourage greater industry-university collaboration in targeted areas of research.[58] For instance, in 1996, federal Finance Minister Paul Martin introduced a new programme of funding for advanced "mission-oriented research" through the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI). The CFI is an organization that was legislated as an independent corporation and given one billion to distribute to universities over five years, with another $300 million in 2004.[59] Similarly, the 1999 report of the federally commissioned Expert Panel on Commercialization of University Research controversially recommended that "innovation" should be made a fourth pillar of research, alongside research, teaching, and service.[60] At one point, The Panel even went as far as to recommend that a professor's commercialization "track record" be incorporated in decisions about tenure.[61] In addition, the Panel pushed for an increase in industrial liaison offices on university campuses. In 2000, Ontario also launched a construction plan, the "SuperBuild" program for universities funded 50 percent by the private sector and, predictably, with strong emphasis on applied sciences, business and technology.[62] Administrative forums such as CHEF and the Expert Panel, quasi-government organizations like the CFI, and corporate collaboration in areas such as infrastructure are just some of the ways that a university-corporate agenda was pursued.

---

[58] Claire Polster, "The nature and implications of the growing importance of research grants to Canadian universities," *Higher Education* 53, no. 5 (2007): 601.

[59] Bruneau, "Shall we Perform or Shall we be Free?"; "Premier announces at least $300 million for R & D," *Council of Ontario Universities News Release*, 6 Oct. 2004, http://www.cou.on.ca/content/objects/OIT%20annoucement%20from%20Summit%20-%20Oct%206.pdf (accessed May 1, 2009).

[60] Nelson, *Schooling as Entertainment,* 130.

[61] Bruneau, "Shall we Perform or Shall we be Free?" 166.

[62] Axelrod, Anisef, and Lin, "Against all odds?" 44 - 77.

The widespread use of cost-benefit analyses and market measures of performance accompanied increased corporate collaboration in the 1990s and 2000s. With the liberal vision in retreat, efficiency and accountability became key measures of success in university management.[63] There are some clear public policy trends accompanying "globalization," the "knowledge economy," and a neoliberal political climate. Universities function in multiple markets (i.e. for students, professors, sponsors, etc.), and as they compete for funds in each of these areas, market logic is increasingly employed. For instance, there are greater requirements for information dissemination to correct issues in "consumer choice" stemming from ill-informed purchasing decisions among students.[64] One outgrowth of this is the increasing prevalence of outside organizations that rank or rate the performance of the university.

Under the market model, the university becomes more akin to a central service provider, than a community of learning. The "service university" – a term coined by the Science Council of Canada - is "deceptively compelling" for students.[65] On one hand, it implies that the university is being responsive to societal needs, and therefore also acting as a responsible public institution. However, viewed through a market lens, students benefit greatly from education and will therefore be required to bear a greater portion of the cost. This creates a user-pay approach to education.[66] Indeed, combined government spending per student has declined substantially, from $17,900 in 1980-81 to $9,900 in 2006-07

---

[63] Newson and Buchbinder, *The University Means Business*, 17.

[64] Stacey Young, "The use of market mechanisms in higher education finance and state control: Ontario considered," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 32, no. 2 (2002): 79 - 101.

[65] Newson and Buchbinder, *The University Means Business*, 66.

[66] Fisher and Rubenson, "The Changing Political Economy," 80.

[figures in constant 2006-2007 CAD].[67] The largest cuts were made in Ontario in 1996-1997, when the government reduced operating grants by over 15 percent ($280 million).[68] Increasingly, student fees and external revenue have filled the funding gap. In 1996-1997, undergraduate tuition in the general arts and sciences increased by 10 percent, and an additional 10 percent increase was available to institutions at their discretion.[69] In addition, Ontario deregulated tuition for graduate and professional programs in 1998. As a result, fees have increased drastically. From 1995 to 2001, tuition for medicine and dentistry rose 241 and 315 percent respectively. Tuition for law programs in Ontario increased by 141 percent during this same period.[70]

Market mechanisms which foster competition and encourage deregulation and privatization are now commonplace in Ontario's higher education system, representing a marked shift in government perspective. Whereas from the 1950s to the 1970s provincial and federal governments fostered and protected the development of higher education, they are now increasingly "willing to trust to the private sector the achievement of basic social goals."[71] For example, in 2000 Ontario Premier Mike Harris formally introduced a performance indicators (PI) system, similar to the one used in Alberta, which linked funding to the employment rates of university graduates.[72] The concomitant focus on the efficient allocation of resources according to market imperatives represents an

---

[67] Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, *Trends in Higher Education – Volume 3: Finance 2007,* http://www.aucc.ca/publications/auccpubs/research/trends/trends_e.html (accessed February 2, 2009). AUCC data was drawn from Statistics Canada resources.

[68] Glen A. Jones, "Ontario Higher Education Reform, 1995-2003: From Modest Modifications to Policy Reform," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education,* 34, no. 3 (2004): 39.

[69] Jones, "Ontario Higher Education Reform," 39.

[70] Marc Fernette, "University Access Amid Tuition Deregulation: Evidence from Ontario Professional Programs," *Canadian Public Policy* 34, no. 1 (2008): 91.

[71] Young, "The use of market mechanisms."

[72] Axelrod, Anisef, and Lin, "Against all odds?"

unprecedented compromise between the autonomous university and the demands of capitalist society.

Overview: Social Change and the Responsive Public Institution

The university has traditionally been thought of as having a protected, privileged space within society.[73] This distance or relative seclusion from mainstream culture allows the university to stand apart from everyday political and economic issues in order to critically analyze them without repercussion. Robert Young suggests that the university should "function as surplus that the economy cannot comprehend."[74] However, a historical analysis of the development of Canadian universities reveals that there has always been an economic impetus and utilitarian motivation for higher education.

Furthermore, the history of Canadian universities highlights "the vulnerability of higher education to shifting perceptions of its economic importance."[75] The link between education and Canada's economic prospects was established during the World Wars and economic Depression of the early 1900s. However, this link was strengthened considerably in the 1950s through several government commissioned studies, as well as the use of "human capital theory" to explain the value of credentials and "manpower forecasting" to predict future job markets. Moreover, as part of post-war Keynesian social-welfare policies, the positioning of the university in direct relation to the economy was an important component for managing production and consumption. The industrialization of Canadian society required skilled workers and professionals to run companies. In addition, the drastic

---

[73] Calhoun, "The University and the Public Good," 11.
[74] Readings, *The University in Ruins,* 124.
[75] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars,* 6.

increase in population necessitated more lawyers, doctors, teachers, and professionals of every nature. Education was not only integral to obtaining a career and a particular consumer lifestyle, but was also an essential component of the productive capacity of Canada's workforce. For this reason, higher education took on both a functional and an ideological meaning; it would turn out educated workers and consumers, and advance the larger political economic project of capitalism while serving seemingly egalitarian goals.

This ideological project is evident in the post-WWII policy discourse and the organizational literature of the university which represented the relationship between the university and society as one-way and reactionary: society shapes the university and the university simply succumbs to external demands.[76] Universities that do not keep up with changing societal demands are seen as "irrelevant," "isolated," "elitist," or "naïve."[77] According to Janice Newson, the reactionary view ties the university to issues of the "knowledge economy," globalization, and consumer capitalism in a disempowering way.[78] That is, rather than being a force for change in society (as it has been traditionally viewed), the university is at the mercy of uncontrollable external pressures.

Newson believes that this perspective is also "mystifying" since it "camouflages the extent to which the university itself is implicated in the very social, political, and economic forces to which it then 'must' accommodate."[79] Universities have actively pursued ties with corporations, the government, and the military. Moreover, in the early half of the 20th century, universities promoted their utilitarian and pragmatic functions in an effort to

---

[76] Newson, "The Corporate-Linked University," 67.

[77] James Small, "Reform in Higher Education in Canada," *Higher Education Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (1995): 115.

[78] Newson, "The Corporate-Linked University," 67.

[79] Ibid.

increase graduate employment rates. Janice Newson is among many who hold that the *modus operandi* of the university is now increasingly aligned with the corporate world.[80] Watch words and criteria such as "efficiency," "productivity," or "accountability" are appearing in the most unlikely places (for instance, mission statements, marketing materials, and strategic plans). Buchbinder and Newson argue that a focus on research, innovation, and corporate collaboration to solve short-term financial problems has increasingly "become the blueprint for carrying universities forward....As the blueprint reconstructs more and more aspects of its activity, the university becomes the mirror image of its corporate partners."[81] Problematically, when university administrators, government policy makers, or members of the community speak about the university in relation to the needs of the "knowledge economy," "they sound so nonpartisan, so sophisticated and logical, as to seem to represent the new 'common sense' of what higher education should be all about."[82] Wayne Ranke has discussed this scenario, describing it as the "colonization of educational activities by commercial categories."[83] He noted that critics of the "corporate university" tend to fall into one of three different types of analyses: 1) assessing the risks associated with corporate relationships; 2) evaluating the institutional directions and priorities; or, 3) appraising the quality of post-secondary education and the repercussions of "commercialization."[84] According to Renke, a more fruitful analysis

---

[80] Newson, "The Corporate-Linked University," 67.

[81] Buchbinder and Newson, "Corporate-university linkages in Canada," 377.

[82] Paul Axelrod quoted in Turk, *The Corporate Campus,* 202.

[83] Wayne Renke, "Commercialization and Resistance," *The Corporate Campus: Commercialization and the Dangers to Canada's Colleges and Universities,* ed. James Turk (Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 2000), 35.

[84] Ibid., 31.

would result from a discussion of the conceptual framework within which post-secondary education is increasingly understood.

For instance, the integration of the university with the consumer capitalist economy involves the subsequent reorientation of knowledge as a commodity and the student as a consumer. University education is no longer primarily viewed as a collective cultural activity and a public good, but as a private right, a quasi-product or service to be purchased.[85] It is important to remember that students, faculty, and administration work and live inside and outside of the institution; they bring their cultural values with them from home to school and vice versa. Randle Nelson described how the development of the Canadian university was intricately connected to the changing political economic climate of the 20th century, and also tied to the maturation of a consumer culture as an institutionalized, shared way of thinking and acting.[86] As more of our lives and identities are mediated by a market system of exchange, the pervasiveness of consumer capitalist logic is reinforced and recreated.

The "commodification" of education is encouraged by institutionalized instrumentalism evident in student evaluations of courses, outcome based learning practices, and an underlying focus on credentialism. While the term "student consumer" is contested, the phenomenon itself is evident.[87] Education is cultural capital, acquired by students in order to participate in the "knowledge economy." James Côté and Anton Allahar write that a consumer-orientation of varying degrees is widespread and is fostered

---

[85] Buchbinder and Newson, "Corporate-university linkages in Canada," 375.

[86] Randle Nelson, *Schooling as Entertainment: Corporate Education Meets Popular Culture* (Kingston, Ontario: Cedarcreek Publications, 2002).

[87] Jill McMillan and George Cheney, "The Student as Consumer: the Implication or Limitations of a Metaphor," *Communication Education* 45, no. 1 (1996): 6.

by one primary disposition: viewing education as a means to an end, rather than a process.[88] The awareness that students sometimes act as consumers or customers has been documented since the early 1980s.[89] Many authors have written on how students view their education as: "a stamp on one's life passport," "qualification earning," "a ticket of admission to a job," or "something that 'happens' to them in return for paying tuition."[90] Characteristic of what Michael Peters terms "autonomous choosers," students proceed through university on their own terms; they choose the program, select courses, expect a learning style that fits their needs, evaluate the performance of professors, and rate their experience based on individual achievement.[91] Peter Emberley agrees that students are encouraged to think of the university as a corporate service provider, and themselves in terms of "learner satisfaction."[92]

In regards to the university, the notion that "a wider spectrum of students requires a wider spectrum of choice" is prevalent among public policy makers.[93] Consequently, alternatives to the public university system are increasingly being pursued. For instance, in Ontario the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act 2000* was enacted to remedy issues of funding and access by offering Ontarians more degree choices. The act extended the "degree-granting environment" in Ontario by including all colleges of applied arts and technology (CAATs) and private not-for-profit and for-profit institutions. The act

---

[88] Côté and Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues,* 67.

[89] J. R. Penn. and R. G Franks, "Student consumerism in an era of conservative politics," *National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Journal* 19, no. 3 (1982): 28 - 37.

[90] Raymond T. Lee and Celeste Botheridge, "Correlates and Consequences of Degree Purchasing among Canadian University Students," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 35, no. 2 (2005): 71.

[91] Newson, "Disrupting the 'Student as Consumer' Model," 235.

[92] Emberley, *Zero Tolerance*, 22.

[93] Geoffrey E. Cudmore, "The Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act 2000, and the Development of Private Universities and Private Post-secondary Degrees in Ontario," *hep.oise.utoronto.ca* 1, no. 2 (2005): 6.

was strongly opposed by the Ontario Federation of Students, the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.[94] Such organizations argued that a public/private hybrid system will continue to drain public resources through student financial aid schemes and higher drop-out rates, and that it will compromise the integrity, collegiality, and autonomy of the university system in Ontario. Since the Act was passed, Ontario has added an additional degree-granting institution, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, designed to provide education in sectors of the economy which are growing or in demand. In addition, many colleges (for example, Humber, Conestoga, and Sheridan) have begun to offer "applied bachelor" degrees in Arts, Business, Information Technology, Information Sciences, and Environmental Sciences, sometimes in collaboration with a partner university. While the intellectual value of such programs cannot be discounted altogether, the emphasis on "fast-tracking" through academic programs and the combination of theory and practice to increase the shelf-life of degrees represents a departure from critical ideals of learning in the university. Moreover, the rising demand for such combined college/university programs highlights a shifting perception of what is considered to be a valuable education (the use-value of a degree) among the general public.

There are now over one million university students in Canada (up from 6,800 in 1900, 36,000 in 1940, and 300,000 in 1970).[95] Nearly half of these students are located in

---

[94] Cudmore, "The Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act 2000," 7.

[95] Côté and Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues,* 26. Since 1987, student enrolment in Canada has increased by 56 percent, with 31 percent of this growth occurring between 2000 and 2006. In Ontario, this is largely a product of the 'Double Cohort' of graduating high school students in 2003, resulting from the elimination of the grade 13 year. Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, *Trends in Higher Education – Volume 1: On Enrolment 2007,* http://www.aucc.ca/publications/auccpubs/research/trends/trends_e.html (accessed February 2, 2009).

Ontario.[96] Upon graduation, these students will enter the "knowledge economy," a post-Fordist system of manufacturing requiring a flexible workplace and service-oriented careers. Contemporary career patterns are less stable, less linear, and consequently, less predictable. Students are "reflexively aware" of the need to direct themselves into marketable and prestigious programs in order to advance their careers after graduation.[97] Likewise, universities are aware that competition for the best students, faculty, and funding is mounting. Post-secondary enrolment is projected to peak around 2012 or 2013 as a result of the echo-Baby Boom, adding 211,000 young people to the pool of higher education applicants. This number is then expected to decline by 400,000 by 2028.[98] Furthermore, shifts in population will not be consistent across Ontario's regions. For instance, Thunder Bay has already witnessed a declining youth population and as a result its Public School Board has closed over half of its institutions. Increasingly, outer-lying universities such as Lakehead University will be looking in cities like Toronto (whose immigrant youth population continues to rise) for students.[99] In addition, retiring faculty from the Baby Boomer generation will continue to encourage new faculty hires. As a result, universities are increasingly focusing on differentiating themselves in a competitive higher education

---

[96] According to Statistics Canada, there were 441,495 students enrolled in Ontario in 2006-2007. "University enrolments by registration status and sex, by province," *Statistic Canada,* 2009, http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/educ53a-eng.htm (accessed March 26, 2009).

[97] Richard Wellen, "The University Student in a Reflexive Society: Consequences of Consumerism and Competition," *Hep.Oise.Utoronto* 1, no. 1 (2005): 26-27.

[98] Darcy Hango and Patrice de Broucker, " Post-secondary Enrolment Trends to 2031: Three Scenarios," *Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics* (2007), 14. http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-595-m/81-595-m2007058-eng.htm (accessed March 26, 2009).

[99] Education marketer Ken Steele also predicts that schools will be focusing on mature student programs, part-time education and distance education to fill enrolment gaps. Ken Steele, "Selling the Academy Without Selling Out," *Academic Matters,* February/March 2009, http://www.academicmatters.ca/current_issue.article.gk?catalog_item_id=2078&category=/issues/MAR2009 (accessed March 26, 2009).

market in order to compete for the best student and faculty, and concomitantly for government dollars, research grants, and corporate contracts.

Conclusion

In the 21st century, university degrees are key indicators of individual success in a "knowledge economy" and the university performs a vital research function that greatly adds to the global competitiveness of the nation. Canadian universities are more attuned to their economic utility than ever. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada estimates that universities are a $26 billion enterprise in Canada, larger than such sectors as pulp and paper, oil and gas extraction, and motor vehicle manufacturing.[100] The Canadian university, once a relatively elite institution with a primarily cultural role, has taken on a democratic function to allow for increased participation from Canadians. The rising population of students, however, is a primary result of the perceived economic or utilitarian function that a university degree serves after graduation. Vocational aspects of the university have been emphasized by universities since the early 1900s and were promoted by governments in the 1950s and 1960s as part of the justification for increased funding and expansion. The utilitarian function of the university has now come to dominate the discursive arena, guide policy decisions, and govern public consensus on the role of the university in society.

---

[100] Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, *Trends in Higher Education – Volume 3: Finance 200*, 4, http://www.aucc.ca/publications/auccpubs/research/trends/trends_e.html (accessed February 2, 2009).

It has always cost money to run programs, pay salaries, and maintain facilities; however, "post-secondary education... while *in* the market, has not been *of* the market."[101] In its practices, as well as language and logic, the university is promoting an internal institutional culture centered on the utilitarian functions of higher education.[102] This change in rhetoric does not represent a new university (the Canadian university has historically been tied closely to Canadian society and economy), but it does indicate an unprecedented level of responsiveness to the economic needs of society. The reorientation of students as consumers of educational products also signifies the extent to which the university has become intertwined with consumer capitalism in its function and purpose. In the following chapter, I discuss how, in addition to borrowing managerial techniques and business strategies from the commercial world, the university has also adopted the promotional strategies prevalent in a consumer culture, and has become *promotionalized.*

[101] Renke, "Commercialization and Resistance," 36.
[102] Newson, "The Corporate-Linked University."

CHAPTER TWO: The Promotional University

The relationship between public universities and the private sector is shifting, largely as a result of government financing programs which target research and development in the science and technology sectors. In addition to the university's corporate linkages, there are also many indicators of a cultural shift in the organizational logic and language of the university.[1] The increased use of marketing for recruitment purposes reflects the "corporatization" of the university both in practice (i.e. collaboration with business) and ideology (i.e. the internalization of marketing language and logic). Colin Symes argues that "the re-ordering and rationalisation of educational budgets [and]...various [other] facets of education's symbolic economy" is evident in the educational systems of developed countries.[2] Manipulating this "symbolic economy" in order to position an institution within a competitive educational marketplace is a fundamental way that universities can affect their self-representation to students, donors, and other (so-called) key "stakeholders." A "new consciousness about appearance" has propelled many Canadian universities to embark on progressively more sophisticated promotional campaigns,[3] producing what Canadian academics Joan Mount and Charles Belanger describe as "the game of prestige."[4]

---

[1] Janice Newson, "Disrupting the 'Student as Consumer' Model: The New Emancipatory Project," *International Relations* 18, no. 2 (2004): 233.

[2] Colin Symes, "Education for sale: A semiotic analysis of school prospectuses and other forms of educational marketing," *Australian Journal of Education* 42, no. 2 (1998): 133, http://find.galegroup.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca:2048/itx/start.do?prodId=AONE (accessed February 3, 2009).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Joan Mount and Charles Belanger, "Entrepreneurship and image management in higher education: pillars of massification," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 34, no. 2 (2004): 125.

In this chapter, I analyze the recruitment activities of five Ontario universities between 1997 and 2007 to illustrate what Andrew Wernick terms the "promotional university:" an institution which no longer relies on its "natural" reputation or actual quality to attract students, faculty, and donors.[5] Reputation is now a deliberate exercise that requires complex coordination between university faculties and administrations to establish a brand, ensure consistency in messaging, and strategically position the university within the higher educational landscape. Wernick explains, "[r]ather than just evolving, each university's collective identity becomes a matter of obsessive definition, becoming in the end a wholly artificial construct."[6] Universities employ strategies of positioning, branding, and ranking in order to promote a manufactured institutional identity. As well, characteristics of the university which are best experienced, or evaluated qualitatively, are instead quantified and promoted as measures of "excellence" and prestige.

The term promotion, rather than advertising, is used in this chapter to signify the broader practices of signification that go beyond the "immediately commercial."[7] Indeed, many university recruitment efforts are touted as informational endeavours that will help students make rational choices. In effect, however, this encourages a student-as-consumer model of admissions and recruitment that is heightened by more commercial modes of recruitment (i.e. billboards, web banners, and recruitment fairs). Thus, in addressing promotional activities over the last decade, this chapter also considers how university recruitment efforts reflect and respond to students of consumer capitalism.

---

[5] Andrew Wernick, *Promotional Culture: Advertising, ideology, and symbolic expression.* (New York: Sage Publications, 1991); Andrew Wernick, "Rebranding Harvard," *Theory, Culture and Society* 21, no. 2/3 (2006): 566 - 567.

[6] Wernick, *Promotional Culture,* 157.

[7] Ibid., 181.

