THE VANCOUVER INSTITUTE AND THE HIGHJACKING OF MUTUAL ENLIGHTENMENT

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Abstract

The Vancouver Institute began as a partnership between the Vancouver community, especially its learned societies, and the University of British Columbia. The social roots and administrative arrangements of the Institute help to explain its evolution between 1916 and 1934. At an early stage, professors and local residents joined in administering the Institute; but by 1934, UBC professors dominated it, thus ensuring maintenance of the university's influence.

Résumé

L'Institut de Vancouver d'ébutait comme partenariat entre la communauté vancouvéroise (ses sociétés savants surtout)—et l'Université de Colombie Britanique. Les racines sociales et l'evolution administrative de l'Institute contribuent à expliquer son d'éveloppement entre 1916 et 1934. Elles nous amènent à comprendre pourquoi l'administration coopérative par les professeurs et les citoyens a disparu pour être remplacée avant 1934 par un système de domination professional dans les affaires de l'Institut.

For over eighty years, Vancouver, British Columbia, has been home to a remarkable lecture series. The Vancouver Institute continues to provide free, popular academic lectures from September to March of each year, much as it did when it was established in 1916. One popular description of The Vancouver Institute (VI) has been that it combines "town and gown"; local citizens join with University of British Columbia (UBC) personnel to organize, promote, sponsor, host, and present the lectures. Yet the roles of town and gown in the VI and their respective influence changed between 1916 and 1934. The institution was born, in part, of Vancouver's "mutual enlightenment" tradition of popular education for cultural edification, and local Vancouver area citizens initially played a strong role in the VI's administration. Within two decades, however, UBC professors dominated the VI administration and promoted the university's interests. This study examines how UBC "highjacked" Vancouver's mutual enlightenment

tradition by establishing a cooperative educational service, and then appropriating its leadership.[1]

The study began with a careful inspection of the Vancouver Institute Collection and other collections at the University of British Columbia's Special Collections. As I identified new actors and their organizational affiliations, I recognized that I also needed to examine collections of the University Women's Club, The Vancouver Natural History Society, and others held at the Vancouver City Archives. To place the activities of VI participants in the circumstances of their times, I also consulted histories of British Columbia, of the University of British Columbia, and of adult education in western Canada.

These sources support the argument that University of British Columbia personnel used an established local tradition of public lectures and volunteer societies to launch a new institution, over which the university slowly asserted stronger influence. The paper traces the VI's origins in early Vancouver society, from which the institution's founders originated, and presents two competing views of the institution's proper symbolic allegiance. These views co-existed for nine years, until VI promoters were forced to choose one view over the other. Finally, I argue, UBC assumed a controlling influence at a time when the university was struggling for its own existence.

Origins of the Vancouver Institute

The Vancouver Institute arose at a time when Vancouver social arrangements were weakly defined, particularly the social and cultural leadership of this new and unstable city.[2] Several features of early Vancouver help to explain the VI's presence, particularly the city's mutual enlightenment movement with its tradition of public lectures. The local movement was part of a broader effort in Canada, the United States, and Britain to popularize high culture, especially art and literature, but increasingly science.[3] Such cultural education set the stage for an initiative by two members of staff from the province's new university.

Vancouver in the early 1900s was in many ways an unstable city without well-established social institutions or patterns of conduct. It had grown quickly in the century's first decade; the local economy boomed, development rose considerably, and the population nearly quadrupled. Vancouver had become the undisputed metropolitan centre for Canada's Pacific Coast.[4] Canadian-born citizens accounted for nearly half of the population, but a strong British and American population was also present.[5]

British and American social attitudes tested each other for dominance, while First Nations, Asian, and other European minorities were either ignored or persecuted.[6] Civic boosters seeking wealth jostled with suffragists and other reformers.[7] Socialists challenged the developing economic order, and Vancouver, a "city of churches and churchmen," had a disturbing "immoral underside."[8] Vancouver was dominated by eager young men on an "untrammeled quest for individual economic betterment."[9]

The phenomenal growth of early twentieth century Vancouver was accompanied by various ideas as to the sort of city Vancouver should be. For some, economic prosperity and population growth were only part of what made Vancouver worthy. Some took very seriously the social and cultural improvement of the city.[10] To that end, various cultural and learned societies appeared, almost immediately after Vancouver's incorporation, to foster mutual enlightenment. As "learned" societies, they were largely concerned with amateur (that is, non-vocational) research and study of literary or scientific works. Many of those involved were prosperous and influential and, inspired by British ideals of high culture, helped temper what began as "an ugly, smelly city."[11]

Ian Hunt has described the emergence and growth of mutual enlightenment in Vancouver at the turn of the century.[12] Through a number of organizations, participants sought to improve the cultural, aesthetic, and social condition of Vancouver residents. Although some organizations attended only to their own members, others turned their attention to the perceived unenlightened masses.