Background: Higher Education Marketing in Canada

Historically, universities engaged in promotional efforts primarily to inform the local community of its activities.[8] Mission statements defined the institution and program quality served as the primary selling-point. All an institution needed to do, it was thought, was to provide the appropriate information on the quality and character of the institution, program details, and admissions information in order for prospective students to choose a school with the best fit.[9] Text-heavy recruitment materials were usually produced separately by faculties or departments, rather than a central administrative office, and professional assistance was not commonly sought out, except for printing and publication purposes.

By the late 1960s, marketing concepts were being applied to non-commercial sectors of society. In 1969, American marketing scholar Philip Kotler launched his first "conceptual grenade" within marketing studies, arguing that marketing was a "technology" that could be applied to all social issues. Kotler held that marketers are really "furtherers," and their skills could therefore be useful to a wider range of institutions.[10] The broadened marketing movement included new types of organizations and new types of transactions, encompassing public, non-profit, and for-profit organizations. In 1975, Kotler and Fox published a marketing "recipe" text-book titled *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations* and later zeroed in on the educational sector with *Strategic Marketing for Educational*

---

[8] Symes, "Education for Sale," 133.

[9] Don Hossler, "Effective Admissions Recruitment," *New Directions for Higher Education* 27, no. 4 (1999): 15.

[10] Alan R. Andreasen, "Intersector Transfer of Marketing Knowledge," *Handbook of Marketing and Society*, ed. Paul N. Bloom and Gregory T. Gundlach (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001), 83.

Institutions (1985).[11] This text has become something of a "blueprint" for marketing universities and other educational institutions. Evidently, cultural categories that were once thought to be separate (education and advertising) had begun to intersect.[12]

According to Kotler and Fox, institutions are more aware of marketing when their environment is unstable or changing, as was evident in the 1970s in the newly expanded North American higher education sector.[13] Likewise, sociologist Peter Berger "posits that a thriving institution must continuously adapt its official language to a societal marketplace that is continually in a position to reject it."[14] During the late 1970s and 1980s Canadian universities began to market themselves for recruitment purposes and to speak the language of the marketplace. In 1973, voluntary recruitment guidelines were established by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) to hedge against disagreement among academics and administrators regarding the use of marketing. The guidelines forbade the use of extravagant advertising campaigns, as well as overt or implied comparisons with other schools.[15]

The voluntary guidelines, however, did not slow the increasing use of marketing concepts by Ontario universities. For example, Western and Guelph (Figure 2.1), advertised in *University Affairs* and Lakehead had been using radio advertisements since 1976. In 1980, Lakehead's registrar Pentti Paularinne commented that "we have to

---

[11] Philip Kotler, *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975); Philip Kotler and Karen A. Fox, *Strategic marketing for educational institutions* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985).

[12] Simon Marginson, "Education and the Trend to Markets," *Australian Journal of Education* 43, no. 3 (1999): 305.

[13] Philip Kotler and Karen Fox, *Strategic marketing for educational institutions* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1995), 8.

[14] Peter Berger cited in Sandra Ragan and Jill J. McMillan, "The Marketing of the Liberal Arts," *The Journal of Higher Education* 60, no. 6(1989): 683.

[15] Tausig, "Aggressive Recruiting," 4.

undertake advertisements because of our location. We can't afford to sit back smugly as some older, more established universities do and say we don't have to advertise. It's important to inform people of our existence."[16] Similarly, the University of Guelph was also trying to promote a new image. In 1979, a Guelph radio advertisement played in Ontario ten times a day for six weeks to the tune of a catchy jingle:

> High school's behind me/I'm headin' on out
> Wanna Keep on learnin'/Gonna find myself
> Find self a place/Gonna check out Guelph
> Myself and Guelph.[17]

In addition, Guelph developed "flashy" promotional posters and advertisements that ran in Ontario weekly newspapers and *Teen Generation,* a magazine distributed free to Ontario high school students.[18] Writing in the early 1980s, Paul Axelrod declares this to be an example of the "more extreme and questionable tactics" used by Canadian universities.[19]

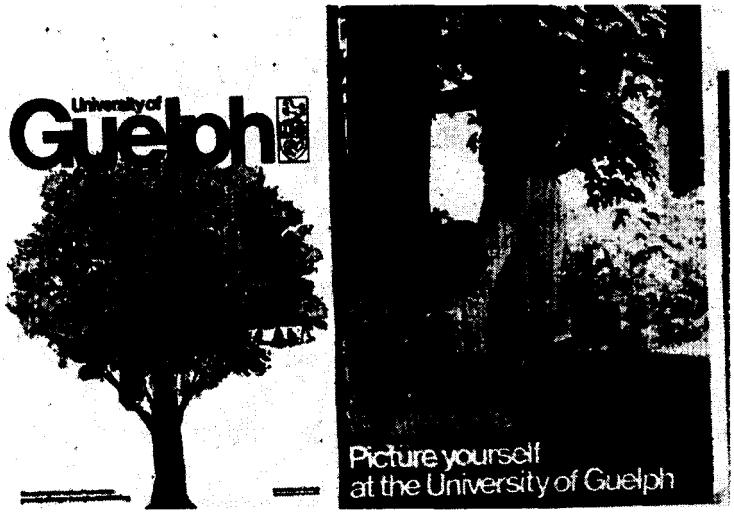

Figure 2.1 University of Guelph - University Affairs Ad (1980)

---

[16] Christine Tausig, "Aggressive Recruiting: for some essential for others anathema," *University Affairs,* March 1980: 3.

[17] Paul Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars: Politics, Economics, and the Universities of Ontario 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 194.

[18] Tausig, "Aggressive Recruiting," 3.

[19] Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars*, 194.

The 1980s saw a "marketing explosion" in North American higher education.[20] In Canada, the cost of recruiting in 1980 was estimated to range from $200 to $2,000 per student. In 1980, McMaster University registrar A.L. Darling claimed that the university spent approximately $120,000 a year in its conservative recruitment program. Collectively, Ontario universities spent approximately $1 million recruiting students in 1980.[21] Even though these figures represent a very small portion of the overall operating budget, the use of marketing techniques and the penetration of marketing vocabulary into the everyday administrative practices created much controversy. In 1980, *University Affairs* journalist Christine Tausig wrote that "extravagant" marketing was viewed as vulgar, undignified, and even an "academic evil;" university officials at the time believed that when recruitment becomes aggressive and moves away from informational recruitment, it was the students who would suffer.[22] Others disagreed, claiming that marketing was the only way for smaller, less well-known universities to survive.

Although universities in Canada were advertising as early as the 1970s, there was little evidence of coherent, long-term marketing plans and branding strategies. Even two decades later, a 1993 study based on interviews with administrators from Alberta universities revealed that universities were advertising on an ad hoc, reactive level, and were not involved in long-term marketing research and planning, due primarily to funding restraints.[23] Similarly, in Ontario, university communications officers describe the use of professional recruitment materials prior to the 1990s as "piecemeal" and haphazard,

---

[20] V. Buell, "The marketing explosion," *Marketing and Media Decisions* 21, no. 7(1986), 1.
[21] Tausig, "Aggressive Recruiting," 5.
[22] Ibid., 2.
[23] Steve Michael, Edward Holdaway and Clifton Young, "Administrators' Perceptions of Institutional Marketing," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 4, no. 1/2 (1993): 3 - 25.

unguided by a comprehensive marketing strategy. The University of Guelph had a "mishmash" of publications developed by various faculties and departments.[24] Similarly, York University promotional material "looked as if it had come from 60 different places."[25] Many programs or faculties ran recruitment programs on their own, and even the central university administration often had several distinct promotional efforts on the go at any one time; for instance, it was not uncommon for alumni affairs, undergraduate recruitment, and faculty recruitment materials to be administered by separate departments, be produced by three different print agencies, and to each have a distinct look and feel.

By the late 1990s, some of the universities under study were developing undergraduate recruitment plans in tandem with other facets of university public relations. This was usually done through a central recruitment or public relations department, often in collaboration with a marketing firm. For instance, in 1997 the University of Windsor, in collaboration with Toronto consulting firm Spencer Francey and Peters (now Cundari SFP), launched a combined recruitment, fundraising, and reputational campaign under the slogan "The Degree that Works." As part of the campaign, Windsor placed advertisements in the *Windsor Star*, the *Globe and Mail*, and *Maclean's* (Figure 2.2). However, it was not until after the new millennium that all five universities developed strategic marketing campaigns centered on branding. Notably, Western adopted the tower logo in 2000 to spearhead a new fundraising and reputational campaign titled "Campaign Western." In 2003, Lakehead launched the "We See You" campaign across Ontario. York produced a major rebranding campaign under the slogan "Redefine the Possible" beginning in 2004,

[24] Interview with University of Guelph Communications Officer (Telephone), October 1, 2008.
[25] Interview with York University Communications Officer (Telephone), November 19, 2008.

and later, in 2007, Guelph re-branded itself under a new cornerstone and tagline, "Changing Lives. Improving Life."

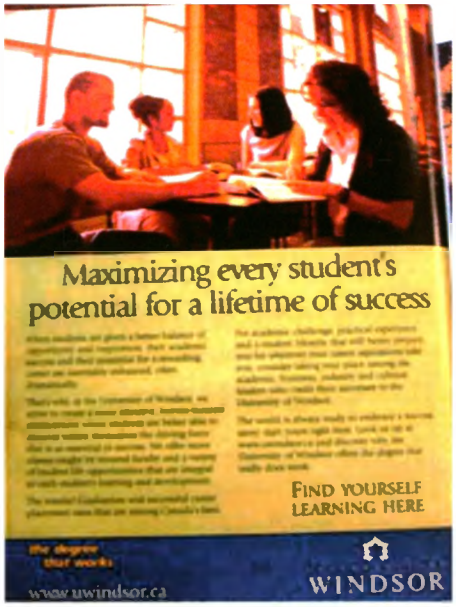

Figure 2.2 University of Windsor – "The Degree That Works" Campaign Ad (2002)

Education marketing specialist Ken Steele agrees that it has only been in the last decade that Canadian universities have developed internal communications departments to allow for increases in promotional activity, as well as a more centralized approach to marketing.[26] Positions were recently established at universities to unify and direct promotional efforts. In 2003, Lakehead University and York University created and filled the positions of Director of Communications and Chief Marketing Officer with applicants from outside of the academic sector. That same year, Western created the position of Associate Director of Creative Services to head marketing initiatives focused on recruitment and reputation management. As universities were expanding their internal

[26] Ken Steele, "Selling the Academy Without Selling Out," *Academic Matters,* February/March 2009 http://www.academicmatters.ca/current_issue.article.gk?catalog_item_id=2078&category=/issues/MAR2009 (accessed March 26, 2009).

communications departments, they also increasingly sent out Request for Proposals to private sector marketing agencies to assist with market research and promotional planning. Academica Group is a private consulting firm specializing in the higher education sector which, while unique in Canada, is common in the U.S. All five Ontario universities in this study have an advertising Agency of Record (AOR) to direct their marketing efforts.[27]

An institutional commitment to image and reputation management has also facilitated the development of the recruitment and promotional capacity of Ontario universities. University strategic plans and budget documents now single out the recruitment and communications division(s) for special mention and financial support. For instance, "raising the profile and improving the reputation of the university" was cited as a key priority of the University of Windsor's latest strategic plans, 1999 *Best of Both Worlds* and 2004 – 2009 *To Greater Heights.*[28] To this end, Windsor's budget for promotional efforts rose from $622,000 in 2002 - 2003 to $1,200,000 in 2007 - 2008.[29] Similarly, Western's Communication and Public Affairs base budget has more than doubled from $913,230 in 2000 - 2001 to $2,098,450 in 2007 - 2008. This is in addition to an Undergraduate Student Recruitment base budget fluctuating between $425,000 - $475,000 during the same time period, as well as millions in one-time allocations for special marketing projects such as "Campaign Western," a fundraising and re-branding campaign

---

[27] Currently, the universities under study are working with the following AORs: York – doug agency (http://www.dougagency.com); Western – The Marketing Department (http://www.themarketingdepartment.ca); Windsor - Cossette Communications (http://www.cossette.com); Guelph – Cundari SFP (http://www.cundari.com); and, Lakehead – Fantail Communications Inc. (http://fantailinc.com)

[28] Interview with University of Windsor Communications Officer (E-mail), October 7, 2008.

[29] Ibid.

that focused on redesigning the visual identity of the university.[30] For the remaining three universities in this study, marketing budgets are more difficult to discern because they are embedded within larger budget lines for registrarial services. However, increased promotional efforts, including collaboration with outside firms, suggests that monetary support is available.

An Organizational Culture for University Marketing

The promotional efforts of Ontario universities have been supplemented and encouraged by formal practices, professional agencies, awards systems, and shared perspectives on higher education marketing. For instance, since at least the 1970s, the Ontario University Registrar's Association (OURA) has organized joint university liaison activities such as the University Information Program (UIP), a travelling high school fair involving all of Ontario's universities.[31] In addition, OURA hosts annual conferences to discuss issues and trends in recruitment, admissions, and communications and a summer liaison workshop to prepare liaison officers for the upcoming fall recruitment season. A 1995 OURA review of joint liaison activities (hereafter termed the 1995 *Ontario Liaison Review*) highlighted that "the image of the university system in Ontario is in need of a 're-think' and consequential refurbishing. Certainly, a more intensive job of articulating the role of universities and their achievements is a necessity."[32] Collaboratively, it was concluded, universities could more efficiently accomplish this goal.

---

[30] UWO Operating Budgets can be found at http://www.ipb.uwo.ca/

[31] Tausig, "Aggressive Recruiting," 2.

[32] OURA, "Together we will prosper," *Ontario University Registrars' Association Commission to Review Joint University Liaison Activities,* June 1995, 8.

Notably, since 1997 OURA has organized the annual Ontario Universities' Fair (OUF), an exhibition-style event held in Toronto. A communications officer at Guelph recounted the first event, when universities had simple science fair style displays with thumbtacks holding up brochures and posters. At the first OUF, Wilfrid Laurier University impressed participants with a display featuring a movable part that flashed "WLU." Since then, "the level of sophistication and the size of the displays have grown terrifically, exponentially."[33] In 2000, Western displayed a new 12 foot high purple and white structure with "larger than life" pictures of students.[34] Every institution now features a professionally designed and technologically enhanced display at the OUF. Furthermore, give-away promotional items such as lanyards, t-shirts, and memory sticks are common. In 2007, a record 90,000 students and their parents attended the three day event (Figure 2.3).[35]

Figure 2.3 OUF - Metro Toronto Convention Centre (2007)

[33] Interview with University of Guelph Communications Officer (Telephone), October 1, 2008.

[34] Interview with The University of Western Ontario Communications Officer (In-person), January 27, 2009.

[35] "About the Fair," *Ontario Universities Fair: 2009*, http://www.ouf.ca/about.shtml (accessed February 10, 2009).

The introduction of awards systems is another indication of an emerging higher education marketing culture. Since 1998, the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education (CCAE), a volunteer led organization that promotes excellence in educational advancement, has been recognizing the promotional efforts of universities through their Prix D'Excellence awards. University promotional materials are judged in categories such as "Best Institutional Homepage on the World Wide Web," "Best Print Ad or Ad Campaign," "Best New Idea: Creativity on a Shoestring," and "Best Program: Student Recruitment." The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) is an international organization of professionals advancing educational institutions in areas such as alumni affairs, public relations, and fundraising/development. Since 2000, CASE has awarded Circle of Excellence prizes to institutions in 39 categories, including "Communications and Marketing." Thus, an organizational culture for the marketing of higher education has been established, serving to support, legitimize, and, ultimately, extend the promotional activities of universities.

In the last decade, marketing's stigma as a "hard sell" approach used only by institutions in the private sector has almost entirely disappeared. According to an administrator at the University of Windsor, "it has been a struggle for most universities to come around to the point of view that marketing is an important part of what we need to do; [however,] dollars are too tight for us to afford the luxury of saying, 'we'll just see what happens.'"[36] Similarly, a University of Guelph communications officer describes how marketing used to be a dirty word, but that its need is now "understood."[37] A Lakehead

[36] Interview with University of Windsor Communications Officer (E-mail), October 7, 2008.
[37] Interview with University of Guelph Communications Officer (Telephone), October 1, 2008.

University communications officer enthusiastically adds that marketing "terminology was very alien to this institution when I first came here. But now everyone talks about my 'AOR,' my 'creatives,' and my 'media buys' – it's really great to listen to them talk. It has become part of the university lexicon."[38]

Marketing Strategies 1997 – 2007: positioning, branding, and ranking the university

Positioning the University

Universities now employ a range of marketing strategies to position themselves and communicate their core messages. Mount and Belanger argue that the impetus to stand out has caused universities to utilize image management techniques that are typically used by the private sector. According to them, "image and reputation have become highly marketable commodities, assisting as they do to differentiate institutions from one another and enhance the marketability of a given institution's offerings."[39] Filling enrolment quotas is vital for every institution, but drawing high quality students who will significantly enhance the overall quality of a learning environment is the ultimate goal. As one Windsor communications officer states, "Canadian universities can all pretty much claim with validity that they turn out a good product – that their profs care about students, that their researchers are changing the world, that they are going to provide the best student experience."[40] Given this, the process of differentiation is especially important for universities, involving the deliberate ordering of institutional characteristics and values.

---

[38] Interview with Lakehead University Communications Officer (Telephone), October 27, 2008.
[39] Mount and Belanger, "Entrepreneurship and image management in higher education," 133.
[40] Interview with University of Windsor Communications Officer (E-mail), October 7, 2008.

For many institutions, establishing and promoting an identity begins with the question: Who does the organization serve and why does it exist?[41] By answering this, universities identify a position within the educational market that spotlights a unique set of services.[42] There are several ways that a university can position itself; for instance, an institution may choose to foreground its geographic location, small size (as a measure of quality), or mission statement and character (e.g. research-intensive). In every case, the university is appealing to a specific segment of society. For instance, Lakehead's isolated rural location might be seen as a disadvantage to some; to assert its competitive advantage, Lakehead represents itself as a green, "indie" university which may attract environmentally conscious, social activist students.

Often, the positioning claim can be found in the school's slogan and/or mission statement. For instance, York's slogan "Redefine the Possible" speaks to its commitment to interdisciplinary studies. Chief Marketing Officer, Richard Fisher explains:

> this interdisciplinary thing is no chimera, but is grounded in the mission outlined by York's founding president, Murray Ross, in 1960: "No one in his right mind would today oppose the need for a high degree of specialization. But to have specialization and nothing else is to possess but half an education . . . we shall try to break down the barriers of specialization, to give to York University students a sense of the unity of knowledge."[43]

Based on this vision, York's "Interdisciplinary Campaign" includes a series of images with a range of "points of view." For example, a *Globe and Mail* plastic newspaper wrapper

---

[41] Tony Conway, Stephen Mackay and David Yorke, "Strategic Planning in Higher Education: Who Are the Customers?" *International Journal of Educational Management* 8, no. 6 (1994): 29.

[42] Larry Litten, "Marketing Higher Education: Benefits and Risks for the American Academic System," *The Journal of Higher Education* 51, no. 1 (1980): 44.

[43] Richard Fisher, "Mighty contests: the controversy over universities and branding," *University Affairs* June 2005, http://www.universityaffairs.ca/article.aspx?id=1882 (accessed March 26, 2009).

reads: "an environmentalist sees deforestation;" "A finance major sees circulation numbers;" and, "A Canadian studies student sees a national icon" (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4 York University – Interdisciplinary Campaign Newspaper Wrapper (2005)

Western, which prides itself on research facilities and student life, has a mission statement that doubles as a slogan: "Western provides the best student experience among Canada's leading research-intensive universities." Western's most recent strategic planning reports, *Making Choices 2001* and *Engaging in the Future 2006*, underscored the importance of this mission statement for the purposes of reputation management and successful recruitment. However, a study found that while most postsecondary institutions in Canada use the mission statement as an indicator of their strategic direction, many statements lack specificity and substance to adequately position the institution.[44] For some, universities need to be more "focused and deliberate in their purpose" by delineating a niche or specialty,[45] a view shared by Bill Readings:

> University mission statements, like their publicity brochures, share two distinctive features nowadays. On the one hand, they all claim that theirs is a unique

[44] Donna S. Finley, Gayla Rogers and John R Galloway, "Beyond the Mission Statement: Alternative Futures for Today's Universities," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 10, no. 4 (2001): 65.
[45] Ibid., 67.

> educational institution. On the other hand, they all go on to describe this uniqueness in exactly the same way.[46]

To differentiate themselves, universities have begun to reinvent their mission statements or rely more heavily on an institutional slogan or positioning statement.

According to Symes, these textual manoeuvres represent the extent to which market discourse has entered university administration, as well as the "degree to which the discursive universe of academia is moving away from its humanist and critical ideals."[47] Certainly, it represents a university which is actively adopting positioning strategies in order to stake claim to a place in the educational marketplace. Through positioning, university promotional strategies, like those for commercial products, appeal to segments of prospective students, rather than a homogenous group. In other words, the style and image of the educational service is emphasized over actual properties or functions in order to appeal to a particular type of student.[48]

Positioning also tends to pit universities against one another in the race for students, faculty, and donors. This is especially the case when more than one university competes for students within the same region. For instance, in 2004, York implemented a "subway domination campaign," blanketing the St. George subway station (a major transfer point on the Toronto subway line and a University of Toronto subway stop) with advertisements (Figure 2.5).[49] Similarly, in 2006, Western strategically placed a billboard ad close to the campus of McMaster University. Western's Director of Undergraduate Recruitment and

---

[46] Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (London: Harvard University Press, 1996), 12.

[47] Colin Symes, "Selling Futures: A new image for Australian Universities?" *Studies in Higher Education* 21, no. 2 (1996): 137.

[48] Ibid., 141.

[49] "York U branding campaign voted best in North America," *York News Release,* 25 May, 2009, http://www.yorku.ca/yfile/archive/index.asp?Article=4565 (accessed March 26, 2009).

Admissions, Lori Gribbon, responded to the media attention garnered by the so-called "sneak attack" by claiming that "it's just the way of the world."[50]

Figure 2.5 York University – Interdisciplinary Campaign Ad (2005)

Finally, Lakehead's 2006 "Unlike Any Other" and subsequent "Yale Shmale" marketing campaigns involved an advertising blitz with fifteen second TV spots, posters canvassed across the GTA, online ads, a micro-site (www.yaleshmale.com) and t-shirt giveaways. "Yale Shmale" ads featured a picture of American president George Bush and the message that going to an Ivy League school does not make you smart (Figure 2.6). Instead, the message "positions Lakehead as a smart choice for both current and prospective students."[51] The ad certainly portrays the President in harsh light and, consequently, sparked controversy with the Lakehead's student and faculty associations, as

---

[50] Peter Van Harten, "Western launches sneak attack at Mac," *The Hamilton Spectator,* 4 Mar. 2006: A01.

[51] "Lakehead University contest winner has book smarts and street smarts," *Lakehead News Release,* 23 Aug 2007, http://communications.lakeheadu.ca/news/?display=news&nid=379 (accessed March 26, 2009).

national and international news media.[52] The ad campaign was not designed to elicit comparisons between Lakehead and Yale, other Ivy League U.S. universities, or even well-known Canadian universities like McGill or the University of Toronto; instead, it characterizes Lakehead as an "indie" university which, despite its non-Ivy League status, is a smart choice for students who "want to make a difference in the world." Just as Lakehead positions itself as the right university for politically or socially conscious students, other universities are carving out their own niche in the higher education market. As universities find themselves in a "positional arms race" for students, marketing campaigns are increasingly central for defining and promoting institutional identities.[53]

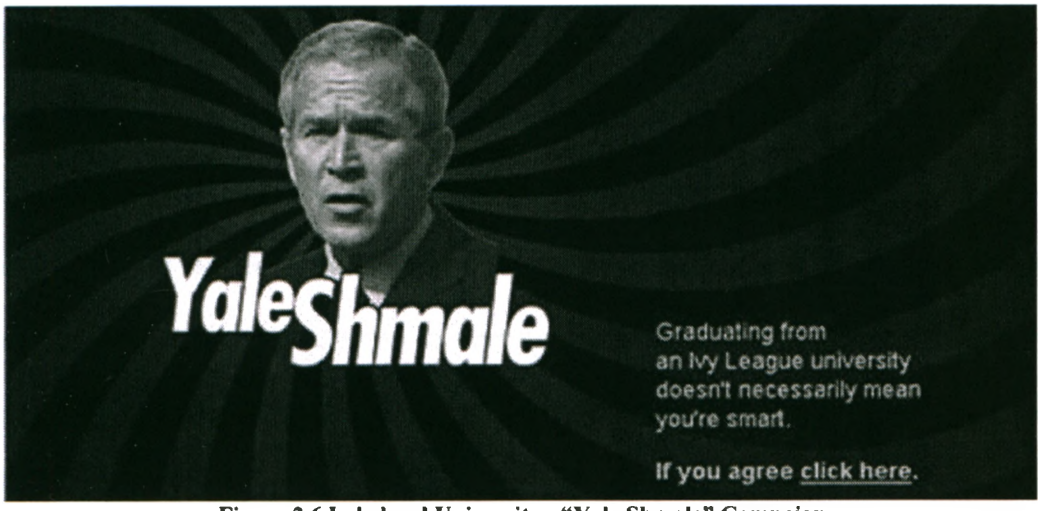

Figure 2.6 Lakehead University - "Yale Shmale" Campaign Web Ad (2006)

---

[52] For example: "University Pokes Fun with Yale Schmale Campaign," *CBC News Online,* 1 Sept. 2006, http://www.cbc.ca/consumer/comm-oddities/2006/09/university_pokes_fun_with_yale.html (accessed May 2, 2009); Daniel Girard, "University Recruits Students with Bush 'Yale Shmale' Campaign," *Toronto Star,* 26 Aug. 2006; Kelly Patrick, "U.S. President Bushwacked by university campaign," *Vancouver Sun,* 26 Aug. 2006; "Canadian University in Campaign Row," *BBC News Online,* 29 Aug. 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5294690.stm (accessed May 2, 2009); and Monica Mark, "New ad Targets Yale Name," *Yale Daily News,* 17 Sept. 2006, http://www.yaledailynews.com/articles/view/17925 (accessed May 2, 2009).

[53] Richard Wellen, "The University Student in a Reflexive Society: Consequences of Consumerism and Competition," *Hep.Oise.Utoronto* 1, no. 1 (2005): 30.

Branding the University

Branding strategies are now employed in order for the university image to more effectively "seep into the public consciousness."[54] According to Symes, branding involves "transmuting a bland institution into a brand name, so that it stands out amongst its peers, like an Oxford, a Harvard, with a clearly defined and crystallised educational aura and set of resonating images."[55] Wernick adds that

> From websites to architecture, from fundraising to student recruitment, from mission statements to touted areas of excellence, from orientation week to convocation, from profiling star faculty to choosing a president/vice-chancellor, every dimension of the institution has come to be pressed into the service of cultivating a public image in line with its management's chosen competitive strategy.[56]

As such, branding is fundamentally concerned with the symbolic or perceived value of a university, rather than its actual qualities. Branding is an attempt to control this symbolic value by strategically directing the images and messages circulating about the institution.[57] Brands are shared by a community; they create trust, value, and a sense of commonality. Branding strategies are thus attempts to steer or direct the commonly shared values surrounding a product or service.[58] To aid in this endeavour, all of the universities under study now have sections on their website that cover topics such as the institution's brand, graphic standards, positioning statements, and media relations.[59] As in Wernick's analysis

---

[54] Symes, "Selling Futures," 136.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Wernick, "Rebranding Harvard," 566.

[57] Marita Strunken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009), 290.

[58] Adam Arvidsson, "Brands: A Critical Perspective," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 5, no. 2 (2005): 236.

[59] For instance, Windsor University has a "Windsor Brand" website (http://www.uwindsor.ca/units/pac/brand.nsf/inToc/10FF8B04FF3A317885256D88005720F6?OpenDocument), Lakehead has a "Visual Identity Program" (http://communications.lakeheadu.ca/?display=page&pageid=4), and Western has a "Graphics Standard

of Harvard, what is new in Ontario is not increased competition between universities (although that too can contribute to the situation), but "[i]t is, rather, the self-consciousness with which a university's corporate image has come to be managed, the administrative prominence this task assumes, and the objectification, and indeed monetization, of academic reputation itself as brand."[60]

Branding is not a process that happens overnight. A communications officer at Windsor comments that "it takes many years to build a brand, and patience isn't necessarily the order of the day here."[61] While "most people understand the need to tell the rest of the world about the great things happening here, [there] are others who think that money spent should be put into other more immediate needs."[62] Often, branding begins with fundraising or development campaigns, and then spreads to all areas of university communications – from t-shirts to letterheads, then to the public mind. For example, in 2000, Western launched a comprehensive re-branding and fundraising campaign, "Campaign Western," in collaboration with Toronto ad agency BBDO. The campaign was designed to address the "graphic inconsistency" of representations of Western, as well as to deal with the fact that "external [actors] don't have a clear understanding of what Western stands for and what its unique strengths [are] as a university."[63] The coat of arms was replaced by the tower logo (Figure 2.7) along with the tagline "Leading. Thinking." Advertisements ran in such publications as *Maclean's*, *Canadian Business*, *London Free Press*, *National Post Report*

Guidelines" website which includes a section on the university brand, key positioning statements, and supporting messages (http://communications.uwo.ca/comms/graphic_standards/brand.htm)

[60] Wernick, "Rebranding Harvard," 566.

[61] Interview with University of Windsor Communications Officer (E-mail), October 7, 2008.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Jim Anderson, "Western adopts new graphic image," *Western News,* 20 Jan. 2000, http://communications.uwo.ca/com/western_news/stories/western_adopts_new_graphic_image_20000120429837/ (accessed March 26, 2009).

on Business, *Business London*, and *London Magazine*. In addition, elevators in Toronto, billboards in London, and transit shelters in both cities were adorned with "Campaign Western" posters. On campus and around London, large banners and 200 small lamppost flags were hung. The new Western brand was not only used for fundraising initiatives, but also for internal communications (i.e. the website, merchandise, letterheads, etc.), student and staff recruitment, and alumni relations. Ranking surveys indicate that the campaign was successful in shifting Western's reputation as a second-rate party school, to that of a leading research-intensive university.

Figure 2.7 UWO Tower Logo (2000)

For universities, as for private corporations, branding is about more than just image management; "[a]t its most basic, the goal of branding is to get your institution included in the choice set."[64] A brand is a "trustmark, a warrant, and a promise" which guarantees quality and value for the buyer.[65] Robert Sevier, Vice President for Research and Marketing at an American communications firm, argues that the practice of branding is very similar to that for creating or reviewing an institutional mission.[66] University of Guelph President, Alastair Summerlee agrees, calling the new Guelph cornerstone (the logo and tagline, "Changing Lives. Improving Life." chosen in 2007 to represent the new

[64] Robert A. Sevier, "Brand as Relevance," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 10, no. 3 (2001): 78.
[65] Ibid., 79.
[66] Ibid., 86.

Guelph brand) a "bold call to action;"[67] it is a summary of the university's promises, its mission statement, and its strategic objectives (Figure 2.8). A strong identity can aid in creating institutional recognition; a well-known, respected university has less to fear from a competitive educational environment. According to a Guelph communications officer,

> it was time to step back and re-evaluate who we are. Not a complete change, but time to update the brand and review our purpose (as branding is all about) and find better ways to explain it to ourselves and our stakeholders, and find ways to differentiate Guelph among competitive institutions....We are trying to find ways to be more effective in telling the Guelph story.[68]

Indeed, Wernick argues that the imagistic and value-side of branding functions differently, depending on the type of university. A University of Windsor communications officer observes that unless you are among the elite few who can survive on reputation alone, "you have to fight for your territory...you have to have something that makes you stand out."[69] Whereas high status schools convert a long standing reputation into a "capitalizable brand" with little difficulty, lesser-known universities have to (re)invent a brand.[70]

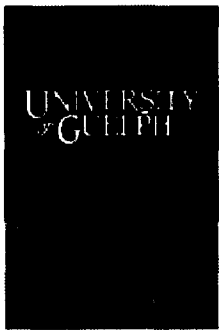

Figure 2.8 University of Guelph Cornerstone (2007)

---

[67] "University of Guelph Graphic Standards Guide," *University of Guelph,* http://www.uoguelph.ca/web/graphicstandards/ (accessed February 10, 2009).

[68] Interview with University of Guelph Communications Officer (Telephone), October 1, 2008.

[69] Interview with University of Windsor Communications Officer (E-mail), October 7, 2008.

[70] Wernick, "Rebranding Harvard," 567.

Ensuring clear and consistent messaging is a key responsibility for university communications departments. For example, in 2004, Lakehead University introduced its own "Visual Identity Program" to develop a recognizable and consistent brand. According to Director of Communications Eleanor Abaya,

> an organization's brand is the sum total of what it represents in reality as well as what its audiences perceive the organization to be. The "best" brands are those where there is no disconnect between perception and reality, and the beauty of branding is that one can build toward bridging perception and reality.[71]

Problematically, however, the brand must convey the multiple pursuits of the university as a "grand harmony of diverse ends."[72] In a university setting, balancing conflicting agendas under a single idea is an inevitably complicated task, requiring internal conflicts among and between faculty, staff and students to be hidden or glossed over.

Universities are not able to achieve the type of message discipline evident in the private sector, where there is often a single spokesperson for the purposes of public relations. In the university, the entire community has opportunities to speak and perspectives vary widely across campus. According to a York University communications officer, there is

> certainly the idea that there should be a unified effort. In the sense that people realized that you couldn't really market yourself properly if you didn't say the same thing twice. Power is very distributed in the university, getting stuff done in a coherent way (policing what happens to get the message out properly) takes quite a bit of effort.[73]

---

[71] Eleanor Abaya, "Marketing universities is a modern-day necessity," *University Affairs,* August 2008, http://www.universityaffairs.ca/marketing-universities-is-a-modern-day-necessity.aspx (accessed March 26, 2009).

[72] Paul Farber and Gunilla Holm, "Selling the Dream of Higher Education," *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture,* ed. Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber (New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 117-130.

[73] Interview with York University Communications Officer (Telephone), November 19, 2008.

The 2008-2009 12 week union strike by teaching assistants, contract faculty, and graduate assistants at York exemplified how difficult it is to manage what is being said across campus and beyond. In addition to formal statements made by union representatives, university executives, and government officials, there was extensive media coverage of the debacle. Adding to the mix of voices were online Facebook groups and blogs devoted to the topic. Following the strike, York experienced a 15 percent decrease in applications from high school students; according to some, this is an indication of a damaged reputation.[74]

Ranking the University

While branding is concerned with establishing a recognizable institutional identity and positioning attempts to mark territory within the higher education marketplace, ranking denotes a hierarchical spot in the university ladder and is closely connected to reputation. Toronto communications consultant David Scott comments that

> in any discussion of university marketing efforts, the importance of university rankings cannot be overlooked or underestimated. Rankings have a distinct impact on the reputation of universities, and a university's reputation influences crucial audiences, such as prospective students, faculty, donors, alumni, and even governments.[75]

In Canada, *Maclean's* and the *Globe and Mail* produce yearly rankings of the country's 94 universities. They are circulated widely throughout Canada, and are especially visible in high school guidance offices.

---

[74] Karen Howlett, "Aches from York strike expected to linger," *Globe and Mail Campus,* 02 Feb. 2009, http://www.globecampus.ca/in-the-news/article/aches-from-york-strike-expected-to-linger/ (accessed March 26, 2009).

[75] David Scott, "University rankings as a marketing tool: readers beware," *Academic Matters,* February/March 2009, http://www.academicmatters.ca/current_issue.article.gk?catalog_item_id=2077&category=/issues/MAR2009 (accessed March 26, 2009). P

The *Maclean's University Ranking Issue* has been published since 1991 and is modeled after the American *U.S. News & World Report* Rankings, first issued in 1983. For the *Maclean's* survey, participating schools are broken down into three categories for analyses: "Medical-Doctoral," "Comprehensive," and "Primarily Undergraduate." Administered by a full-time statistician, the report consists of statistical surveys of 24 key indicators of "excellence." The rankings are also based on reports about the institution from over 5,000 people across Canada (guidance counsellors, principles, CEOs, university officials, etc). *Maclean's* also publishes yearly "University Guides" (an informational book on all Canadian universities and programs), as well as a "Student Rankings" issue and a "Professional Schools" issue. As well, *The Globe and Mail Report Card* publishes the results of a survey sent out to over 40,000 undergraduate university students. For this survey, student opinions on about 100 questions provide quantitative measures of institutional quality. A final letter grade based on the mean scores is assigned to each university.

It is argued that rankings present information to the student "in order [for him or her] to pick the best university, the best buy, the institution with the strongest reputation for excellence in teaching and research."[76] Gordon Chang and J R. Osborne analyzed the US university ranking system, arguing that rankings abstract real material conditions of higher education, quantify it, and reduce it to an exchangeable commodity. This is especially problematic because rankings attempt to quantify things that are best evaluated qualitatively (for example, faculty quality), and it presents the university as a product or

---

[76] Suzy Harris, "Internationalising the University?" *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 39, no. 1 (2007): 3.

service to be consumed. Moreover, rankings are often viewed as objective indicators of quality, rather than subjective and socially constructed categories.[77]

Historian Theodore Porter discusses the rise of statistical thinking in Western civilization, and how, concomitantly, expertise is seen as inseparable from objectivity.[78] For some, rankings ensure transparency and accountability in university administrations and act as a crucial indicator of the democratic functioning of public institutions. However, numbers, and rankings in particular, do not simply "speak for themselves;" not only are the categories and indicators socially determined, as Readings argues, they are also empty signifiers for "excellence," a term with no internal or external referent. Not just rankings, but all counselling information for prospective students continues to be data-driven, relying on "fast facts" and numbers (e.g. student to faculty ratios) to appeal to prospective students. The "onus to provide measurable results" stems from more stringent funding guidelines, the rhetoric of accountability and accessibility, as well as notions of consumer choice.[79]

University administrators and faculty have criticized both ranking systems on issues ranging from methodology to their commercial nature.[80] In 2006, 22 universities dropped out of the *Maclean's* ranking, and no longer actively contribute data. Instead, information on each university can be found on institutional websites under categories such as "Public

---

[77] Gordan Chang and J R. Osborn, "Spectacular Colleges and Spectacular Rankings," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 5, no. 1 (2005): 338 - 364.

[78] Theodore Porter, *Trust in Numbers* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1995).

[79] Mount and Belanger, "Entrepreneurship and Image Management in Higher Education," 135.

[80] Similarly, the ranking of Ontario primary and secondary schools has been the subject of a recent debate among policy makers and the general public. The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) administers standardized math and English tests to all primary and secondary school students as a prerequisite for graduation. The push for externally mandated performance data such as EQAO or Common University Data Ontario (CUDO) is part of a larger push for greater transparency and accountability for public organizations. In effect, however, the standardized testing and "performance indicator" trends encourage the use of positivist, quantitative measurements (that often lack context) as funding guidelines.

Accountability" and "University Statistics," or on the COU website under Common University Data Ontario (CUDO). Data on the university have been made publicly available under the pretence of institutional transparency, to offer an alterative venue for the public for information on each university, as well as to prevent private organizations such as *Maclean's* from publishing inaccurate information. Criticism of rankings often figures into a larger concern that universities are investing in "a competition that has become an end in itself."[81] Canada's universities are publicly funded and, although they vary by type and size, quality research and teaching are evident across the board. Rather than emphasizing the unique strengths of each institution, rankings place universities on competitive footing and hierarchical scale that encourages students to think in the "idiom of winners and losers."[82] In addition, for less well-known universities, a low ranking can negatively affect an already struggling reputation.

Despite the recent backlash against ranking systems, universities are nonetheless compelled to participate in this zero-sum game of prestige. For example, Ontario universities continue to advertise in the *Maclean's* and *Globe and Mail* print and online ranking editions. The number of schools advertising in *Maclean's* has steadily grown from four ads in 1994 to seventeen in the 2007 edition. Moreover, high scores in the rankings continue to be cited in press releases, alumni newsletters, promotional materials, Viewbooks, and websites. Relying on rankings as a positioning statement is uncommon and can be problematic, as exemplified by the case of Guelph, which used to market itself as Canada's number one comprehensive university based on the *Maclean's* ranking. Now

---

[81] Craig Calhoun, "The University and the Public Good," *Thesis Eleven* 84, no. 1 (2006): 8.

[82] Kenneth Cramer and Stewart Page, "Calibrating Canadian Universities: Rankings for sale once again," *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 22, no. 1 (2007): 5.

that its rank has fallen from first place, this statement no longer holds true and Guelph has had to adjust its strategy to reflect the results of a different ranking system produced by Research Infosource Inc., which evaluates universities according to financial inputs and research outputs. According to a York University communications officer, "if you make rankings your positioning statement then you are always going to be a victim of circumstance."[83] Nonetheless, it is difficult to ignore the rankings when they figure so significantly in the student recruitment process.

Canadian universities, like their American counterparts, are always cognizant of ways to boost ratings. As a result, universities are launching massive re-branding campaigns designed to bolster the university reputation among internal and external audiences who may be contributing to the survey. Thus, reputation is not static or linear, but circulated cyclically; in business language, school spirit translates into "brand loyalty" which has the potential to increase "brand awareness," in turn contributing to a high ranking that indicates a "positive brand association" by survey participants. For this reason, branding the university extends from student recruitment to alumni relations, which seeks to continue the brand relationship long after a student's university education is complete.

Through positioning tactics, branding strategies, and rankings, each university strives for distinctiveness and high standing. The deliberate ordering of institutional characteristics in public relations and advertising efforts is symptomatic of a university that has become promotional. The correlation to this is that students and their parents are increasingly viewed through the lens of consumer choice theories. This further encourages

---

[83] Interview with York University Communications Officer (Telephone), November 19, 2008.

recruitment strategies that cater to a new generation of students who are increasingly more interested in gaining credentials than in becoming educated citizens.

Recruiting the 21st Century Student: consumer choice & the Millennial generation

Consumer Choice

Contemporary consumer capitalism is almost entirely predicated on the concept of consumer choice or consumer sovereignty.[84] Freedom to choose based on individual needs or desires, and the concomitant requirement of the market to "provide," have become unquestioned fundamental principles of capitalist democracy. Universities are extending program choice, instituting new programs (and universities) to meet student and market demands, and focusing more on part-time, online, distance, and evening studies in response to a growing, more diverse student body. Indeed, one of Western's four positioning statements concerns "flexibility in choice of curriculum" and marketing materials boast of more than "400 different majors, minors, and specializations offered."[85] Within the consumer choice paradigm, institutions are accountable to private interests and are responsible for aiding in the rational decision-making of constituencies. Marketing professors Julie Ozanne and Jeff Murray explain that "consumers have a right to know the real cost per unit of a brand, the ingredients in a product, accurate nutritional info, and truthful claims in advertising."[86] Likewise, it is thought that students require information to

---

[84] Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity.*

[85] "The University of Western Ontario Graphics Standards Guidelines," *The University of Western Ontario,* http://communications.uwo.ca/comms/graphic_standards/index.htm (accessed March 26, 2009).