A number of groups discussed by Hunt would become key participants in subsequent activities by the VI. The first were the Art, Historical, and Scientific Association (AHSA), Vancouver's oldest learned society; the Vancouver Archaeological Society; and the British Columbia Academy of Science. They were soon joined by the British Columbia Society of Fine Arts, the Natural History Section of the British Columbia Mountaineering Club (to become the Vancouver Natural History Society), and the Alpine Club of Canada (Vancouver section). The University Women's Club and the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council were also engaged in similar voluntary educational activities, although each had its own particular interests, and both groups became early supporters of the VI.[13] It was typical of all these groups to provide lectures to their membership or the general public.

These and other mutual enlightenment groups dealt with ideas and problems analogous to those informing the "new education" in turn-of-the-

century Canadian schools. Among the new education topics were civics, science (particularly through nature study), physical education (including health and hygiene), and manual training.[14] Although topics were adapted to fit specific Vancouver interests, they can be found in the programmes of at least some voluntary scientific and literary associations. The AHSA certainly promoted civics, advanced as high culture coloured by imperial sensibility.[15] Others, to varying degrees, promoted science (the Archaeological Society, British Columbia Academy of Science, and the British Columbia Mountaineering Club), physical recreation (the Alpine Club of Canada), health and hygiene (the Academy of Science included several physicians), or manual training (the Vancouver Arts and Crafts Association, Society of Fine Arts).[16] These interests also came to be expressed through the VI; lecture topics often included science, health, patriotism, mountaineering, or nature. The educational ideas promoted in this complicated movement were championed by tobacco baron and educational philanthropist Sir William Macdonald as part of the Macdonald/Robertson Movement.[17] A further link exists through Macdonald's financial aid to McGill University College of British Columbia in 1906.[18] Isolated as Vancouver may have been, it was not without contact with educational ideas elsewhere in Canada.

As Vancouver's mutual enlightenment movement evolved, so too did British Columbia's university movement. British Columbia residents considered establishing a university as early as the 1870s, but took some forty years to agree on its location and constitution.[19] Control of the proposed university was a popular issue for those who argued for a university. Before the provincial government decided in 1910 to locate the future University of British Columbia (UBC) on the tip of Point Grey, then several kilometres from Vancouver, McGill University had established affiliates in the province.[20] Initially through Victoria College and Vancouver High School (which became Vancouver College), and, in 1906, McGill University College in Vancouver, McGill came to dominate higher education in British Columbia.[21] McGill's dominance annoyed a few Vancouverites who had loyalties to the University of Toronto and upset those who desired a university established and controlled by local citizens.[22] Although McGill played a crucial role in higher education in British Columbia, the ethos of the university movement was clearly dominated by a concern for local and public control, and the movement to create a provincial university independent of McGill continued.[23] Not only did the University of British Columbia's existence spark the VI, but the themes of the debates over the control and function of the university found expression in the VI.

The VI attracted people who were keen on an independent and locally controlled educational organization, some of whom had been active in the university movement. Furthermore, the VI was an independent Vancouver organization, whereas UBC, as the provincial university, also served other British Columbia communities. Civic boosters, University of McGill and University of Toronto graduates, and local academics who were part of the university movement helped establish the VI as a publicly and locally controlled institution.