[86] Julie L. Ozanne and Jeff Murray, "The Reflexively Defiant Consumer," ed. Ron P. Hill, *Marketing and Consumer Research in the Public Interest* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996), 7.

make informed decisions about their education, and that it is the responsibility of the university to provide such information.[87]

Thus, university promotional materials and other sources of information, such as rankings, are thought to help students, as consumers, to be better informed about the education in which they are investing. It is held that in order for students to make rational, self-serving decisions, they must "exercise the maximum of free choice in the learning environment."[88] The 1995 *Ontario Liaison Review* likewise posited that as the "quality of liaison improves, the universities benefit and the students, our customers, are best served."[89] "Student consumers" of today expect more than a warm handshake and a friendly smile.[90] They want to know student to teacher ratios, entering averages, scholarships, and study abroad opportunities. More than this, they want to understand what a degree means for them in life after graduation. Canadian academic Richard Wellen argues that students do warrant an explanation of the value of higher education, "rather than having this value treated as self-evident;"[91] however, it is questionable whether rankings and quantifiable indicators such as graduate employment rates are appropriate for making a decision about education, which is best experienced and evaluated qualitatively.

The Millennial Generation

Universities are currently marketing to the millennial generation, born in the mid-1980s onward. Otherwise known as the echo-boom, generation Y, trophy kids, iGeneration, or the

---

[87] Ibid., 9.

[88] Colin Symes, "'Working for your Future:' the rise of the vocationalised university," *Australian Journal of Higher Education* 43, no. 3 (1999): 248.

[89] OURA, "Together we will prosper," 11.

[90] Hossler, "Effective Admissions Recruitment," 15.

[91] Wellen, "The University Student in Reflexive Society," 29.

net generation, this group of prospective university students are career-oriented and have high expectations for the future. According to William Strauss and Neil Howe, Millennials have set high standards for themselves and are extremely motivated, but are simultaneously sheltered by their overprotective parents.[92] In addition, it is argued that this generation has had the "easiest passage" through elementary and secondary school systems.[93] The Millennials grew up in a post-Fordist society and a "knowledge economy," where employment is increasingly service-oriented and requires postsecondary credentials for entry. Most students now form their higher educational aspirations prematurely, "as something which they have been socialized to desire from childhood – if not from birth."[94] For the Millennials, postsecondary education is part of a natural educational progression, something that inevitably comes after high school.

Finally, the Millennials are born into a culture of consumption that emphasizes acquisition over development and individualism over communal goals. The observation that students sometimes act competitively or as consumers in regards to higher education is not entirely new. In *No Contest: The Case against Competition*, Alfie Kohn explains how the message of competition has been "drummed into us from nursery school to graduate school...[as] the sub-text of every lesson."[95] In "Buying and Selling Higher Education," Patricia McDonough argues that the "college applicant" is a social construction which is shaped by conditions that place stress on the student to choose a career and pressure on universities to accept more applicants. Furthermore, McMillan and Cheney argue that

---

[92] William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Millennials Rising: the next great generation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000).

[93] Côté and Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues*, 103.

[94] Sean Junor and Alexander Usher, quoted in Côté and Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues*, 144.

[95] Alfie Kohn, *No Contest: The case against competition* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1986), 25.

students are primed with individualistic, self-centered mantras which suggest that competition is inevitable, even desirable, in all aspects of our life; for example, being "first in line," "getting the best price," "receiving top dollar," and "beating out the competition" are common unwritten cultural codes.[96] Prospective students are involved in this competitive environment as they participate against their peers for university acceptance. The college applicant is more competitive, career driven, individualistic, and goal-oriented than ever before; moreover, the contemporary prospective student is likely to view higher education as a stepping stone in achieving a successful career and a consumer lifestyle.

Canadian sociologists James Côté and Anton Allahar surmise that "while the world has changed considerably, one question is whether the university should change to meet the 'new' student, or should the old standards be maintained."[97] The authors comment on how students increasingly view their relationships as exchanges involving the maximum gain for the least amount of effort.[98] According to them, both students and professors are caught in a cycle of grade inflation based on unrealistic expectations fostered in secondary school. As part of a "feel good, materialistic, consumerist society" students have set their sights high on well-paying, professional careers that are largely unattainable.[99] Furthermore, rather than being pulled into the university system by the prospect of free inquiry, critical thinking, and personal development, most students are now pushed into the system by grade inflation, "helicopter parents," guidance counsellors, and a culture of credentialism.

---

[96] Jill McMillan and George Cheney, "The Student as Consumer: the Implication or Limitations of a Metaphor," *Communication Education* 45, no. 1 (1996): 9 - 10.

[97] Côté and Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues,* 43.

[98] Ibid., 65.

[99] Ibid., 105.

The cycle of credentialism increasingly ups the ante on educational achievement, creating new "layers of competition" for graduates.[100] Côté and Allahar worry that students are "running faster on the education treadmill just to stay in the same place in the occupational structure."[101] Higher education is not simply a form of "cultural capital," it can also be considered an economic investment into a career and lifestyle. As a result, university education is "sold" to students as something that is universally beneficial for entry into the labour force or professional schools.[102] In their analysis of higher education and popular culture, Susan Talburt and Paula Salvio likewise conclude that university promotion increasingly frames the public's understanding of education as an investment in their career future.[103] Furthermore, former Ontario Premier Bob Rae's review of higher education in Ontario held that "[m]ore students view themselves as active purchasers of academic services, and are calling for stronger quality assurance standards and "valued" credentials."[104] Moreover, simply having a degree is no longer sufficient assurance of job security; the reputation and standing of universities and programs carries progressively more weight. Recruitment materials often emphasize the reputation and quality of an institution as an indicator of the influence that its degrees hold in the job market. Windsor has used the campaign slogan "the degree that works" (figuratively and literally), while one

---

[100] Ibid., 25

[101] Ibid., 153.

[102] Côté and Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues*, 185.

[103] Susan Talburt and Paula Salvio, "The Personal Professor and the Excellent University," *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture,* ed. Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber (New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 118.

[104] Bob Rae, *Higher expectations for higher education: A discussion paper* (Toronto: Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, 2004); See also Bob Rae, *Ontario: A Leader in Learning* (Toronto: Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, 2005).

Western advertisement simply states "Get A Job," then goes on to discuss internship opportunities that will guarantee successful careers after graduation.

Another way that promotional strategies appeal to the current generation of students is by emphasizing individualized attention and student centered services. In 2003, under the instruction of the McLellan Group of Toronto, Lakehead implemented the "We See You" campaign (Figure 2.9). Advertisements were placed on buses and subway cars in the GTA, posters featuring the new website hung across Ontario, and an ad insert was placed in the *Toronto Star*. The new visual identity positioned Lakehead as "the University that treats students as individuals"[105]

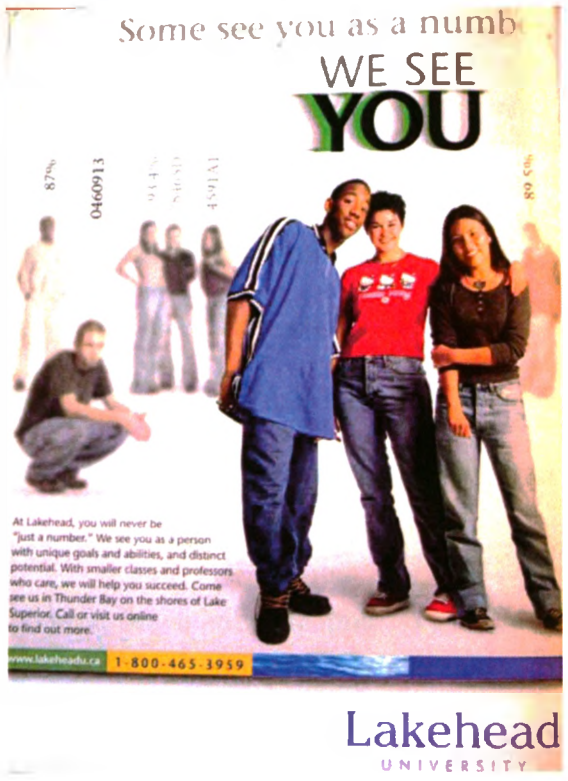

Figure 2.9 Lakehead University - "We See You" Campaign (2003)

[105] "Lakehead University sees you," *Lakehead News,* 7 Nov. 2003, http://communications.lakeheadu.ca/news/?display=news&nid=19 (accessed March 26, 2009). The "We See You" campaign was awarded a CCAE gold medal for best Print Ad or Ad campaign.

In addition to emphasizing individual attention and personalized education, recruitment materials also increasingly focus on non-academic aspects of education. For instance, Viewbooks are professionally designed promotional brochures or magazines which are meant to inform prospective students about the institution. According to marketing professor Michael Klassen, all Viewbooks contain four essential elements: the face (students or professors); the package (for example, rural vs. urban); the promise (for example, a job after graduation); and the "big idea" (usually a mission statement or slogan). The Viewbook is not only intended to portray a university in good light, but also to offer "images that symbolize institutional values and priorities."[106] As early as 1990, Viewbooks were being modernized to fit the expectations of prospective students.[107] Symes comments that the Australian university prospectus, or Viewbook, looks more like a cross between a teenage magazine and a tourist brochure than an informational profiling of an institution.[108] Without a doubt, that trend has also occurred in Canada. The University of Windsor's 2006 Viewbook features a smiling, face-painted sports fan on the cover, while Brock University's 2007 Viewbook is covered with the image of a skydiving economics student. Full page images, profiles of students, and details about student services dominate Viewbook pages. The emphasis is often on entertainment and recreation; program and admissions information come at the end of the publication, almost as an afterthought.

Finally, universities are tapping into online services and social networking technology that have become so central to the lives of the Millennials. University websites

---

[106] Michael Klassen, "Lots of Fun, Not Much Work, and No Hassles: Marketing Images of Higher Education," *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 10, no. 2 (2000): 20.

[107] Symes, "Selling Futures," 139.

[108] Ibid.

are also changing from primarily informational resources, to interactive promotional tools. Recent trends indicate more personalized and interactive university websites, often allowing prospective students to log-in and customize their menu options.[109] Furthermore, the addition of features such as YouTube videos,[110] 3D virtual tours,[111] and Flickr photo albums[112] has added to a university website's capacity to act as a form of promotion, rather than simply an informational resource. For instance, the latest 2007 Guelph website redesign revealed Guelph's new branding strategy, including a new cornerstone and tagline (Figure 2.8), which portrays the institution as modern and student-centered. Guelph's new website features several private sector services such as The Weather Network, Facebook, and iTunes. At many Ontario universities, lectures are turned into podcasts, current students are invited to post blog entries about their student experience in university branded blogs, and university YouTube channels are host to videos ranging from convocation speeches to fundraising commercials. Thus, it is not just the nature of recruitment materials that is changing, but the modes of communication as well.

University administrations are placed in a precarious situation when it comes to recruiting students embedded in consumer culture. Like businesses, universities are now advertising in highly public places such as bus shelters, the sides of buildings, subway stations, and on billboards. At the same time, university administrations have begun to adopt private sector practices such as target marketing to promote their institution in ways that are familiar to students (for example, television commercials, or online banner ads).

---

[109] For example, Trent University - http://www.trentu.ca/undergraduate/

[110] For example, Lakehead University- http://ca.youtube.com/watch?v=zhvQckXGbng

[111] For example, The University of Windsor - http://web4.uwindsor.ca/units/liaison/applying.nsf/main.htm

[112] For example, The University of Western Ontario - http://www.flickr.com/groups/western/

Fisher believes that "York is redefining the way that students select and identify with a university." With help from the doug agency, a Toronto ad firm, York's public relations and recruitment efforts have taken on a creative edge. Advertisements for their "Interdisciplinary Campaign" ranged from plastic newspaper covers to floor-cling ads in movie theatres. Moreover, audio and video spots were broadcast on radio and television, in elevators, and during movie previews in theatres. Streetcars, GO Transit cars, and subway stations adorned with York posters occupied public spaces to catch the eye of passersby. Online ads were placed on popular teen sites such as MySpace.ca and on other education-related news and information sites such as Macleans.ca. Moreover, home visits were made to "star applicants" and a March Break Gala for future students convinced 70 percent of attendees to choose York. According to Fisher, the medium is a large part of the message: "it shows we're creative, open-minded and in step with the real world."[113]

The York marketing campaign is symptomatic of a growing awareness that university marketing material should not only reflect the values and expectations of the institution, but that they should also "parallel the educational expectations of...its readers, to resonate with their ideologies about schooling."[114] Both in style, format, and content, university marketing strategies are carefully chosen with the target audience in mind. Traditional images of learning are replaced by computer labs, co-op workplaces, and research parks and standard information recruitment practices like high school visits are substituted with online virtual university fairs. Canadian academic Neil Tudiver worries

---

[113] "York University coming soon to a theatre near you," *York News Release,* 15 Apr. 2005. In 2005, York won the prestigious CASE "Grand Gold ward" for best university marketing campaign in all of North America. York's subway domination campaign also won a Gold Award for best community/public relations program.

[114] Symes, "Selling Futures," 133.

that advertising to students as if they were consumers can be dangerous; "[a]dvertising and marketing campaigns emphasize convenience, service, lifestyle, and reputation."[115] While these themes certainly resonate with consumer cultural values, they do not prepare students for the academic experience.[116]

Wernick's discussion of promotional culture is likewise concerned that the imagistic promotion of the university is value laden, and that the values it encourages are socially conservative.[117] Wernick explains that "the picture of the world [university promotion] presents, accordingly is flat, one-dimensional, incorporative, and normalized."[118] As we have seen, university recruitment strategies are constantly changing; however, modes and messages shift only to the extent that they can still resonate within the broader social system. University promotion, like other forms of advertising, often encourages participation in consumer culture, rather than reflection on it, by integrating students into a particular version of higher education in Canada.[119] The 1995 *Ontario Liaison Review* explicitly mandates that university recruiters have a role in explaining "the 'IDEA' of Universities." However, the report suggests that such a discussion should revolve around three points: 1) Employment, 2) Economic Impact, and 3) Universities as the focus of innovation. Below these three points, as an afterthought, the authors add that "[o]ther foci would be appropriate in explaining the importance of Arts, History and other Academic areas."[120] This section of the report is indicative of a trend in Ontario

---

[115] Neil Tudiver, *Universities for Sale: Resisting Corporate Control over Canadian Higher Education* (Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 1999), 160.
[116] Côté and Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues,* 18.
[117] Wernick, *Promotional Culture,* 24.
[118] Ibid., 42.
[119] Ozanne and Murray, "The Reflexively Defiant Consumer," 9.
[120] OURA, "Together we will prosper," 18.

recruitment that makes the utilitarian and vocational aspects of university education explicit and its traditional cultural role implicit. Through strategies of positioning, branding, and ranking, as well as through changing modes of communication, university promotion encourages an image of the university that is entrepreneurial, service-oriented, and in-step with the larger political-economic world.

Conclusion

Marketing and advertising are now considered routine practices among university administrators. From 1997 to 2007, each university's marketing and recruitment efforts increased substantially. Promotional materials used by these schools to attract students' attention now range widely, from university Viewbooks to radio and television broadcasts. In addition, external ranking authorities (such as *Maclean's*), positional marketing tactics, and an increasing pool of qualified applicants contribute to a climate of competition among universities. University communications officers have transformed from relatively unskilled public relations personnel to professionally trained marketing specialists. In fact, some marketing administrators at universities in Ontario once practiced in the private sector. Abaya claims that despite the past reluctance of administrators to use market terminology, "Canadian universities are undeniably now in a marketplace. Academics may flinch at those terms, but this is a reality."[121] This "reality" is made perfectly evident by the marketplace frenzy at the annual Ontario Universities' Fair in Toronto, in promotional approaches such as full-scale TTC transit ads, and in each university's recently redesigned visual identity.

---

[121] Abaya, "Marketing universities is a modern-day necessity."

Recruitment strategies do more than simply inform the "student consumer;" increasingly, the university promotes itself symbolically, positions itself quantitatively, and appeals to the current generation of students using marketing strategies often associated with consumer products. Students are likely to encounter promotional messages from universities on the streets, online, and in their homes and schools, as they would for any other commercial product. Thus, as a by-product of forces of "corporatization," "commodification," and competition (discussed in Chapter 1), the university has become embedded in what Wernick terms "promotional culture." As such, university promotional materials naturalize the role of the university in Canada as a credential provider. Fundamentally, I have argued that both the mode of communication and the meanings and messages within university promotion are strategically chosen to manipulate the university's "symbolic economy" in order to appeal to students. In Chapter Three, the nature of such appeals is investigated, elucidating the ways in which cultural meaning is circulated in recruitment practices.

CHAPTER THREE: Case Study Analyses of Promotional Materials

Introduction

Competition among universities is based more on a carefully constructed identity than on actual program differences. The symbolic processes visible in university promotional materials are not "arbitrary or accidental but are integral parts of a shifting social framework, influenced by governments and political fit, changes in the economy and the dynamics of the market."[1] For instance, the pressure to establish a university brand is a by-product of the shift towards an increasingly vocational university and a situation where success in the "knowledge economy" is dependent on institutional reputation. As a result, utilitarian objectives are often explicit in promotional discourse, while non-monetary aspects of the university are increasingly devalued and deemphasized.[2]

The promotional message redefines the university and circulates cultural connotations within Canadian society. It can be considered a "dual commodity sign," representing something to be sold and a carrier of cultural messages that students can then incorporate into their own self-promotional efforts.[3] In this chapter, I analyze and compare material from two Ontario universities – The University of Western Ontario (Western) and Lakehead University (Lakehead) – to illustrate how university promotional materials produce and affirm ideologies. Like advertisements, promotional materials contribute to the illusion of consumer sovereignty. University education is presented to students as an

---

[1] Colin Symes, "Education for sale: A semiotic analysis of school prospectuses and other forms of educational marketing," *Australian Journal of Education* 42, no. 2 (1998): 133.

[2] Paul Axelrod, Paul Anisef, and Zeng Lin, "Against all odds? The enduring value of liberal education in universities, professions and the labour market," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 31, no. 2 (2001): 105.

[3] Andrew Wernick, *Promotional Culture: Advertising, ideology, and symbolic expression* (New York: Sage Publications, 1991).

option, but is in effect a duty of the consumer-citizen necessary in order to become a productive member of society.

Furthermore, in a semiotic and discursive analysis, I identify key themes, visual signifiers, and connotative messages within promotional materials. It is concluded that universities employ the rhetoric of antithesis through text and images, which communicates to students that they can "have it all." In promotional materials, it appears that the university is able to expand indefinitely – for example, creating new disciplines, online education, and part-time studies programs – to address market demands. In addition, promotional materials portray a university that is able to cater to the needs of both students and consumers simultaneously, without compromising its core values. Ultimately, this chapter addresses how the university presents itself visually and textually according to its role within the broader social, political, and economic landscape. As outlined in Chapter 1, this landscape has changed over time, and universities have also adjusted to remain relevant. Universities have not entirely done away with their traditional cultural role and identity in promotional efforts; rather, they have combined their socio-cultural identity with one of vocational education and technological progress.

Advertising the University

Institutional admissions, recruitment, and communications departments act as cultural intermediaries. They are "specialists in symbolic production," who educate the public on the status, role, and cultural relevance of the university in Canadian society.[4] University promotion can be considered a "commercial nexus" where institutional forces of the

[4] Anne Cronin, "Regimes of Mediation: Advertising Practitioners as Cultural Intermediaries?" *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 7, no. 4 (2004): 350.

market, the "knowledge economy," consumer culture, and the university are mediated and made sense of for audiences.[5] The weight of the university as a democratic social institution concerned with knowledge production lends particular force to its ideological claims. This does not imply that university promotion can directly shape perceptions; as always, audiences will interpret ads collectively and individually, creating alternative meanings and subversive readings. However, the university does have a strong ability to act as a mediator in shaping the conceptual framework within which the university is understood.[6] University recruitment activities serve a functional purpose in educating the public about the characteristics of the university, some of which can be easily measured but aren't generally known to the public, and also have an ideological component which cultivates a particular image or perception of the university.[7]

Ads are pervasive and ubiquitous, an everyday part of life. However, advertising is not simply an attempt to sell products or fill classroom seats.[8] Like commercial advertisements, university promotion produces and affirms cultural ideologies: "the broad but indispensable shared sets of values and beliefs through which individuals live out their complex relations in a range of social networks."[9] Judith Williamson argues that advertisements are capable of promoting ideologies because they "make sense" to the

---

[5] William Leiss, Stephen Kline and Sut Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising: Persons, Products & Images of Well-being* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 191.

[6] Cronin, "Regimes of Mediation," 366.

[7] Nguye Nha, and Gaston LeBlanc, "Image and reputation of higher education institutions in students' retention decisions," *International Journal of Educational Management* 15, no. 6 (2001): 303.

[8] William Leiss, Stephen Kline and Sut Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising: consumption in the mediated marketplace,* 3rd ed (New York: Routledge, 2005), 5.

[9] Marita Strunken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture,* 2nd ed (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009).

viewer who is situated within a particular social structure.[10] Without the appropriate cultural knowledge, perfume is not naturally tied to femininity, nor is university education inherently connected to social status. The connotative meanings of ads are what make them socially understandable, culturally relevant, and personally appealing. This last point is of particular relevance to the process of interpellation, which, according to Louis Althusser, is how images and media texts call to or hail viewers as individuals to become a specific type of subject by situating them within the "you" of the ad.[11] For Althusser, this identity construction is deeply ideological; it interpellates individuals and shapes their consciousness. In other words, the student is called assume his or her position as an incoming university student. An important point here is that subjects are not simply created; "that an individual is always-already a subject, even before he is born, is nevertheless the plain reality, accessible to everyone and not a paradox at all."[12] Interpellation calls on us to consciously assume predefined positions within society: the black student attending an urban, multicultural school, a poor student relying on financial aid and scholarships, an upper class student attending an Ivy League school, or a first-generation university student hoping to become a doctor. Recruitment is no longer just about informing students about an institution's offerings; schools now have a much different, broader agenda of defining what a degree means in Canadian culture, thereby reproducing already existing social identities.

---

[10] Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements* (London: Marion Boyars, 1978).

[11] Strunken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking,* 50.

[12] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," *Mapping Ideology,* ed. Slavoj Zizek (London/New York: Verso, 1994), 133.

The Reflexive "Student Consumer"

That advertising addresses us as individuals and not collective members of society is also important to this analysis. In consumer culture, we are led to believe that happiness and satisfaction are best achieved through private acts of consumption in the marketplace.[13] Advertising's rendering of education as a commodity likewise implies that individual success is possible through educational achievement. Students are aware that their educational choices are an investment in their intellectual capital, which will be used later in life to ascertain a particular spot in the "knowledge economy."[14] Richard Wellen concludes that the "notion of social reflexivity helps us understand some of the sociological reasons for the ascendancy of consumer motivations and identities among today's university students."[15] Wellen discusses how the "de-traditionalization" of relationships has created a more flexible, open process of identity creation.[16] Social theorists largely concur that modern identity is no longer formed through cultural networks (for example, the church) or ascribed at birth, but is instead created partly through acts of consumption.[17]

In a world increasingly filled with commodities, there appear to be more and more choices involved in how one identifies oneself within the broader social structure; however, this "freedom" to choose is only autonomous in so far as it is carried out individually and without direct force. Indeed, whereas for some this choice is a hard-won consumer

---

[13] Sut Jhally, *The Spectacle of Accumulation: Essays in Culture, Media, & Politics* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2006).

[14] Richard Wellen, "The University Student in a Reflexive Society: Consequences of Consumerism and Competition," *Hep.Oise.Utoronto* 1, no. 1 (2005): 27.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 26.

[17] Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 1997), 30.

freedom, for others, such as Zygmunt Bauman or Alan Warde, we are forced to choose.[18] In consumer capitalism, choice is only an illusion; individuals are required to consume and to, in turn, become a type of commodity themselves as a precondition for actively participating in society. This can result in ontological insecurities of constructing a personal self-image ("dilemmas of the self"), a focus on lifestyles, and a sense of anxiety and personal responsibility to choose wisely (a "do-it-yourself project").[19] Rather than alleviating stress by helping us to understand the products at hands, advertising is often a source of discomfort for consumers.[20] Indeed, the pressure to choose a university program is often translated into choosing a career, lifestyle, and future. Education is something that is a permanent part of your identity, "a part of you always."[21] University marketing materials, which emphasize the importance of university education in achieving a desired consumer lifestyle, can potentially add to the prospective student's feeling of anxiety.

Publicity & Transformation

University promotional materials are also a form of publicity which, according to John Berger, speaks of the future and proposes to the viewer that he or she undergo a process of transformation: "with this you *will* become desirable. In these surroundings all your relationships *will* become happy and radiant."[22] Promotional materials portray students who have made the most of themselves and offer prospective students instructions on how

---

[18] Alan Warde, "Consumption, Identity-Formation and Uncertainty," *Sociology* 28, no. 1 (1994): 877 - 898.

[19] Zygmunt Bauman, *Consuming Life* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2007), 57.

[20] Warde, "Consumption, Identity-Formation and Uncertainty," 897.

[21] Paul Farber and Gunilla Holm, "Selling the Dream of Higher Education," *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture,* ed. Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber (New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 127.

[22] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1972), 144.

to become successful, both socially and financially. University promotion, like consumer advertisements, "makes the promise of a better self-image, a better appearance, more prestige, and fulfillment."[23] Thus, in addition to communicating various institutional characteristics, promotional materials also address the gap between the prospective student's present situation and his or her future.

Students are told that with the right credentials they can become some sort of transformed product and that school is simply a stepping stone to a future life. [24] Moreover, by placing responsibility for that transformation on the individual student, they are made to feel that they are the "architects of their own destinies."[25] In university advertisements, students are rhetorically positioned as the subjects of transformation. As students incorporate education into their identity and assume a position as a specific type of subject, they also project their "self" onto the world around us.[26] Recruitment materials encourage the student to think of education as a layer in his or her "promotional self" by signifying how the university (its programs, campus, reputation, etc.) can become part of a student's identity. While not entirely free from broader social forces, students do exercise agency in constructing their promotional-self; identities are fundamentally tied to the positions that students choose to align themselves with, the lifestyles they aspire to, and the ways in which they perceive themselves in relation to the broader social world. While it is beyond the scope of this project to speak directly to students regarding their perceptions and experiences with university recruitment, it is nonetheless useful to analyze promotional

---

[23] Strunken and Cartwright, *Practice of Looking,* 265.

[24] James E. Côté and Anton Allahar, *Ivory Tower Blues* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 65.

[25] Ibid., 110.

[26] Wernick, *Promotional Culture*, 193.

texts themselves, focusing on the meanings and messages that students are likely to draw given their situation as members of consumer capitalist society. Indeed, focusing on both textual and visual cues, the two case study analyses to follow shed light on the connotative messages within university promotional materials that are fundamental to the process of identity formation and circulation.

Case Study 1: The University of Western Ontario

"With Canada's most beautiful campus, on-site medical facilities, a variety of restaurants, bars and pubs, a movie theatre and an unrivalled array of sports, clubs and activities, Western is more than just a place of higher learning, it is a place of higher living" – Western Student Recruitment Advertisement (2005)

Western promotional materials emphasize the university's reputation as a student-centered institution with well-known medical-doctoral programs and research facilities. The Western image is governed by strict "Graphic Standards Guidelines" and public relations strategies which ensure consistency in messaging across campus. The brand, "Western," is founded on four key supporting messages:

- Western has nationally and internationally celebrated scholars who bring innovative approaches to teaching, learning and research;
- Western offers flexibility in choice of curriculum;
- Western is Canada's premier residential university; and,
- The Western experience promotes leadership and personal growth. [27]

"Proof points" are used as evidence to support these statements; for example, "$27 million in undergraduate financial aid and scholarships" and "more than 400 different majors, minors, and specializations offered." These positioning statements, combined with

[27] "The University of Western Ontario Graphics Standards Guidelines," *The University of Western Ontario,* http://communications.uwo.ca/comms/graphic_standards/index.htm (accessed March 26, 2009).

professionally taken photos, the tower logo, and a purple, white, and silver colour palette, make up the formula for Western promotion used over the last decade. This promotional equation, championed by Western President Paul Davenport, has shifted the institution's former reputation (primarily in the 1980s and 1990s) as a second-rate party school with low entrance standards, to one of a competitive, high-achieving institution that is academically rigorous, as well as socially stimulating.[28]

Western's promotional materials have a very professional look and feel. Unlike other universities, who may use the terms "we" or "our" to discuss the institution in a colloquial manner, Western usually refers to itself in the third person. The focus on "proof points," facts, and qualifying statements implies that this is an institution that thinks and acts like a business. At the same time, Western is not interested in attracting just any students or faculty; it is seeking the "leaders of tomorrow." Promotional materials give the impression that Western is an exclusive club made up of high achieving individuals. Western Athletics promotional materials ask the reader: "are you PURPLE?" Indeed, "Purple and Proud" is not just the name of Western's school song, it is also something of a motto among the university community. Membership in this association requires a certain level of conformity, particularly in the collectively perceived social status of the group. The following analyses further illustrate how Western promotional materials convey an aura of tradition and quality (higher education), along with exclusivity and a focus on the student experience (higher living).

---

[28] Paul Wells, "Academic Renaissance - The Paul Davenport Legacy – 1994 to 2009," *Western Alumni Gazette,* 31 Mar. 2009, http://communications.uwo.ca/com/alumni_gazette/alumni_stories/academic_renaissance_-_the_paul_davenport_legacy_%e2%80%93_1994_to_2009_20090331443973/ (accessed March 29, 2009).

(Re)Imaging the Ivory Tower

Every September, thousands of students and their parents head to the Ontario Universities' Fair (OUF) held in Toronto. Canada's largest postsecondary trade show boasts attendance of all provincial universities, some colleges, and a variety of out-of-province institutions. It is considered a "one-stop-shop" for high school students who are bussed in from Toronto and neighbouring areas. Most university fair set-ups are adorned with flat screen TVs, flashing displays, computer terminals, and other high-tech devices. In addition to handing out informational materials such as Viewbooks, universities distribute promotional give-away items. King's University College, a Western affiliate, hands out locker mirrors that read "Picture Yourself at King's," Lakehead University gives away t-shirts, and York university recruiters ("Yorkies"), adorned in all red, enthusiastically invite students to have their face painted with the letters "YORK" in exchange for a chance to win an iPod Shuffle.[29] Amongst the (relatively) organized chaos, in the far corner of the room is a gigantic 150 foot long neo-gothic, faux stone structure, aptly nicknamed "the castle" (Figure 3.1).

[29] Ken Steele, "Field Report from the 2007 Ontario Universities' Fair," Weblog post, *Academica Group Inc.*, 14 Oct. 2007, http://www.academicagroup.ca/2007-OUF (accessed March 26, 2009).

Figure 3.1 Western OUF Fair Display – "The Castle" (2007)

Western's fair display is a replica of its well-known University College (UC) tower, which sits atop a hill in the center of campus. Like UC tower, the model features ivy-covered (faux) limestone walls, turrets, archways, and lamp posts. Founded in 1878, Western is one of Canada's oldest universities. The castle display attempts to convey this sense of establishment, history, and tradition to students as a point of differentiation among the many newer universities present at the fair. Without a doubt, the castle display is austere and even imposing; it conjures up notions of the ivory tower which are predicated on elitism and higher learning. However, the castle is also somewhat comforting and reassuring;[30] to onlookers, it would seem that Western is not a university that has to compromise its values or change its traditions in order to remain relevant and attract students. Juxtaposed to full sized images in each archway of contemporary students and

[30] In 2000, Western ran an ad campaign entitled "There is Something Comforting About Tradition."

professors deep in research and study, the castle display is a striking example of how universities can capitalize on images of tradition and history in order to direct reputation.

The UC tower can be considered an icon for tradition and high standards.[31] Unlike a symbol, an icon resembles its object in some way.[32] The UC tower replicates traditional depictions of the ivory tower, bringing with it cultural connotations which weigh heavily on viewers' interpretations. The ivory tower is connected with a sense of elite privilege in engaging in intellectual pursuits which are entirely separate from everyday life, particularly from economic concerns. It brings with it many negative implications, but also represents a scenario for education which is not altogether undesirable; namely, the unfettered pursuit of knowledge. In 1996, Bhandari & Plater Inc. Integrated Design Communications in Toronto incorporated the UC tower in an art-deco styled recruitment poster (Figure 3.2).[33] Within the tower shape are symbols of the academy representing art, science, law, and math. The text makes plain the intended meaning of the ad, reading "The University of Western Ontario. Over a Century of Quality Education." The image (signifier) of the ivory tower (in this case, the UC tower) is meant to evoke a feeling of tradition, history, and high standards (signified). Combined, Western is then a sign for elite liberal education which connotes free intellectual pursuits, ideals of erudition, and a certain socio-economic status of those able to partake in education with non-utilitarian motives.

---

[31] Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication and Advertising* 3rd ed, 226.

[32] Strunken and Cartwright, *Practice of Looking,* 265.

[33] This ad campaign was recognized by the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) for the "designer of the year" award, was on display in a Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) exhibit in 1999, and in 2009, became part of the permanent design collection at the ROM. Heather Travis, "Posters Join ROM's Design Collection," *Western News,* 06 Apr. 2009, http://communications.uwo.ca/com/western_news/stories/posters_join_rom%27s_design_collection_20090406444052/ (accessed April 6, 2009).

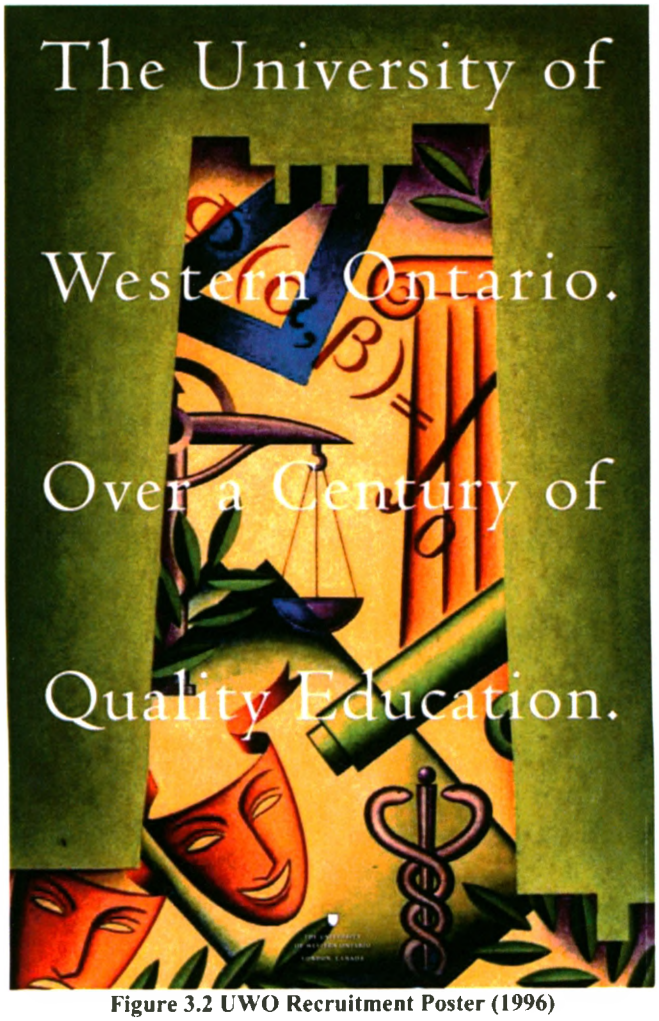

Figure 3.2 UWO Recruitment Poster (1996)

In 2000, Western adopted the tower logo as its official symbol and has since spotlighted the UC tower in all recruitment and communications strategies (See Figure 2.7 in Chapter Two). In the 2008 Viewbook (used for the 2007 recruitment season), 10 out of 84 pages are taken up by full colour images of the tower; indeed, it seems that there is an image of the tower from every angle of the campus. As a recruitment strategy, this is not surprising given that Western's campus has long been touted by students as a key factor for

their choice to attend the school.[34] For instance, in a news article, one student commented that "Western was just what I considered a university should look like," while another thought "the campus looked like something out of a movie."[35] It is undeniable that Western's campus is stereotypically beautiful; however, the representations of it in promotional materials are often idealized, value laden, and lack context. Significantly, the lucrative research function of the university, its corporate linkages, and its service-orientation are either glossed over or combined with the narrative of tradition.

Figure 3.3 is a striking example of how the tower is sometimes strategically incorporated with images of modernity in promotional imagery. This panoramic shot of campus is taken from the west end on a warm day in the early fall. Protruding from the center in the background is the UC tower, amongst other older buildings covered in ivy, and amid large trees about to change colour. This natural scene in the distance is then juxtaposed to a modern landscape. Front and center is the aptly named "concrete beach" where students hang out, or leisurely pass through on their way to the University Community Center (UCC). To the left, a glass structure (part of the UCC) starkly contrasts with the ivy covered buildings in the background. And finally, on the right, a large purple awning labelled "Shops & Services" marks the entryway to the underground campus mall which houses everything from a bank to a hair salon. This image sends the message that at Western you can have it all; Western is an established, academically challenging institution, but students won't have to compromise a consumer lifestyle.

---

[34] Most recently, in the 2008 *Globe and Mail Report Card*, Campus Attractiveness was graded by students as an "A+."

[35] Mark Rayner, "Selling Western: student recruitment in the 21st century," *Western News,* 1 Mar. 2000, http://communications.uwo.ca/com/alumni_gazette/alumni_stories/selling_western-student_recruitment_in_the_21st_century._20000301438237/ (accessed March 26, 2009).

Figure 3.3 UWO Campus –Viewbook (2007 Recruitment Season)

The Best Student Experience

With approximately 34,000 students, Western ranks as the third largest university in Ontario. In such a large setting it might be easy for students to imagine themselves feeling lost or alienated once enrolled. To ease prospective student's anxieties, or perhaps in an effort to exhibit successful students as evidence of anyone's potential to make the most of him or herself at Western, promotional materials have consistently used student profiles as a recruitment technique. In 1999, Western's undergraduate recruitment campaign, titled "Major in Yourself" featured a 32 page magazine spotlighting Western students. Later, playing on Western's trademarked slogan, "Canada's *Best* Student Experience™," a 2005 ad blitz featured head-shots of four students, along with a list of qualifications and a paragraph of carefully scripted information about Western. These advertisements, however, are not meant to represent the ordinary Western student, but rather to showcase Western's premier student-superstars. One of the ads featured Randy McAuley, a philosophy major in

the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (Figure 3.4). Randy is not just "well-rounded," as the ad suggests, he is *exceptional*. Not only is Randy a visible minority at a school with a predominantly white population,[36] he is also a star football player and a Juno-nominated singer.

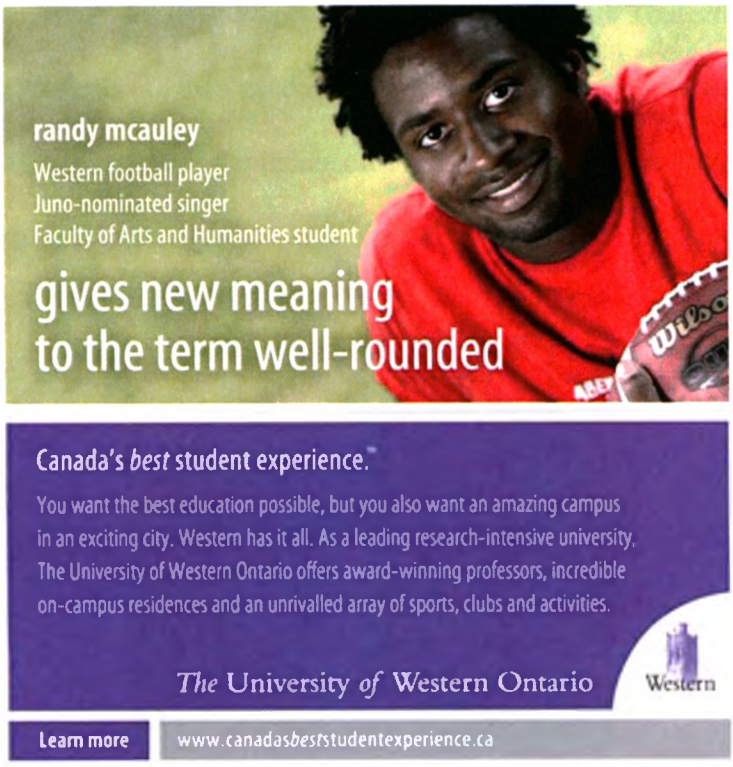

Figure 3.4 UWO - Canada's Best Student Experience Advertisement (2005)

At a 2006 football game, the first 1,200 attendees were given the Randy McAuley promotional "Jack-in-the-box" (Figure 3.5).[37] Recipients of the "Randy-in-a-box" could then crank the toy to see a stuffed replica of Randy pop out to the tune of Western's fight

---

[36] For Western's population statistics see: Office of Institutional Planning and Budgeting: Western Facts http://www.ipb.uwo.ca/facts.php

[37] "Randy-in-a-box?" *Western News*, 11 Oct. 2006, http://communications.uwo.ca/com/western_news/stories/randy-in-the-box?_20061011435127/ (accessed March 26, 2009).

song. A year prior to this, "bobble-heads" replicating Mustangs receiver Andy Fantuz were distributed to fans (Figure 3.6). Both toys can be considered part of the varsity sports spectacle, creating celebrities out of students to bolster the reputation of the team and, ultimately, of the university as a whole. Student-superstars like Randy and Andy are co-opted and "commodified" for the advantage of the Western brand. That such representations of students are then used in recruitment efforts is evidence of a university that is promotional, attempting to capitalize on everything from its buildings to its students to increase its "symbolic economy."

Figure 3.5 Randy McAuley "Jack-in-the-box" promotional give-away (2006)

Figure 3.6 Andy Fantuz "Bobble-head" promotional give-away (2005)

The Western Viewbook showcases the profiles of eight students in sections labelled "your student experience" (Figure 3.7). This time, rather than featuring professionally

taken, posed pictures of football stars, student council presidents, and award winning students, the focus here is on the "average" student. For these profiles, students answered questions such as, what is your "hometown," "future ambition," "favourite movie," and "coolest experience." The profiles have an aura of authenticity; they appear to be unedited, are written in the student's own handwriting, and are complemented by amateur photos of each student and his or her friends doing everyday activities. The profiles suggest that this is what it is *really* like to be a student at Western. The focus is on having an enjoyable experience, exploring oneself, and belonging to the campus community. In the case of both the advertisements of student-superstars and the Viewbook profiles of ordinary students, the viewer is positioned or hailed to as the person in the photo: "The tacit message is: This could be you!"[38] In addition, the profiles invite the prospective student to imagine becoming part of an exclusive club; the implication is that the Western experience is desirable, one-of-a-kind, and even a privilege. At the same time, the rhetoric of exclusivity is moderated by images of multiculturalism and inclusivity. This duality, among others, is later discussed in relation to Lakehead, an institution of widely different description.