Debate over the proper function of the university was also popular, unsurprising in a province experiencing tremendous growth and clashing immigrant cultures. Cultural differences between middle-class university supporters, particularly between leisurely, class-conscious Britons and ambitious, industrious anglo-Canadians and Americans, informed different perspectives on the importance of a university.[24] Although the industrious thought UBC should be a practical university for economic development—because "the man [*sic*] who knew all about classics or literature was useless,"[25]—others stressed the character-building role of a university. Henry Essen Young, as Provincial Minister of Education, was sympathetic to the former function yet declared that "character building was the great duty of a university."[26] Although the desire for a practical and scientific university predominated (a major reason why UBC was located near commercial Vancouver), it was balanced by the character-building goal, however defined.[27] Vancouverites believed their city the best university location for industrial and cultural reasons.[28]

Both these functions became expressed in the operation of UBC. Although UBC sought to provide courses in several applied fields, it put many of them aside in the initial years while maintaining an ample budget for the classics, a staple of a liberal education.[29] The VI, too, attracted support from individuals and groups interested in the two functions. Some VI supporters, such as the Chamber of Mines and its members, stood to gain from UBC's industrial and practical function and supported that aspect of the university. Others, particularly mutual enlightenment groups and their members, were interested in the cultural, character-building function of the university.

Concurrent with the development of UBC appeared two people who subsequently helped found the VI. One was Lemuel Robertson, a classics scholar, mutual enlightenment participant, educator, and sometime administrator of British Columbia's institutions of higher education.[30] His career was linked to public support for UBC, high social regard for teaching

and scholarly professions, and a valued position for the classics. He exercised broad social influence in British Columbia's formal education system, and the VI can be seen as an effort to further his social and career interests.[31] Although the VI was Robertson's idea, much of the early leadership was seen to come from Robertson's first recruit: UBC President Frank Fairchild Wesbrook proved to be an excellent catalyst.[32]

Wesbrook was the second person to help found the VI. Although he had only been in Vancouver since 1913, he was well suited to launch an effort such as the VI. He brought a number of personal qualities and dispositions to his prestigious role as UBC's charismatic first President.[33] As a physician, medical researcher, educator, and administrator, he was aware of the professionalization of these occupations. He was born and educated in Manitoba, had worked and studied in Cambridge, England, and had held academic and administrative appointments at the University of Minnesota. His espoused educational philosophy was secular, democratic, and patriotic.[34] He appealed to aspiring professionals (for whom universities were increasingly important), blended Canadian, British, and American sensibilities, supported the state, and promised a less class-based university.[35] Wesbrook was an ideal person to attract supporters to a project like the VI.

In summary, the social origins of the VI were partly found in Vancouver's mutual enlightenment movement and partly found in the province's university movement. The VI brought together social, cultural, industrial, and educational leaders who participated in these movements and who thought that the VI might further their interests. Although the different reasons for promoting Vancouver's premier lecture series were generally well accommodated in the first decade of the VI's operation, supporters were divided on who actually ran the organization. Informed by one of two views, VI councillors would eventually choose whether their organization belonged with the mutual enlightenment societies or UBC.

Two Views

Those who met to create the VI held varying views of exactly what they were creating. During the winter and spring of 1916, the VI acquired a formal structure, councillors and an executive, a meeting hall at UBC, and the first syllabus of lectures for the 1916–1917 season.[36] One early objective was to encourage personal membership and organizational affiliation, and three mutual enlightenment societies helped found the VI. They were the Art, Historical, and Scientific Association, the British Columbia Academy of

Science, and the Archaeological Society. These societies sought to promote cultural values to their members and the public rather than to seek their own economic gain, although not all societies embraced the same values.[37] (See Table 1 for a complete list of affiliated organizations.) Many who joined, as individuals or through prior membership in a local society, viewed the VI as an instrument to coordinate the efforts of their societies. UBC personnel, however, viewed the VI as an instrument to assert its leadership in social and cultural affairs.

Those holding the first view perceived Wesbrook as the instigator of the VI, "acting upon suggestions of the representatives of the Art, Historical, and Scientific Association."[38] The VI produced "a first-rate Syllabus of

Table 1. *Mutual Enlightenment Affiliates, pre-1925*

Affiliate Name	First Season	Last Season	No. of Lectures
Art, Historical, and Scientific Assoc.	1916-17	1932-33	24
Archaeological Institute	1916-17	1927-28	3
B.C. Academy of Science	1916-17	1932-33	28
Vancouver Natural History Society*	1916-17	1932-33	24
Vancouver Trades and Labour Council	1916-17	1920-21	6
University Women's Club	1916-17	1931-32	13
British Columbia Society of Fine Arts	1916-17	1927-28	6
Alpine Club of Canada	1917-18	1932-33	15
Dickens Fellowship	1923-24	1932-33	6
Shakespeare Society	1923-24	1932-33	5
Vancouver Musical Council	1924-25	1928-29	4
British Columbia Institute of Authors	1924-25	1925-26	2
Women's Methodist Education Club	1924-25	1924-25	0

Sources: (a) Institute programs, VI Collection Box 4-5; dates are those printed on the programs, and do not necessarily indicate exact date of affiliation or standing; data incomplete for 1919-1920; (b) VI Minutes.

* Formerly the Natural History Section of the British Columbia Mountaineering Club.

Lectures by men [*sic*] of note...given under the auspices of the several Societies."[39] Such comments suggest the view of the VI as a project by local citizens and merely hosted by UBC. Mutual enlightenment supporters promoted the view of the VI as a *town* organization.

The other view, held largely by university personnel, was that the VI was auxiliary to UBC. Vancouver Institute programs stated that speakers of note were hosted "under the auspices of UBC," and UBC claimed the VI as an extension project in the 1916 report to the Minister of Education.[40] Although UBC never did claim a formal connection with the VI, its presence was deliberate. On Wednesday, 11 October 1916, the Senate approved a motion to create a committee "to deal with the relations of the University to learned Societies and the utilization of the University buildings so as to make the University a focalizing point for activities of the University scope."[41]

Three of the five members of that committee—classics professor Lemuel Robertson, physics professor James G. Davidson, and botany professor John Davidson (no relation)—became long-serving VI supporters. The UBC Extension Lectures Committee, formed in 1918, claimed any lecture provided voluntarily by UBC faculty members as a "University Extension Lecture."[42] The VI lectures, many of which were provided free by UBC scholars, qualified as extension lectures. The university viewed the VI primarily as a *gown* organization, and the university stood to gain from its success.

Each view served the interests of those who held them. Mutual enlightenment groups had several possible reasons for holding their view. One was simply public service, to varying degrees important to the AHSA, Vancouver Natural History Society, University Women's Club, and Academy of Science.[43] The VI may also have been seen as useful for organizational enhancement and survival, boosting the group's status and attracting new members.[44] UBC personnel had reasons to hold their alternative view. As a new and vulnerable institution, UBC was keen to promote itself in various ways.[45] In fact, the VI brochure in the early years stated that visitors to the university would become more aware of and sympathetic to the problems UBC faced.[46] The VI's public relations potential for UBC was not accidental. Despite these two views of the VI and their respective interests, they co-existed peacefully from 1916 to 1925.

Part of the amicable fit between town and gown was encouraged by the composition of the early council. As Table 2 suggests, many long-serving VI councillors participated in the institutional life of UBC as well as local

Table 2. *Longest Serving Councillors Of The Vancouver Institute, 1916-1925*

Name	No. of Seasons on VI Council	Occupation/Affiliations
L. Robertson	9	UBC professor; Local societies
Robie Reid	5	Lawyer/businessman; UBC Governor; Societies
S. Dunn Scott	5	Editor; UBC Governor; Local societies;
John Davidson	4	UBC professor; Local societies
W. Plowden	4	(Husband was businessman)*
W. E. Banton	4	Lawyer
J. G. Davidson	4	UBC professor; Academy of Science
F. W. Howay	4	Judge; UBC Senate; Local societies
Anna B. Jamieson	4	Teacher; U. Women's Club; future UBC Senator

Sources: (a) VI Minutes (note: incomplete data for 1919-1920); (b) Henderson's Vancouver Directory 1917-1925; (c) R.A.J. MacDonald, "Business Leaders in Early Vancouver" (Ph.D. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1977).

* Consistent with the sexism of the era, women were rarely listed in Vancouver directories. Winnifred Plowden's social status can be inferred from her husband's occupation.

societies and civic affairs. The VI minutes record little internal debate over aspects of the VI's operation, and few mutual enlightenment groups dis-affiliated. Everyone seemed content with the organization and enjoyed the general increase in popularity of the lectures.[47]

If these two views of the VI co-existed amicably for the initial nine years, UBC's 1925 move to Point Grey forced a choice. UBC and Vancouver appeared physically inseparable and symbolically integrated as long as the university remained in central Vancouver, where the VI could easily represent both town and gown. If, however, the VI also moved to Point Grey, it would appear as a university service; if it remained in the city, it would become Vancouver's premier lecture series. The latter choice prevailed from 1925 to 1929.