---

[38] Glenn M. Hudak, "On Publicity, Poverty, and Transformation: Images and Recruitment in Teacher Education Brochures," *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture,* ed. Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber (New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 183.

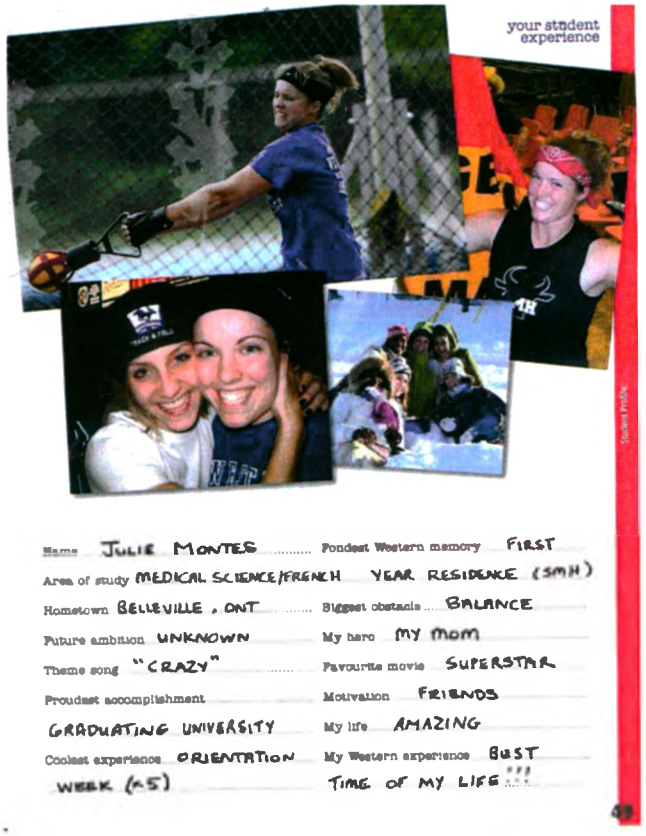

Figure 3.7 UWO Viewbook - Your Student Experience (2007 Recruitment Season)

Case Study 2: Lakehead University

"There are universities and then there are universities. So let's not beat around the bush. Lakehead is different." ~ "Yale Shmale" Campaign (2006)

Lakehead's visual identity program and branding strategy are centered on the slogan "we recognize and realize potential." Lakehead is portrayed as inclusive and able to help students grow and realize their individual possibility for success. The overall tone of most Lakehead promotional materials is light and fun. The Viewbook distributed during the 2007 recruitment season is colourful and full of images of students roasting marshmallows, kayaking, playing hockey, and enjoying the "rugged beauty of North-western Ontario." At first glance, the university appears to look more like a summer camp than an academic

institution. However, combined with images of recreation and nature are state of the art laboratories, modern glass buildings, and buzzwords like "cutting edge," "hands-on," "high-tech," and "innovative." Evidently, at Lakehead you can have the best of both worlds: a scenic natural environment and modern facilities.

Although it is the smallest and most remote university in consideration, Lakehead has produced some of the best known marketing campaigns in Canada and abroad. Over the last decade, Lakehead has run five separate marketing campaigns and, in 2009 re-launched another campaign entitled "My Lakehead," with the slogan "I will think for myself." Constantly changing promotional efforts indicate that Lakehead is a university that perhaps is still "finding itself." Moreover, because Lakehead is a relatively young school, first established as a technical institute in 1946, it cannot rely on traditions and history alone to direct its reputation. Instead, Lakehead employs a strategy of differentiation, whereby it (somewhat satirically) addresses the perceived negative aspects of large urban universities in order to highlight its own positive attributes.

Unlike Any Other

Over the last decade, Lakehead's recruitment strategies have exhibited a common theme of discursive differentiation. For instance, a 2001 print ad in *Maclean's* invites students to "Escape the ordinary…experience the extraordinary" in Lakehead's scenic Thunder Bay location. The accompanying image features the silhouette of a student on her laptop, sitting on the edge of a cliff that overlooks a forest and lake. The ad suggests that unlike urban universities, at Lakehead you will not be confined indoors; perhaps you will even become "one with nature" (without having to give up modern luxuries such as laptops). The

emphasis on distinction is even more obvious in the 2003 "We See You" campaign, where ads state bluntly that unlike other universities, Lakehead won't treat you as a number (See Figure 2.9 in Chapter Two). Although the ads for this campaign never specify which universities treat students as numbers, the implication is that it is likely to be found at large, urban universities such as York or the University of Toronto.

In 2006, the discourse of differentiation was taken to new heights with the "Unlike Any Other" campaign. This campaign included four simple black and white ads with three words printed on them: "SMART. NOT SMUG," "INDIE. NOT IVY," "SOMEONE. NOT ANYONE," and "MAVERICK. NOT MEDIOCRE." Although each of these appears to be a final statement, marked with a period, there is a high degree of interpretation afforded to the reader. Do the ads refer to the institution, programs, students, faculty, or graduates? Perhaps it speaks to the essence of Lakehead as a brand, rather than referring to any physical object or person. Indeed, in all its promotional efforts Lakehead sends the message that it is not old, uptight, or conservative (like some schools), but rather politically, socially, and environmentally progressive - a "maverick" university (Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8 Lakehead University "Unlike Any other" Campaign (2006)

For the prospective student, the campaign suggests that Lakehead is the "smart" choice. To emphasize this, applicants were entered into a contest to win a Smart Car (emblazoned with the campaign website). The play on the word "smart" is not a simple gimmick; giveaway items are common in recruitment campaigns, and the association of a good university choice with the acquisition of material objects reaffirms consumer values. That this was a Smart Car and not a SUV was also strategic; because of the school's northern locale and many environment-related programs, a certain environmentally conscious attitude underlies the messages in much of their promotional material. There is also a sense that Lakehead (and its students, faculty, staff) are nonconformist.

A 2006 tactical marketing campaign labelled "Yale Shmale" featured an unflattering picture of former American president George W. Bush and the message that going to an Ivy League school (and subsequently becoming president) doesn't necessarily make you smart (Figure 3.9). Lakehead, it would seem, is a place where students are encouraged to go against the mainstream and confront traditional, perhaps outdated, notions of university hierarchy. The ideological force behind a campaign such as "Yale Shmale" is fundamentally different than traditional recruitment strategies that focus on students, the academic product, or the campus and buildings. Rather than invoking symbols of the university, or iconic images to represent Lakehead, the university is employing satire, contemporary political/pop-cultural debates, and an ideological message against elitism. These strategies amount to the signification of an "idea" of Lakehead. As such, prospective students are appealed to on their values and beliefs, not on their educational interests.

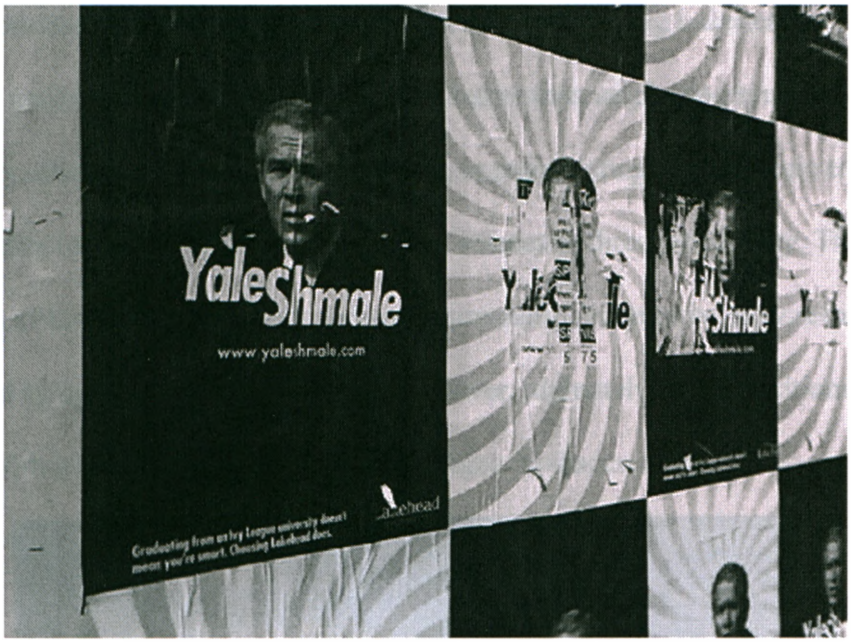

Figure 3.9 Lakehead University "Yale Shmale" Campaign Posters in Toronto (2006)

Do Something Now

Lakehead's most recent campaign took on a much more serious tone. According to Eleanor Abaya, the university's 2007 marketing campaign, "Do Something Now," encourages students to think as citizens, work through challenges, take action, and do something.[39] The campaign included posters around the GTA, online contests, transit ads in Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and Winnipeg, and a micro-site featuring emotionally powerful images of war in the third world, poverty, pollution, and climate change (Figure 3.10). Online, each picture is accompanied by dramatic sound effects (guns firing, children coughing, street noise, and rushing water) and a checklist with two options: "Do

[39] "Lakehead's Do Something Ad Campaign takes CCAE Gold," *Lakehead News Release,* 1 May 2008, http://communications.lakeheadu.ca/news/?display=news&nid=448 (accessed March 26, 2009).

Something" and "Do Nothing." "Do Something Now" presents students with important social and political world issues as a recruitment tool, positioning Lakehead as place where students can make a difference globally. Again, rather than employing symbols or icons of the university, discussing educational programs, or representing the academic experience, Lakehead refers to global issues and ideological stances to direct its identity. The signification of Lakehead as socially and environmentally progressive may resonate with students who sympathize with such causes; however, ultimately, it is a positioning tactic that brings with it many other connotative messages, as discussed below.

Figure 3.10 Lakehead University "Do Something Now" Campaign (2007)

Like all emotional messaging, the campaign is "designed to stir up some negative or positive emotion that will motivate action."[40] In this instance, the images are designed to invoke fear, guilt, sympathy, and anger in viewers. The checkboxes may then empower students by giving options; however, given such a moral impasse, would anyone

[40] Philip Kotler and Karen A. Fox, *Strategic marketing for educational institutions* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985), 302.

consciously choose to sit back and do nothing? The blue cover of the 2007 Lakehead Viewbook has only one option written on it: "Do Something." This suggests that the student has already made the right choice by getting more information about the school. Lakehead President Fred Gilbert says that the campaign "appeals to young people during a time in their lives when idealism is expected and changing the world seems possible."[41] The very act of choosing a university is therefore framed as a form of political, social, or environmental activism. Viewers are hailed not as incoming university students, but as members of the global village, concerned citizens, and environmentally conscious individuals. Furthermore, by playing on students' idealism and naiveté, by giving students a false sense of empowerment over complex global issues, and by co-opting such environmental and social issues for the purposes of student recruitment, Lakehead is contributing to the popularization of awareness campaigns which do little to confront existing power relations.

The link between the message of "Do Something Now" and the act of choosing a university is almost entirely symbolic. While it is true that a university education can empower students to make a difference, and could potentially lead to a career in which graduates are able to address such issues, a high school student's university choice is not typically a political act. Principally, university choice is a personal decision and an individual investment. Read in this way, the "Do Something Now" ads also present students with the prospect of changing their own lives by enrolling at Lakehead. In particular, the ads offer a personal ultimatum for students: get educated or risk being unsuccessful. There is a certain "sink or swim" undercurrent which suggests to students

[41] "Lakehead's Do Something Ad Campaign Takes CCAE Gold."

that their only real option in order to "Do Something" with their lives is to get a university degree. Rather than empowering students to take action on global issues, the campaign may further encourage students to feel a sense of obligation, a push rather than a pull, to enrol.[42]

Discussion

By and large, university promotional materials offer idealized representations of the academy. Everyday realities, such as the stress of studying for exams or trudging through snow to get to class are missing from the picture. It seems that every image captures smiling students on a warm summer's day, despite the fact that both London and Thunder Bay experience cold, snowy winters for more than half of the school year. In promotional materials, all students are athletic, motivated, and well-rounded. Moreover, it appears that the contemporary university student does not have to give up a comfortable lifestyle while attending university; universities are service-oriented, with virtually every consumer necessity available on campus or nearby. Furthermore, the university is not just a place to learn, it is also a venue for partying, socializing, volunteering, getting career advice, acquiring credentials, and more.[43] However, in addition to this, the university is also expected to engage in research activities and to be leaders in technology and innovation. In promotional efforts, the university attempts to harmonize conflicting expectations of what it should be and do and, at the same time, distinguish itself from other institutions.[44]

From my analysis, two primary themes emerged for further discussion. The first is consistent with Ragan and McMillan's study on the use of "rhetorical antithesis" as a

---

[42] Côté and Allahar, Ivory Tower Blues, 40.
[43] Farber and Holm, "Selling the Dream of Higher Education," 118.
[44] Ibid., 119.

discursive strategy for managing conflicting agendas. Secondly, one such strategy will be discussed in detail as the primary narrative in promotion: the juxtaposition of tradition and liberal arts education with technology, progress, and vocational education. Finally, I establish how the "rhetorical antithesis" of promotional materials constructs ideological myths predicated on liberal democratic notions of accessibility and "excellence."

Rhetorical Antithesis

In 1989, American communications scholars Sandra Ragan and Jill McMillan established that liberal arts institutions have a common rhetorical posture in their Viewbooks.[45] According to the authors, universities are caught in a "discursive dilemma" when they market themselves, torn between appealing to their traditional roots and conceding to market demands. As a result, universities tend to take the rhetorical middle ground and represent themselves as having the best of both worlds.[46] Indeed, a decade or more later, this narrative is also evident in the promotional materials of Western and Lakehead. For instance, Lakehead employs a "big fish in a small pond" narrative to describe how, with small class sizes and professors who care, you will not be just another number (See Figure 2.9); you will be "Unlike Any Other," "Someone. Not Anyone." Roland Marchand describes how, in the 1920s and 1930s, modernizing consumers faced increasing complexity in social relations of urban environments.[47] Like advertisements of this period, university advertisements today attempt to moderate student anxieties concerning the scale

---

[45] Sandra Ragan and Jill J. McMillan, "The Marketing of the Liberal Arts," *The Journal of Higher Education* 60, no. 6 (1989): 690.

[46] Ibid., 692.

[47] Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making way for modernity 1920 – 1940* (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 1985).

and complexity of the university by employing a language of inclusion and community. At the same time, the Lakehead Viewbook emphasizes the vibrant and accessible city of Thunder Bay (a short 1.5 hour plane ride away from Toronto!) (Figure 3.11). Similarly, Western moderates any apprehension over its size with positive attributes such as hundreds of program and course choices, and 170 clubs and associations. One Western advertisement tells the viewer that "you want the best education possible, but you also want an amazing campus in an exciting city. Western has it all." Thus, the juxtaposition of an intimate and worldly environment in both cases exemplifies the strategic use of "rhetorical antithesis."

Figure 3.11 Lakehead Viewbook - Profile of Thunder Bay (2007 Recruitment Season)

Western and Lakehead also use words and images to moderate against exclusivity, while at the same time emphasizing that their institution is not for everyone. However, Western is perhaps the more exclusive of the two, touting high entrance averages and award-winning students as evidence of its high calibre population. A Western ad claims that "[a]s a leading research-intensive university, Western attracts some of the best and brightest students and professors from across Canada and around the world." Yet, at the same time, this textual language of exclusivity is moderated by iconographic images of multiculturalism and gender diversity to indicate an inclusive student body (Figure 3.12). Similarly, Lakehead emphasizes its international services and Aboriginal cultural programs and support services as evidence of its inclusivity. However, the underlying connotations of Lakehead promotion appeals to a specific type of socially, political and environmentally conscious student. Thus, both universities employ a language of exclusivity, moderated by images of inclusivity which, in effect, resonate with a specific type of student without appearing to be undemocratic or arbitrarily selective.

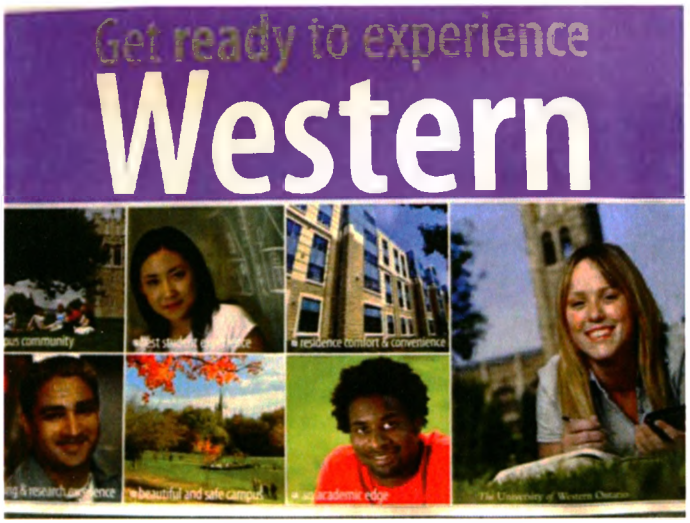

Figure 3.12 UWO Poster - gender and racial diversity (2007)

In addition, through images and text, both schools emphasize that their institution provides an environment that is academic as well as social, educating students not just in philosophy or science, but also on themselves and their relationship with the larger social world. Ragan and McMillan likewise establish that the "hackneyed adage 'to be well-rounded' is a verity well established in the literature."[48] To be sure, Western promotes itself as both an academic and social milieu: "Western offers award-winning faculty, world-class research facilities and the flexibility of more than 300 different majors, minors and specializations. Outside the classroom you'll get to grow as part of a stimulating community." Lakehead also emphasizes its social atmosphere in which students will learn and have a good time both on and off campus, in the city, as well as in the natural environment.

Finally, in promotional materials, information on academic programs is combined with a focus on applicability, particularly in the job market. Classical (liberal arts) and vocational schooling are not necessarily *at odds* with one another in promotional materials, but rather are fused to present to the student an education that is both theoretical and practical, fit for the academic world and the "real" world. For example, the Lakehead Viewbook tells readers that "[t]he intellectual skills you will develop in a Social Sciences and Humanities program – critical thinking, communication, cultural and historical understanding, judgement, adaptability – have a very long shelf life and are prized by employers." This is complemented by an alumni profile of a geography graduate who has now started his own company (Figure 3.13). Similarly, Western promotional materials

---

[48] Ragan and McMillan, "The Marketing of the Liberal Arts," 695.

place emphasis on the co-op, work-study, and internship opportunities available, claiming that "here at Western, it's all part of the curriculum." In both text and images, vocational aspects of education are portrayed as integral to traditional academic programs.

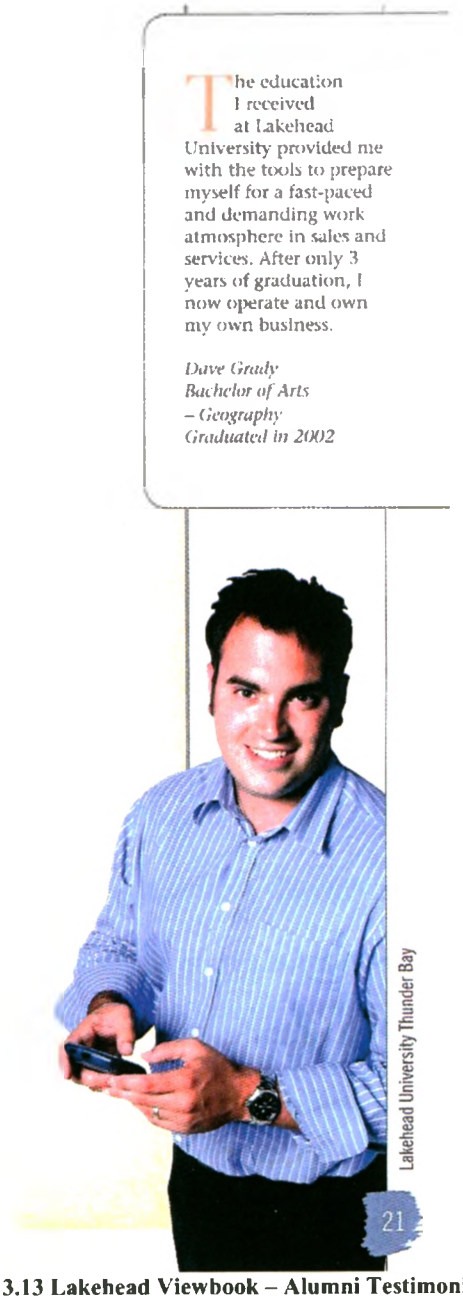

Figure 3.13 Lakehead Viewbook – Alumni Testimonial (2007 Recruitment Season)

Tradition and Technological Progress

The most pervasive duality present in promotional materials is between tradition and technological progress. Through buzzwords such as "world-class," "innovative," and "state-of-the-art," universities convey that they are forward looking, in touch with the economic and social realities of the "real world." Gerlinde Mautner and Norman Fairclough show how, through critical discourse studies, the macro-level "corporatization" of the university is mirrored at the micro-level of linguistic detail.[49] Without explicitly mentioning the economy or business, promotional materials convey to the student that theirs is an institution that is in-tune with the larger political-economic world. For instance, the Lakehead Viewbook claims that "[w]ithin this climate of innovation, you will find yourself immersed in a high-tech campus that is surrounded by the rugged beauty of North-western Ontario." Further discussion of research facilities, technologically enhanced learning environments, and hands-on learning assumes that the student has a vested interest in practical application and career development.