Choosing a View

At the 1924–1925 Annual General Meeting, outgoing VI President William Dunlop, a local accountant prominent in various learned societies,

presented a plan to keep the VI in Vancouver.[48] This was moved and seconded by two lawyers, and carried by those in attendance. UBC's offer to house the VI at Point Grey was declined.[49] By 1924, the composition of the VI council suggests that the organization had become town-oriented: most councillors had little direct involvement with UBC, and many local businessmen were unenthusiastic about the university.[50] At a time of Vancouver civic boosterism, it seems likely that other VI councillors would also want to keep the city's premier lecture series in the city rather than move it to the undeveloped hinterland mudhole that was the provincial university.[51] The VI and UBC geographically parted company.

For four years—the seasons of 1925–1926 to 1928–1929—the VI was obliged to present lectures at various locations in Vancouver. This led to increased costs and decreased attendance at lectures, although one season was reportedly the best attended ever.[52] Despite changed location, declining attendance, and very low finances, council retained a view of the VI as a local project. The unrepeated attendance surge in 1926–1927 prompted the VI secretary to record with satisfaction the financial and moral support of "distinguished members," including the Mayor, the press, the speakers themselves, Vancouver school trustees, UBC President Klinck, and UBC faculty members. Council believed that the VI "fulfilled a 'want' in the life of the city."[53] In the wake of a less successful 1927–1928 season, VI councillors looked to the City of Vancouver for an operating grant.[54] However, attempts to maintain the VI as a town project were about to give way to the view of the VI as a UBC service.

The season 1928–1929 was one of the poorest attended and left the VI with a six dollar deficit.[55] The VI was also losing its appeal to mutual enlightenment societies. The Archaeological Institute, Society of Fine Arts, Musical Council, and Royal Society of Theatrical Art left the VI. None of these groups had been particularly strong VI supporters, but it can be presumed that VI affiliation was of little value to these organizations. Two new organizations took up affiliation, but they were not mutual enlightenment groups and their interests were more closely tied to those of UBC.[56] The British Columbia Medical Association and the British Columbia Music Teachers' Federation, two groups interested in the enhancement and promotion of their occupations, became VI supporters. These professional organizations, along with the British Columbia Chamber of Mines, Architectural Institute, Vancouver Teachers' Association, and Academy of Science (which also has a claim to mutual enlightenment status) remained interested in the VI. Faced with financial debt, dwindling attendance at

lectures, and changing affiliate support, the VI executive finally considered moving to Point Grey.

The decision to relocate with UBC was not unheralded. During the previous four years, the several UBC faculty members who remained with the VI kept the offer of UBC housing alive.[57] On 4 March 1929, an executive meeting of the VI was held. This meeting was distinguished by UBC President Leonard S. Klinck, the perennial but rarely present Honourary President of the VI, and the issue of the VI's future was discussed.[58] During the Annual General Meeting the following month, VI members further discussed the relationship between the VI and UBC, especially whether the VI would hold the lectures at the university.[59] Two weeks later, at an executive meeting, Wilfrid Sadler, a UBC professor of dairying, moved that the VI executive seek an interview with Klinck for the purpose of securing UBC facilities.[60] UBC's Board of Governors subsequently granted permission to the VI to present its lectures at the university, and, in May 1929, the VI accepted the offer.[61] UBC resumed its role as the long-standing host.

The decision to relocate to UBC was not entirely motivated by the costs of various rental halls. It was, rather, a deliberate move to replace the view of the VI as an independent Vancouver institution, coordinating the efforts of local, learned societies, with the competing view of the VI as an institution with close ties to UBC. Central to this move were the Academy of Science and VI affiliates that represented occupations.

The Academy of Science provided perhaps the strongest impetus for moving the VI closer to the university. The Academy had been an early ally of UBC: "In order to guarantee that the Academy would maintain contact with the strongest scientific stimulus likely to develop in the province, it was decided that its headquarters should be located in the community housing the provincial university."[62] In 1924 and 1925, Academy executives questioned whether their organization had been made superfluous by UBC, implying that the Academy had been formed to encourage the establishment of the university.[63] Since the university had become well established (if poorly funded), the Academy decided to continue in a supporting role, promoting professional science and the institution that supported it. The symbolic tie between the VI and UBC was important to Academy members.

The Academy of Science had also been a regular supporter of the VI. It had been a charter affiliate, and sponsored over the years more lectures than any other society.[64] Many of the members of the Academy were UBC scientists who, to varying degrees, supported the VI as either lecturers or

councillors. The Academy had become increasingly concerned to promote scientific research and publishing of "professional" scientists and was later critical of "semi-scientific periodicals" and the local societies that produced them. One Academy councillor even suggested that experts from the Academy could join local societies to provide expert leadership.[65] The VI provided a useful platform on which to promote not only the cultural value of scientific knowledge (its mutual enlightenment role), but also the work of the professional scientist.

In April 1929, the Academy met and discussed the "rather unsatisfactory affiliation with the Vancouver Institute" over the past few years, and decided on "either making a real effort to bring the institution back to the University or else ceasing our affiliation with it."[66] Clearly, members of the Academy of Science felt that there was a benefit in the implied association between the VI and UBC over and above the economic benefits of university sponsorship.

Other VI affiliates also had reasons to maintain UBC ties. Many of the local groups to affiliate with the VI during the first decades were interested in promoting their occupations rather than the cultural good, and looked to UBC to provide occupational gatekeeping. The Architectural Institute of British Columbia, for example, looked to the new university to provide the required credentials not locally obtainable.[67] It and other professional associations like the Vancouver Teachers Association and the British Columbia Music Teachers' Federation sought status enhancement and closer ties with UBC.[68] The British Columbia Chamber of Mines had long enjoyed a university curriculum helpful to the mining industry, and the British Columbia Medical Association also enjoyed informal support from UBC.[69] Occupations with aspirations of professional status sought university programs across Canada.[70] UBC was too young and impoverished to accommodate many local demands, so Vancouverites with professional aspirations had to settle for informal ties through the VI. All of the above professional associations were long-standing VI affiliates, and all eventually gained a UBC curriculum of studies suited to their demands.

At the same time, the growth of UBC depended on its ability to provide occupational gatekeeping.[71] UBC grew during the 1920s in response to demands of local industries or government, and this helps explain new programs such as nursing, forestry, and commerce.[72] Two recent histories of universities elsewhere have suggested ways of understanding the twentieth century university that may help to explain UBC. In Fritz Ringer's account, French academics sold their increasingly valuable "cultural capital" to the

holders of "economic capital" in a bid to assert social influence.[73] Similarly, universities in Harold Perkin's Britain grew increasingly important in creating knowledge-based career hierarchies.[74] In both accounts, the ideology of meritocracy made universities important state allies. Although the published research is severely limited, UBC appears to have been filling similar roles in British Columbia by combining arts education, professional credentials, industrial research, and a modicum of social mobility. Professors at UBC, as elsewhere, gained power to assert their cultural and intellectual leadership in public education. The VI, by mixing university promoters with certain occupational boosters, was caught in the university's wider politics.[75]

The reunion of the VI with UBC was made public in a 1929 newspaper article entitled "Institute Seeking U.B.C. Assistance."[76] The article suggested that UBC would provide not only a location, but add new vigour and intellectual stimulation to the Institute. This was a further indication that UBC could play a significant symbolic role because the university, in one VI President's view, "confers the suggestion of standing [*sic*] we otherwise would not have."[77]

Shortly after the move, many mutual enlightenment affiliates lost interest in the VI. The onset of the Depression no doubt prompted these groups to reconsider their costs, but this was rarely given as the reasons for discontent. The Alpine Club and University Women's Club complained about accessibility; the Dickens Society complained about the lack of fresh audiences.[78] The AHSA, one of the more significant VI affiliates, disaffiliated on the grounds of cost and a priority to oversee the new Vancouver museum and art gallery.[79] This is not entirely convincing, given the high social and economic standing of many AHSA members. Since many VI speakers and councillors were UBC professors, many of whom were critical of amateur learned societies, the VI likely had failed to contribute to the status and social leadership the organization sought.[80] By 1933, many of the VI's mutual enlightenment affiliates had left. The majority of the affiliates that remained were the professional associations with their occupational interests in UBC.[81]

UBC Triumphs

Between 1929 and 1933, UBC had become much more influential in the life of the VI than it had been the previous few years. Through renewed institutional presence and the influence of UBC personnel in key VI positions, the Institute was appearing more like a university project. In 1933,

however, UBC influence became direct and forceful, if still informal. Much of this was because of the efforts of UBC physics professor Gordon Shrum.