Juxtaposed to this narrative of technology and progress is a somewhat more subtle narrative of tradition and history. For example, through images of the Western campus, viewers are left with the feeling that this is an institution that has "been around a long time and will stand proudly into the future. Football stadiums, leafy walkways, and various kinds of labs featuring highly focused engagement in an atmosphere of hushed attentiveness are also familiar accoutrements of enduring, sacred space."[50] In a

---

[49] Norman Fairclough, "Critical Discourse Analysis and the Marketisation of Public Discourse: the universities," *Discourse & Society* 4, no. 3 (1993): 133 - 168; Gerlinde Mautner, "The Entrepreneurial University: a discursive profile of higher education," *Critical Discourse Studies* 2, no. 2 (2005): 95 - 120.

[50] Farber and Holm, "Selling the Dream of Higher Education," 127.

fundraising/community awareness ad campaign, Western stressed its "proud traditions and promising future;" however, the "tradition" invoked here is not one of classical liberal arts education, but of success in research and innovation and a history of scientific accomplishments which have helped to shape the world (Figure 3.14).

Figure 3.14 UWO Print Ad (2007)

Similarly, the first page of the Lakehead Viewbook reads "ad augusta per angusta," Latin for "achievement through effort." The use of a Latin motto, characteristic of medieval universities, attempts to connote a sense of history, establishment, and purpose for

Lakehead. Following this, however, is a detailed discussion of Lakehead's technologically assisted learning environment, with convergent telecommunications technology installed in residences and world class labs and research facilities on campus. Through these examples and many others, the promotional materials from the two universities in question exemplify how the narrative of tradition and the rhetoric of technological progress are not pitted against each other, but rather integrated into one another in an effort to represent a university that has the best of both worlds.

Key Myths: Accessibility & "Excellence"

Craig Calhoun reminds us of the university's importance to the public sphere especially in terms of preparation for citizenship, contributing to creativity and culture, and advancing social mobility.[51] For this reason, "excellence" in the name of social progress and accessibility to all citizens in a democracy have become core tenets of the university. The theme of accessibility is played out continuously in university promotion. With few exceptions, promotional materials give the impression that the university is a multicultural, multiethnic, multinational environment; here, the only barrier to entry is your high school average. The class free, stereotype free environment depicted in the photos obscures the real cultural make-up, which, at Western, is predominantly female, white, and middle class, and hides the fact that higher education has never been truly egalitarian. Roland Barthes uses the term "myth" to describe how cultural values and beliefs circulate connotatively and are naturalized.[52] The concepts of accessibility and "excellence" not only appear as the

---

[51] Craig Calhoun, "The University and the Public Good," *Thesis Eleven* 84, no. 1 (2006): 10.

[52] Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," *Mythologies*, Trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 150 - 159.

natural order of things in university promotion, but they appear to be inherently complementary and harmonious. Indeed, as the case studies indicate, the university is portrayed as "all things to all people," able to accommodate students indefinitely while still maintaining quality.

"Excellence" and accessibility, however, contradict one another and create what Joan Mount and Charles Belanger label the "massification" of the university.[53] They contend that the opening up of the university to a wider population by lowering barriers to entrance and creating more flexible programming occurred at the expense of academic quality. Jurgen Habermas also recognized the dilemma which emerged with "democratic accessibility." While openness and rational-critical discourse were key markers of democracy, as the public sphere broadened, "the quality of its discourse was debased and it became more vulnerable to mass opinion management."[54] In other words, as the university responds to populist calls for access it also lowers its academic standards and caters to a larger body of student demands.[55]

Moreover, the myths of accessibility and "excellence" are perpetuated by indicators of success which quantify material conditions of the university in order to provide measurable results. Seemingly objective indicators, such as rankings, exist on a scale of "excellence" which is invoked, as Readings notes, "to say precisely nothing at all: it deflects attention from the questions of what quality and pertinence might be, who actually are the judges of a relevant or good University, and by what authority have they become

---

[53] Joan Mount and Charles Belanger, "Entrepreneurship and image management in higher education: pillars of massification," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 34, no. 2 (2004): 125 - 140

[54] Habermas quoted in Calhoun, "The University and the Public Good," 16.

[55] Ibid., 36.

those judges."[56] Furthermore, any questioning of rankings or performance indicators is viewed as an objection to public accountability.[57] Thus, the rhetoric of "excellence" and accessibility evident in university promotion can be considered an ideological myth which makes the current order of things within the university appear to be natural and consistent with broader liberal democratic ideals.

Conclusion

In addition to furthering its own agenda, the university acts as a "cultural intermediary" in promotional efforts, attempting to direct and reflect contemporary notions of personal development, success, and the academy. Promotional strategies recognize that the population of prospective students is diverse rather than homogenous, and that students can be appealed to using strategies of image management and references to non-academic aspects of the university.[58] Whereas Western relies heavily on the iconography of the ivory tower and profiles of students to connote quality and exclusivity, Lakehead establishes its identity using the language of difference, which might appeal to a specific type of socially, politically, or environmentally aware student. Both universities employ a strategy of "rhetorical antithesis" to describe how they have an intimate/worldly climate, inclusive/exclusive environment, academic/social experience, and classical/vocational learning style. In particular, both universities also attempt to convey a sense of history and tradition that coexists with a narrative of technological progress. Finally, university promotion naturalizes notions of "excellence" and accessibility which are historically

---

[56] Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (London: Harvard University Press, 1996), 32.
[57] Ibid., 26.
[58] Colin Symes, "Selling Futures: A new image for Australian Universities?" *Studies in Higher Education* 21, no. 2 (1996): 141.

contingent on liberal democratic values and give further credibility to idealized representations of the university.

Although university promotional materials do not always accurately reflect the actual experience of going to university, they are a sign of "a complex (and sometimes contradictory) educational environment."[59] The Canadian university now faces a number of interlocking tensions in regards to 1) maintaining high quality education with an expanding student population, 2) dealing with the increasingly consumer-oriented mentality of incoming students, and 3) responding to the rising pressure to direct reputation through professional marketing campaigns. Semiotic and discursive exercises, such as the one presented in this chapter, are a starting point for exploring how university promotion circulates the "idea" of the university in Canadian society.

[59] Ragan and McMillan, "The Marketing of the Liberal Arts"; Farber and Holm, "Selling the Dream of Higher Education."

CONCLUSION

The previous three chapters outlined the development of the promotional university, tracing the concomitant shift towards a culture of credentialism and the foregrounding of vocational aspects of the university. In Chapter One, key social, political, and economic forces that have helped shape the contemporary promotional university were discussed. Since their inception, Canadian universities have had a dual function: a utilitarian role in preparing graduates for professional life, as well as a cultural purpose in educating young Canadians and preparing them for citizenship. However, it is clear that this cultural function is increasingly being marginalized by government policies, public opinion, and university initiatives emphasizing vocationalism and credentialism. Importantly, it is this utilitarian function which now holds currency as the defining element in the university's identity.

As discussed in Chapter Two, universities have begun to speak the language of the market and to act like businesses when representing themselves. Colin Symes notes that as the "'invisible hand' has gained a stranglehold over schools and universities, so they have become more conscious of the need to engage in stratagems such as advertising and promotion, that are designed to shape the movements of this invisible hand."[1] Beginning in the early 1970s, marketing concepts were applied to public, not-for-profit institutions such as universities. Although university staff and faculty were initially lukewarm to promotional practices, the stigma attached to marketing has been removed and it is now a

[1] Colin Symes, "Education for sale: A semiotic analysis of school prospectuses and other forms of educational marketing," *Australian Journal of Education* 42, no. 2 (1998): 133, http://find.galegroup.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca:2048/itx/start.do?prodId=AONE (accessed February 3, 2009).

formalized, "natural" part of university administrative practices in Ontario. Joint liaison activities, province-wide university fairs, award systems for outstanding promotion, and international branding campaigns are elements of this organizational culture.

Increases in marketing, alongside positioning strategies, branding practices, and ranking exercises, are evidence of a university that has become promotional, selling education like a specialized consumer product or service. At the same time, notions of consumer choice and consumer sovereignty have extended beyond the commercial realm, and are now resident features of universities. More program choice, flexible schedules, interdisciplinary programming, and, importantly, increased information for prospective students are part of the consumer choice paradigm. Furthermore, new recruitment practices that are commercial in nature (for example, billboards, direct marketing, and online banner ads) are partly a response to a new type of student. Universities are currently marketing to the Millennial generation. These young Canadians grew up in a culture of consumption, are primed with a competitive, individualistic mentality, and expect success and a comfortable consumer lifestyle in return for little effort.

Recruitment materials aid in institutional representation and also create an imaginary picture of student life. Chapter Three describes how university recruitment materials act as advertisements to sell a "commodified" version of university education and as publicity images which propose that the prospective student undergo an identity change by enrolling; thus, enabling him or her to become an active participant in consumer capitalist society. Focussing on two Ontario universities – The University of Western Ontario and Lakehead University – I looked closely at the meanings and messages which are culturally constituted within promotional texts. Western relies on a narrative of "higher

living" and "higher education" to connote high standards and high status. Using the iconography of the University College tower, Western is able to capitalize on its history and tradition, while at the same time rhetorically positioning itself as a technologically advanced, research institution. In undergraduate recruitment efforts, Western promotes itself as "Canada's *Best* Student Experience" and employs student profiles to illustrate why this is the case. On the other hand, Lakehead's promotional strategy is one of differentiation; through images and words, the university is positioned as "alternative" or "indie," a smart choice for students who are socially or environmentally conscious. Rather than relying on images of the university and its students, Lakehead has piggy-backed on larger global issues such as anti-Americanism, poverty, and climate change, which have no direct correlation to choosing a university or to academic life. It is clear that recruitment strategies are moving away from describing an institution and its students, programs, and facilities, and towards circulating an "idea" associated with an institution. Messages that are entirely unrelated to academics are now employed as recruitment strategies. Indeed, universities do not restrict themselves to a single subject centered on academics; instead, they draw on a wide range of cultural topics in promotional campaigns.

Overall, semiotic and discursive analyses reveal that the university is in a rhetorical dilemma when it comes to defining itself, primarily caught between a traditional cultural role and a contemporary utilitarian function. Universities consciously construct their identity through marketing strategies; however, this construction is often based on contradiction. In promotional materials it appears that the university is able to be both small in size and worldly in character, exclusive and committed to high standards, but also inclusive and democratic. It is a place for socializing, but also for getting a rigorous

education that will one day secure employment. At Lakehead, you get "the best of both worlds," while at Western "you can have it all." Indeed, the university is promoted as all things to all people, and something that is inherently and universally beneficial for individual success. Conflicts are not simply glossed over in promotional materials, they constitute ideological myths which naturalize the current state of things and frame the university ahistorically.

Certainly, promotional materials reflect a changing political and economic environment for universities which is more closely aligned with the logic of consumer capitalism; however, the university is also an important social institution and a pillar of liberal democracy. Beginning in the early 19th century, university accessibility was a foremost concern and a central requirement not only for educating citizens, but also for preparing skilled professionals for the workforce. Concurrently, the university has been heralded as a fundamental ally to Canadian governments and businesses through research and development, innovation, and technological progress. The contemporary social role of the university requires it to be both accessible and "excellent" and in promotional materials this does indeed appear to be possible. However, the university is a limited public resource which cannot expand indefinitely and maintain high quality. Nor can the university be funded, administered, and evaluated according to market indicators of "excellence," efficiency, and progress, without having its cultural role marginalized.

Promotional materials containing idealized representations of the university need not be considered deceptive; rather, they reflect a complex and contradictory higher educational environment that has several competing functions and many constituencies in opposition and tension. Nonetheless, university promotional materials have the potential to

weigh heavily on the conceptual framework within which the university is understood. The messages that are sent to prospective high school students, whose knowledge of the university is limited, help shape their consciousness as well as their subjectivity. Like other advertisements, university promotional materials hail audiences as prospective university students and offer students another layer of identity that will then become a part of their "promotional self." If promotional materials do this in modes and manners akin to consumer products, while emphasizing entertainment, convenience, individual attention, and lifestyles, it follows that students are more likely to act as consumers in their university experience.[2] Thus, promotional materials reflect a university that is more aligned with tenets of consumer capitalism (e.g. freedom of choice and individualism). Consequently, students themselves are more likely to make sense of higher education through the lens of capitalist consumption, as they do in most other areas of their lives.

This thesis is a starting point for outlining the field of university promotion in Ontario; however, analyses involving a wider range of institutions are necessary. For example, one could extend this initiative beyond Ontario, as well as into the college sector. Furthermore, while this thesis focussed on undergraduate recruitment strategies, research on graduate and faculty recruitment, fundraising/development, and alumni relations would also be useful contributions to the field. Finally, international recruitment efforts are a growing concern for universities in Canada. The promotional university now has a global

[2] This offers one potential area for future research. The effect of promotional materials on audiences has yet to be 'measured' or evaluated (either quantitatively or qualitatively) in Canada. Doing so would offer important clues on how students themselves interpret and reconstruct the meanings and messages latent in university promotion.

reach and positions itself competitively worldwide.[3] Following the example of countries such as England and Australia, Canadian higher educational institutions have united for international recruitment. In 2007, the Canadian federal government allocated $2 million for international recruitment efforts. Subsequently, a Canadian brand of higher education was created by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, in conjunction with Montreal firm Bang Marketing.[4] Under the maple leaf logo and the slogan "Imagine Education in/au Canada," the "idea" of the Canadian university now circulates globally (Figure 4.1). Rather than replacing individual international recruitment efforts, the initiative is meant to "sell Canada as a brand… Once we have that established in the foreign psyche, then it becomes more of a competitive issue between the institutions."[5] The global promotional university is a phenomenon which requires exploration and explanation. How does the international identity of Canadian higher education circulate, what are the meanings and messages being conveyed to prospective university students abroad, and to what end?

Figure 4.1 Imagine Education au/in Canada logo – Canada's post-secondary education brand (2008)

---

[3] Suzy Harris, "Internationalising the University?" *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 39, no. 1 (2007): 1 - 9; Daniel Lang, "'World Class' or the Curse of Comparison," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 35, no. 3 (2005): 27 - 55.

[4] Rosanna Tamburri, "Canada works on a brand for post-secondary education," *University Affairs,* 7 Jan. 2009, http://www.universityaffairs.ca/canada-works-on-a-brand-for-post-secondary-education.aspx (accessed May 8, 2009).

[5] Rosanna Tamburri, "Canada launches an education brand," *University Affairs,* 6 Oct. 2008, http://www.universityaffairs.ca/canada-launches-an-education-brand.aspx (accessed May 8, 2009).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Interviews:

Interview with University of Guelph Communications Officer (Telephone). October 1, 2008.

Interview with Lakehead University Communications Officer (Telephone). October 27, 2008.

Interview with The University of Western Ontario Communications Officer (In-person). January 27, 2009.

Interview with University of Windsor Communications Officer (E-mail). October 7, 2008.

Interview with York University Communications Officer (Telephone). November 19, 2008.

Steele, Ken. "Academica and Education Marketing." Telephone interview. 4 Feb. 2009.

Reports:

OURA. "Together we will prosper." *Ontario University Registrars' Association Commission to Review Joint University Liaison Activities.* June 1995.

Rae, Bob. *Higher expectations for higher education: A discussion paper.* Toronto: Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, 2004

---. *Ontario: A Leader in Learning.* Toronto: Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, 2005.

Marketing/Recruitment Materials:

Lakehead University

- *Maclean's* ads 2001 – 2004 ("Escape the ordinary," "Experience the extraordinary," "Ready for the Double Cohort," and "We See You")
- We See You (2003)
  - Description: Student recruitment campaign under tagline "Some see you as a number, we see you"
  - AOR: McLellan Group

    - Included: Ads on 1,500 buses and subway cars around the GTA, and *Toronto Star* insert
- Unlike Any Other (2006)
    - Description: Positions Lakehead as a "smart choice" and an "indie" institution
    - AOR: McLellan Group
    - Included: Print ads, give-away Smart Car, t-shirts, posters around GTA, and 15 second TV spots
- Yale Shmale (2006)
    - Phase 1: "Guerrilla" marketing campaign featuring photo of President George W. Bush and message that going to an Ivy League university doesn't mean you are smart. Phase 2: Photo of Bush replaced by the words "Be Smart" and the message that students should choose a university that is right for them
    - AOR: McLellan Group
    - Included: Posters around GTA, online ads, and a micro-site
- Do Something Now (2007)
    - Description: Marketing campaign based on social and environmental awareness with graphic images of poverty, climate change, homelessness, and war
    - AOR: Fantail Communications and BIG Advertising
    - Included: T-shirts, micro-site and contest, posters, transit ads in Barrie, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Calgary, cinema video spots, and bus shelter ads in GTA
- My Lakehead (re-launched 2008)
    - Description: Undergraduate marketing campaign under the slogan, "I will think for myself"
- Viewbook: 2007 – Do Something

<u>University of Guelph</u>

- Radio Ad (1979)
- University Affairs Advertisement (1980)
- Worked with Cundari SFP in early 1990s
- Guelph – Humber Advertisements in *Maclean's* 2001 – 2007 ("Learn More. Do More")
- Changing Lives. Improving Life (2007)
    - Description: Rebranding campaign including new cornerstone, tagline, website redesign, and Viewbook redesign
    - AOR: Cundari communications agency
- Viewbook: 2007 – Changing Lives. Improving Life.

<u>University of Windsor</u>

- Various *Maclean's* ads 1995 – 2005 ("Well-Connected," "Get a Life," "The Degree that Works")
- NAFTA Degree (1997)
    - Description: American student recruitment campaign promoting discounted tuition
- The Degree That Works (1997)
    - Description: Recruitment, fundraising, reputational campaign
    - AOR: Spencer, Francey, and Peters (now Cundari SFP)
    - Included: Ads in *Maclean's, Globe and Mail, and Windsor Star*
- Marketing Campaign (untitled) (2005)

    - Description: New campaign marks end of "Degree That Works" slogan after focus groups indicated that it is not beneficial to the "university's long-term profile and reputation goals" (Windsor News Release 2005-12-22)
    - AOR: Day Advertising
    - Included: Print ads in *Globe and Mail, National Post, Maclean's, Windsor Star,* regional daily newspapers, and Essex county weeklies
- Marketing Campaign (untitled) (2006)
    - AOR: Day Advertising
    - Included: Posters, billboards, newspaper ads, radio spots, and posters in McDonald's and Windsor malls
- Thinking Forward (2007)
    - Description: Rebranding campaign, including new logo, merchandise, and website.
    - AOR: Cossette Communications
    - Included: Print ads in *Globe and Mail Report on Business, Toronto Star, Windsor Star,* online promotions on Muchmusic.com, MTV.ca, Myspace.com, Facebook.com, Macleans.ca, and Schoolfinder.com
- Viewbooks: 2006, 2007 – Thinking Forward

<u>The University of Western Ontario</u>

- Over a Century of Quality Education (1996)
    - Description: Three art-deco style recruitment posters, now on permanent display at the Royal Ontario Museum
    - AOR: Bandharri and Plater Inc., Integrated Design
- Major In Yourself (1998)
    - Description: 32-page magazine featuring student profiles, used for student recruitment
- Campaign Western (2000)
    - Description: Fundraising and rebranding campaign
    - AOR: BBDO
    - Included: Print Ads in *Maclean's, Time, Canada Business, National Post Report on Business, Business London* and *London Magazine,* poster ads in Toronto elevators, billboards in London, and transit shelters in both cities, large banners placed on campus, and small lamppost banners placed around London
- Leading. Thinking (2001)
    - Description: Fundraising case statement
    - Included: Print Ads ("Compassion 101," "We do THIS in a lab," "May we suggest our ALL-YOU-CAN-THINK buffet?," "Watch what you think," "Get a Job," and "Use your head")
- Print Ads for 125th Anniversary (2003)
- The *Best* Student Experience (2004)
    - Description: New positioning statement for all recruitment efforts based on mission statement
    - AOR: The Marketing Department
    - Included: Student profiles (x4), print ads in *Maclean's* (x2) and posters
- RESEARCH what Western can do for you (2004)
    - Description: New positioning statement for all fundraising based on mission statement
    - AOR: The Marketing Department

    - Included: Print ads.
- Viewbooks: 2006, 2007, 2008 – *Best* Student Experience

York University
- Various *Maclean's* ads (1997 – 2002)
- Interdisciplinary Campaign (2004 - present)
    - Description: Rebranding campaign under the slogan "redefine the possible"
    - AOR: doug agency
    - Included: subway domination campaign, Bus Ads (x2), Subway Ads (x2), Newspaper Wrapper, Theatre and Elevator Spots (x5), Radio Ads (x4), Online Banner Ads (x4), Recruitment Gala, and home visits to star applicants
- York to the Power of 50 (2007)
    - Description: Fundraising campaign marks 50th anniversary (in 2009) of the university.
- Viewbook: 2006, 2007 – Enter Here

Online Resources:

"About the Fair." *Ontario Universities Fair: 2009.* http://www.ouf.ca/about.shtml (accessed February 10, 2009).

"University of Guelph Graphic Standards Guide." *University of Guelph.* http://www.uoguelph.ca/web/graphicstandards/ (accessed February 10, 2009).

"The University of Western Ontario Graphics Standards Guidelines." *The University of Western Ontario.* http://communications.uwo.ca/comms/graphic_standards/index.htm (accessed March 26, 2009).

"University of Windsor Brand." *University of Windsor.* http://www.uwindsor.ca/brand (Accessed May 1, 2009).

"Visual Identity Program." *Lakehead University.* http://communications.lakeheadu.ca/?display=page&pageid=4 (Accessed May 1, 2009).

"York U Graphic Standards." *York University.* http://www.yorku.ca/yorkweb/standards/index.htm (Accessed May 1, 2009).