Shrum had been appointed to UBC in 1925, and soon earned a reputation as a talented and energetic individual who became involved in numerous campus activities.[82] To some, however, he was ambitious, occasionally ruthless, quick and impatient.[83] Shrum had contributed lectures to the VI as early as 1928, and by 1931–1932 was on the VI council.[84] He had been involved in the move by the Academy of Science to hold VI lectures in UBC facilities, and in 1932–1933 was the VI President proposing amendments to the VI constitution.

The new constitution changed the conditions of individual membership to make it more accessible, but the biggest change was to the nature of affiliates and the VI council. Affiliates essentially lost their place in sponsoring lectures, although their named support was still welcome. Council was previously comprised of nine councillors from VI membership and two from each affiliated society. Under the new constitution, ten VI members were elected councillors, and two were appointed by the President of UBC. UBC was thus formally guaranteed influence, and affiliated societies were formally excluded. Informally, UBC gained considerable influence through the make-up of the new VI council. The election for new councillors in spring 1933 yielded a council dominated by UBC faculty members; this trend continued for many years. Several local town representatives lost their places, prompting a disapproving Dunlop to ask whether "gown discriminated against town."[85]

The change to the VI can be seen as part of a broader move by UBC to increase its popular support. Threatened by Depression-induced government cutbacks, internal conflict, and the infamous 1932 Kidd Report (with recommendations to close the university as a cost-cutting measure), UBC was feeling many pressures.[86] At the same time, the university was establishing a Public Relations Committee, an Alumni Association, and preparing for the Extension Department. In 1934, UBC professor of horticulture A. F. Barss wrote "A Proposal to Improve relation of University to the Province by the establishment of a University Extension Service."[87] Barrs had become a VI councillor in 1933, and the VI fit very neatly into his proposal for UBC to provide lectures and "open houses."[88]

One observer suggested that the VI had become "unofficially the senior branch of the extension department" and that the UBC-influenced council had become self-perpetuating.[89] UBC President Klinck denied any formal connection between the university and the VI, but the university's much

increased influence cannot be denied.[90] The syllabus changed from one that had long been oriented to popularized arts and sciences topics to one more sensitive to popular social concerns; a marked increase in lecture attendance followed this change.[91] The VI had changed since 1916. What had begun as a cooperative project with Vancouver's leading learned societies had effectively become a university service; mutual enlightenment had been hijacked.

Summary and Implications for Adult Education

What I have called the highjacking of mutual enlightenment is the account of one way that the University of British Columbia asserted its leadership in the cultural life of Vancouver. What began as a cooperative project between UBC and three well established learned societies had largely become a university service two decades later. I have argued not only that these changes were deliberate, but also that they fit wider changes in British Columbian society, particularly changes in the workforce and the role of the new university. By arguing that self-interest helps explain UBC's role in The Vancouver Institute, I also suggest that university self-interest encouraged its adult education provision more generally.

Endnotes and References

[1] For a more comprehensive examination of the first few decades of The Vancouver Institute, see Eric Damer, "Town and Gown: The Early History of The Vancouver Institute" (M. A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1995). The author wishes to thank W. A. Bruneau for commenting on a draft of the present paper.

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[4] Patricia Roy, *Vancouver: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1980), 51.

[5] Norbert MacDonald, *Distant Neighbours: A Comparative History of Seattle & Vancouver* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), chap. 4.

[6] N. MacDonald, *Neighbours*, 43; Roy, *Vancouver*, 59-63; Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), chap. 8.

[7] Roy, *Vancouver*, 51; Barman, *The West*, 210.

[8] Robert A. J. McDonald, "Working Class Vancouver, 1886-1914: Urbanism and Class in British Columbia," *B.C. Studies* 69-70 (Spring-Summer 1986): 34; Roy, *Vancouver*, 82.

[9] R. A. J. McDonald, "Working Class Vancouver," 65.