Secondary Sources

Magazine and Newspaper Articles:

Abaya, Eleanor. "Marketing universities is a modern-day necessity." *University Affairs* August 2008. http://www.universityaffairs.ca/marketing-universities-is-a-modern-day-necessity.aspx (accessed March 26, 2009).

Anderson, Jim. "Western adopts new graphic image." *Western News* 20 Jan. 2000. http://communications.uwo.ca/com/western_news/stories/western_adopts_new_graphic_image_20000120429837/ (accessed March 26, 2009).

Fisher, Richard. "Mighty contests: the controversy over universities and branding." *University Affairs* 10 June 2005. http://www.universityaffairs.ca/article.aspx?id=1882 (accessed March 26, 2009).

Howlett, Karen. "Aches from York strike expected to linger." *Globe and Mail Campus* 02 Feb. 2009. http://www.globecampus.ca/in-the-news/article/aches-from-york-strike-expected-to-linger/ (accessed March 26, 2009).

"Lakehead University contest winner has book smarts and street smarts." *Lakehead News Release*. 23 Aug. 2007. http://communications.lakeheadu.ca/news/?display=news&nid=379 (accessed March 26, 2009).

"Lakehead University sees you." *Lakehead News* 7 Nov. 2003. http://communications.lakeheadu.ca/news/?display=news&nid=19 (accessed March 26, 2009).

"Lakehead's Do Something Ad Campaign takes CCAE Gold." *Lakehead News Release.* 1 May 2008. http://communications.lakeheadu.ca/news/?display=news&nid=448 (accessed March 26, 2009).

"Premier announces at least $300 million for R & D." *Council of Ontario Universities News Release* 6 Oct. 2004. http://www.cou.on.ca/content/objects/OIT%20annoucement%20from%20Summit%20-%20Oct%206.pdf (accessed May 1, 2009).

"Randy-in-a-box?" *Western News* 11 Oct. 2006. http://communications.uwo.ca/com/western_news/stories/randy-in-the-box?_20061011435127/ (accessed March 26, 2009).

Rayner, Mark. "Selling Western: student recruitment in the 21st century." *Western News* 1 Mar. 2000. http://communications.uwo.ca/com/alumni_gazette/alumni_stories/selling_western-student_recruitment_in_the_21st_century._20000301438237/ (accessed March 26, 2009).

Scott, David. "University rankings as a marketing tool: readers beware." *Academic Matters* February/March 2009. http://www.academicmatters.ca/current_issue.article.gk?catalog_item_id=2077&category=/issues/MAR2009 (accessed March 26, 2009).

Steele, Ken. "Field Report from the 2007 Ontario Universities' Fair." Weblog post. *Academica Group Inc.* 14 Oct. 2007. http://www.academicagroup.ca/2007-OUF (accessed March 26, 2009).

---. "Selling the Academy Without Selling Out." *Academic Matters* February/March 2009. http://www.academicmatters.ca/current_issue.article.gk?catalog_item_id=2078&category=/issues/MAR2009 (accessed March 26, 2009).

Tamburri, Rosanna. "Canada launches an education brand." *University Affairs* 6 Oct. 2008. http://www.universityaffairs.ca/canada-launches-an-education-brand.aspx (accessed May 8, 2009).

---. "Canada works on a brand for postsecondary education." *University Affairs* 7 Jan. 2009. http://www.universityaffairs.ca/canada-works-on-a-brand-for-postsecondary-education.aspx (accessed May 8, 2009).

Tausig, Christine. "Aggressive Recruiting: for some essential for others anathema." *University Affairs* (March 1980): 2 - 5.

Travis, Heather. "Posters Join ROM's Design Collection." *Western News* 06 Apr. 2009. http://communications.uwo.ca/com/western_news/stories/posters_join_rom%27s_design_collection_20090406444052/ (accessed April 6, 2009).

Van Harten, Peter. "Western launches sneak attack at Mac." *The Hamilton Spectator* 4 Mar. 2006: A01.

Wells, Paul. "Academic Renaissance - The Paul Davenport Legacy – 1994 to 2009." *Western Alumni Gazette* 31 Mar. 2009. http://communications.uwo.ca/com/alumni_gazette/alumni_stories/academic_renaissance_-_the_paul_davenport_legacy_%e2%80%93_1994_to_2009_20090331443973/ (accessed March 29, 2009).

"York U branding campaign voted best in North America." *York News Release* May 25 2005. http://www.yorku.ca/yfile/archive/index.asp?Article=4565 (accessed March 26, 2009).

"York University coming soon to a theatre near you." *York News Release* 15 Apr. 2005.

Online Resources:

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. *Trends in Higher Education – Volume 1: On Enrolment 2007.* http://www.aucc.ca/publications/auccpubs/research/trends/trends_e.html (accessed February 2, 2009)

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. *Trends in Higher Education – Volume 3: Finance 2007.* http://www.aucc.ca/publications/auccpubs/research/trends/trends_e.html (accessed February 2, 2009).

Hango, Darcy and Patrice de Broucker. " Postsecondary Enrolment Trends to 2031: Three Scenarios." *Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics* (2007). http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-595-m/81-595-m2007058-eng.htm (accessed March 26, 2009).

"University enrolments by registration status and sex, by province." *Statistics Canada.* 2009. http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/educ53a-eng.htm (accessed March 26, 2009).

Books and Journal Articles:

Abrahamson, T. and Don Hossler. "Applying Marketing Strategies to Student Recruitment." *The Strategic Management of College Enrollments.* Edited by D. Hossler et al. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990.

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." *Mapping Ideology.* Edited by Slavoj Zizek. London/New York: Verso, 1994. 100 -140.

Andreasen, Alan R. "Intersector Transfer of Marketing Knowledge." *Handbook of Marketing and Society.* Edited by Bloom, Paul N. and Gregory T. Gundlach. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001. 80 -104.

Anisef, Paul and Paul Axelrod. "Universities, Graduates and the Marketplace." *Transitions: schooling and employment in Canada.* Edited by Paul Anisef and Paul Axelrod. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 1993.

Armstrong, Jami J. and Barry D Lumsden. "Impact of Universities' Promotional Materials on College Choice." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 9, no. 2 (1999): 83 - 91.

Aronowitz, Stanley. *The Knowledge Factory: Dismantling the Corporate University and Creating True Higher Learning.* New York: Beacon P, 2000.

Arvidsson, Adam. "Brands: A Critical Perspective." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 5, no. 2 (2005): 235 - 258.

Atkinson-Grosjean, Janet. "Illusions of Excellence and the Selling of the University: a Micro-Study." *Electronic Journal of Sociology* (1998). http://mycrospacesdemo.com/content/vol003.003/atkinson.html (accessed May 1, 2009).

Axelrod, Paul. *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada During the 1930s.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1990.

---. *Scholars and Dollars: Politics, Economics, and the Universities of Ontario 1945-1980.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982.

Axelrod, Paul, Paul Anisef, and Zeng Lin. "Against all odds? The enduring value of liberal education in universities, professions and the labour market." *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 31, no. 2 (2001): 47 - 77.

Ayouch, Karen. "How colleges have responded to changes in student recruitment as defined by their level of Web definition on their official college Web sites." Diss., State University of New York Institute of Technology, 2007.

Barthes, Roland. "Myth Today." *Mythologies.* Translated by Annette Lavers. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983. 150 - 159.

Barton, David W., Jr. and David R. Treadwell, Jr. "Marketing: a synthesis of institutional soul-searching and aggressiveness." *Marketing Higher Education.* Edited by David W. Barton, Jr. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Consuming Life.* Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2007.

Bercuson, David J., Robert Bothwell, and J.L. Granatstein. *The Great Brain Robbery: Canada's Universities on the Road to Ruin.* Toronto: McClelland and Steward Limited, 1984.

---. *Petrified Campus: the Crisis in Canada's Universities.* Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1997.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing.* London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1972.

Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality: a Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge.* New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966.

Brooks, Larry R. and James O. Hammons. "Has Higher Education Been Using the Wrong Marketing Approach?" *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 4, no. 1 (1993): 27 - 48.

Bruneau, William. "Shall we Perform or Shall we be Free?" *The Corporate Campus: Commercialization and the Dangers to Canada's Colleges and Universities.* Edited by James Turk. Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 2000. 164 - 176.

Buchbinder, Howard and Janice Newson. "Corporate-university linkages in Canada: transforming a public institution." *Higher Education* 2, no. 1 (1990): 355 - 379.

Buell, V. "The marketing explosion." *Marketing and Media Decisions* 21, no. 7 (1986): 176 - 177.

Calhoun, Craig. "The University and the Public Good." *Thesis Eleven* 84, no. 1 (2006): 7 - 43.

Chang, Gordan and J.R. Osborn. "Spectacular Colleges and Spectacular Rankings." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 5, no. 1 (2005): 338 - 364.

Conway, Tony, Stephen Mackay and David Yorke. "Strategic Planning in Higher Education: Who Are the Customers?" *International Journal of Educational Management* 8, no. 6 (1994): 29 - 36.

Côté, James E. and Anton Allahar. *Ivory Tower Blues.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2007.

Cramer, Kenneth and Stewart Page. "Calibrating Canadian Universities: Rankings for sale once again." *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 22, no. 1 (2007): 4 - 13.

Cronin, Anne. "Regimes of Mediation: Advertising Practitioners as Cultural Intermediaries?" *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 7, no. 4 (2004): 349 - 369.

Cudmore, Geoffrey E. "The Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act 2000, and the Development of Private Universities and Private Post-secondary Degrees in Ontario." *hep.oise.utoronto.ca* 1, no. 2 (2005): 1 - 23.

Cutlip, S. M. "Advertising Higher Education: The Early Years of College Public Relations (Part 1)." *College and University Journal* (Fall 1970): 21 - 28.

Dehne, G. C., D. L Brodigan, and P. Topping. "Understanding the Marketing of Higher Education." *Marketing Higher Education: A Handbook for College Administrators.* Edited by G. C. Dehne, D. L. Brodigan, and P. Topping. Washington, D.C.: Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education, 1991.

Drucker, Peter F. *The Age of Discontinuity: guidelines to our changing society.* New York: Harper and Row, 1969.

Duncan, J. G. "Marketing of Higher Education: Problems and Issues in Theory and Practice." *Higher Education Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (1989): 175 - 188.

Edgerton, Susan, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber, Eds. *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture.* New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005.

Emberley, Peter. *Zero Tolerance: Hot button politics in Canada's universities.* New York: Penguin Books, 1996.

Fairclough, Norman. "Critical Discourse Analysis and the Marketisation of Public Discourse: the universities." *Discourse & Society* 4, no. 3 (1993): 133 - 168.

Fallis, George. "The Mission of the University." *CSSHE Professional File* 26, no. 1 (2005): 1 - 59.

Farber, Paul, and Gunilla Holm. "Selling the Dream of Higher Education." *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture.* Edited by Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber. New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005. 117 - 130.

Fernette, Marc. "University Access Amid Tuition Deregulation: Evidence from Ontario Professional Programs." *Canadian Public Policy* 34, no. 1 (2008): 89 - 109.

Finley, Donna S., Gayla Rogers and John R Galloway. "Beyond the Mission Statement: Alternative Futures for Today's Universities." *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 10, no. 4 (2001): 63 - 82.

Fisher, Donald and Kjell Rubenson. "The Changing Political Economy: the Private and Public Lives of Canadian Universities." *Universities and Globalization: Critical Perspectives.* Edited by Janice K. Currie and Janice A. Newson. Minneapolis: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1998. 77 - 98.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish.* New York: Pantheon, 1977.

Fram, Eugene H. "Marketing Higher Education." *The Future in the Making.* Edited by Dyckman W. Vermilye. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973.

Gibbs, Paul. "Does Advertising Pervert Higher Education? Is There a Case for Resistance?" *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 17, no. 1 (2007): 3 - 11.

Glogau, Arthur H. "Advertising Higher Education." *College and University Journal* (Spring 1964): 34 - 39.

Goldgehn, Leslie A. "Are U. S. Colleges and Universities Applying Marketing Techniques Properly and within the Context of an Overall Marketing Plan?" *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 3, no. 1(1990): 5 - 28.

Goldman, Robert. *Reading Ads Socially.* New York: Routledge, 1992.

Hall, Stuart. *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997.

Harris, Suzy. "Internationalising the University?" *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 39, no. 1 (2007): 1 - 9.

Hayes, Thomas J. "Image and the University." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 4, no. 1 (1993): 423 - 425.

Hossler, Don. "Effective Admissions Recruitment." *New Directions for Higher Education* 27, no. 4 (1999): 15 - 30.

Hudak, Glenn M. "On Publicity, Poverty, and Transformation: Images and Recruitment in Teacher Education Brochures." *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture.* Edited by Edgerton, Susan, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber. New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005.

Hugstad, Paul S. "The Marketing Concept in Higher Education: A Caveat." *Liberal Education* 61, no. 4 (1975): 504 - 512.

Jhally, Sut. *The Spectacle of Accumulation: Essays in Culture, Media, & Politics.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2006.

Johnson, Fern. *Imaging in advertising: verbal and visual codes of commerce.* New York: Routledge, 2008.

Jones, Glen, A. *Higher Education in Canada: Different Systems, Different Perspectives.* New York: Garland Publishing, 1997.

---. "Ontario Higher Education Reform, 1995 - 2003: From Modest Modifications to Policy Reform." *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 34, no. 3(2004): 39 - 54.

Kittle, Bart and Diane Ciba. "Using College Web Sites for Student Recruitment: A Relationship Marketing Study." *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 11, no. 3 (2001): 17 - 37.

Klassen, Michael. "Lots of Fun, Not Much Work, and No Hassles: Marketing Images of Higher Education." *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 10, no. 2 (2000): 11 - 26.

Kohn, Alfie. *No Contest: The case against competition.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1986.

Kotler, Philip. *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975.

---. *Strategic marketing for educational institutions.* 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1995.

Kotler, Philip and B. Dubois. "A Marketing Orientation for Colleges and Universities." Working Paper, Northwestern University, July 1972.

Kotler, Philip and Karen A. Fox. *Strategic marketing for educational institutions.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985.

Krachenberg, A.R. "Bringing the Concept of Marketing to Higher Education." *The Journal of Higher Education* 43, no. 5 (1972): 369 - 380.

Lang, Daniel. "'World Class' or the Curse of Comparison." *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 35, no. 3 (2005): 27 - 55.

Lang'at, Nicholas Kipkorir. "University public relations strategies: A case study." Diss., University of Alberta, 1997.

Lauer, Larry D. "Advertising Can Be an Effective Integrated Marketing Tool." *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 17, no. 1 (2007): 13 - 15.

Lee, Raymond T, and Celeste Botheridge. "Correlates and Consequences of Degree Purchasing among Canadian University Students." *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 35, no. 2 (2005): 71 - 97.

Leiss, William, Stephen Kline and Sut Jhally. *Social Communication in Advertising: consumption in the mediated marketplace.* 3rd ed. New York: Routledge, 2005.

---. *Social Communication in Advertising: Persons, Products & Images of Well-being.* New York: Routledge, 1990.

Licata, Jane and Gary L. Frankwick. "University Marketing: A Professional Service Organization Perspective." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 7, no. 2 (1996): 1 - 16.

Litten, Larry H. "Marketing Higher Education: Benefits and Risks for the American Academic System." *The Journal of Higher Education* 51, no. 1 (1980): 40 - 59.

Litten, Larry H., D.J. Sullivan and D.L. Brodigan. *Applying Market Research in College Admissions*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1983.

Liu, Sandra S. "Integrating Strategic Marketing on an Institutional Level." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 8, no. 4 (1998): 17 - 28.

Mackey, M. "The selling of the sheepskin." *Change* 26, no. 3 (1994): 28 - 33.

Marchand, Roland. *Advertising the American Dream: Making way for modernity 1920 - 1940.* Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 1985.

Marginson, Simon. "Education and the Trend to Markets." *Australian Journal of Education* 43, no. 3 (1999): 229 - 240.

Mautner, Gerlinde. "The Entrepreneurial University: a discursive profile of higher education." *Critical Discourse Studies* 2, no. 2 (2005): 95 - 120.

McDonough, Patricia. "Buying and selling higher education: The social construction of the college applicant." *The Journal of Higher Education* 65, no. 4 (1994): 425 - 445.

McGrath, John M "Attitudes About Marketing in Higher Education: An Exploratory Study." *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 12, no. 1 (2002): 1 - 14.

McKillop, A.B. *Matters of Mind: the University in Ontario, 1791-1951.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

McMillan, Jill, and George Cheney. "The Student as Consumer: the Implication or Limitations of a Metaphor." *Communication Education* 45, no. 1 (1996): 1 - 14.

Michael, Steve, Edward Holdaway and Clifton Young. "Administrators' Perceptions of Institutional Marketing." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 4, no. ½ (1993): 3 - 25.

Morey, Ann I. "Globalization and the emergence of for-profit higher education." *Higher Education* 48, no. 1 (2004): 131 - 150.

Mount, Joan and Charles Belanger. "Entrepreneurship and image management in higher education: pillars of massification." *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 34, no. 2 (2004): 125 - 140.

Nelson, Randle. *Schooling as Entertainment: Corporate Education Meets Popular Culture.* Kingston, Ontario: Cedarcreek Publications, 2002.

Newman, Cynthia M. "The Current State of Marketing Activity Among Higher Education Institutions." *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 12, no. 1 (2002): 15-29.

Newson, Janice. "The Corporate-Linked University: From Social Project to Market Force." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 23, no. 1 (1998). http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/1026/932 (accessed May 1, 2009).

---. "Disrupting the 'Student as Consumer' Model: The New Emancipatory Project." *International Relations* 18, no. 2 (2004): 227 - 239.

Newson, Janice and Howard Buchbinder. *The University Means Business*. Toronto, ON: Garamond P, 1988.

Nha, Nguye and Gaston LeBlanc. "Image and reputation of higher education institutions in students' retention decisions." *International Journal of Educational Management* 15, no. 6 (2001): 303 - 311.

Ozanne, Julie L. and Jeff B. Murray. "The Reflexively Defiant Consumer." Edited by Ron P. Hill. *Marketing and Consumer Research in the Public Interest.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996. 3 - 30.

Pegoraro, Ann. "Using university websites for student recruitment: A study of Canadian university home pages examining relationship marketing tactics and website usability." Diss., The University of Nebraska - Lincoln, 2006.

Penn. J. R. and R. G Franks. "Student consumerism in an era of conservative politics." *National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Journal* 19, no. 3 (1982): 28 - 37.

Polster, Claire. "The nature and implications of the growing importance of research grants to Canadian universities." *Higher Education* 53, no. 5 (2007): 599 - 622.

Porter, Theodore. *Trust in Numbers.* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1995.

Ragan, Sandra and Jill J. McMillan. "The Marketing of the Liberal Arts." *The Journal of Higher Education* 60, no. 6 (1989): 682 - 703.

Readings, Bill. *The University in Ruins.* London: Harvard UP, 1996.

Renke, Wayne. "Commercialization and Resistance." *The Corporate Campus: Commercialization and the Dangers to Canada's Colleges and Universities.* Edited by James Turk. Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 2000. 31 - 47.

Riesman, D. *On higher education: The academic enterprise in an era of rising student consumerism.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 1980.

Sevier, Robert A. "Brand as Relevance." *The Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 10, no. 3 (2001): 77 - 97.

Simon, Roger. "The University: A Place to Think?" *Beyond the Corporate University: Culture and Pedagogy in the New Millennium.* Edited by Henry Giroux and Kostas Myrsiades. Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield, 2001. 41 - 56.

Slater, Don. *Consumer Culture and Modernity.* Malden, MA: Polity Press, 1997.

Small, James. "Reform in Higher Education in Canada." *Higher Education Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (1995): 113 - 127.

Stevens, Robert E. "The Public's Image of University Professors." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 4, no. 1 (1993): 49 - 57.

Strauss, William and Neil Howe. *Millennials Rising: the next great generation.* New York: Vintage Books, 2000

Strunken, Marita and Lisa Cartwright. *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.

Symes, Colin. "Education for sale: A semiotic analysis of school prospectuses and other forms of educational marketing." *Australian Journal of Education* 42, no. 2 (1998): 133. http://find.galegroup.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca:2048/itx/start.do?prodId=AONE (accessed February 3, 2009).

---. "Selling Futures: A new image for Australian Universities?" *Studies in Higher Education* 21, no. 2 (1996): 133 - 146.

---. "'Working for your Future:' the rise of the vocationalised university." *Australian Journal of Higher Education* 43, no. 3 (1999): 241 - 256.

Talburt, Susan and Paula Salvio. "The Personal Professor and the Excellent University." *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture.* Edited by Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber. New York/London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005. 117 - 130.

Tudiver, Neil. *Universities for Sale: Resisting Corporate Control over Canadian Higher Education.* Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 1999.

Turk, James, ed. *The Corporate Campus: Commercialization and the Dangers to Canada's Colleges and Universities.* Toronto, Ontario: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 2000.

Warde, Alan. "Consumption, Identity-Formation and Uncertainty." *Sociology* 28, no. 1 (1994): 877 - 898.

Wellen, Richard. "The University Student in a Reflexive Society: Consequences of Consumerism and Competition." *Hep.Oise.Utoronto* 1, no. 1 (2005): 24 - 36.

Wernick, Andrew. *Promotional Culture: Advertising, ideology, and symbolic expression.* New York: Sage Publications, 1991.

---. "Rebranding Harvard." *Theory, Culture and Society* 21, no. 2/3(2006): 566 - 567.

Williamson, Judith. *Decoding Advertisements.* London: Marion Boyars, 1978.

Young, Stacey. "The use of market mechanisms in higher education finance and state control: Ontario considered." *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 32, no. 2 (2002): 79 - 101.