[10] N. MacDonald, *Neighbours*, 33. MacDonald argues that early Vancouverites were city-builders as well as profiteers.

[11] Roy, *Vancouver*, 29.

[12] Hunt, "Mutual Enlightenment."

[13] University of British Columbia Special Collections, Vancouver Institute Collection, Box 4-5, Programs. (Subsequent references to this collection are hereafter "VI Collection.")

[14] Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), chap. 12; Douglas A. Lawr and Robert Gidney, eds., *Educating Canadians* (Toronto: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1973), 157.

[15] Hunt, "Mutual Enlightenment," 41.

[16] Hunt, "Mutual Enlightenment," 42-43; Lawrence Ranta, "British Columbia Academy of Science," University of British Columbia, Special Collections, British Columbia Academy of Science Collection, Box 1-1. (Subsequent references to this collection are hereafter "Academy of Science Collection.")

[17] Sutherland, *Children*, chapter 12.

[18] Harry Logan, *Tuum Est* (Vancouver: The University of British Columbia, 1958), 18.

[19] Logan, *Tuum Est*, 2; R. Cole Harris "Locating the University of British Columbia" *B.C. Studies* 32 (Winter 1976-77), 107.

[20] Harris, "Locating the University," 108-109.

[21] Logan, *Tuum Est*, 23.

[22] University of British Columbia Special Collections, President's Office/Wesbrook Collection, Box 1-5, Public meeting minutes, 1906. (Subsequent references to this collection are hereafter "Wesbrook Collection.")

[23] Logan, *Tuum Est*, 31.

[24] Harris, "Locating the University," 125; Barman, *The West*, 137-141. N. MacDonald, *Neighbours*, 43; Roy, *Vancouver*, 60.

[25] *Daily Province*, 4 February, 1908. Cited in Harris, "Locating the University," 113.

[26] University of British Columbia, Special Collections, Convocation Records, Box 1-2, *Daily News Advertiser*, 22 August, 1912.

[27] Logan, *Tuum Est*, 37; Harris, "Locating the University," 115, 116, also notes the American influence behind the practical and scientific views.

[28] Harris, "Locating the University," 115.

[29] University of British Columbia Special Collections, UBC Board of Governors Collection, Box 1, Reel 1, Minutes, 11 January 1916. (Subsequent references to this collection are labelled "UBC Board Collection.")

[30] "Makers of the University—Lemuel Robertson," *U.B.C. Alumni Chronicle*, Spring 1955; Vancouver City Archives, Microfiche 8023, biography of Lemuel Robertson, 8 July, 1941.

[31] Valerie Giles, "Historical Evolution of the Office of Deputy Minister in British Columbia Education Policy Making 1919-1945: The Career of Samuel John Willis" (Ph. D. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1993), 10; Vancouver City Archives, Microfiche 8023, unidentified newspaper clipping, 16 August, 1941.

[32] Wesbrook Collection, Box 5-11, Correspondence, Howay to Wesbrook, 9 March 1916. Howay acknowledged receiving a "statement from Professor Robertson" regarding the founding of the VI.

[33] William C. Gibson, *Wesbrook and his University* (Vancouver: The Library of the University of British Columbia, 1973); Isobel Harvey, "Frank Fairchild Wesbrook," *The University of British Columbia Graduate Chronicle* (May 1932): 16-17.

[34] Wesbrook Collection, Box 2-2, Telegram, Wesbrook to [unknown]. Wesbrook describes his views of nation building. Other documents describe his views of "The People's University."

[35] Robert Gidney and Winnifred Millar, *Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 230. Despite attempts to convince working people otherwise, the labour press at times continued to regard UBC as an elite institution. University of British Columbia Special Collections, UBC Scrapbook 4, Newspaper clipping, *B.C. Federationist*, 19 November 1915.

[36] VI Collection, Box 1-5, frontispiece; Wesbrook Collection, Box 5-11, Correspondence, Howay to Wesbrook, 9 March 1916.

[37] The Trades and Labour Council is a case in point, remaining with the VI only a few years. Its VI representative, Helena Gutteridge, mixed socialism, unionism, and suffrage in a way unappealing to Vancouver's middle-class reformers. VI Collection, Box 4-5, Programs; Irene Howard, *The Struggle for Social Justice in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992), 64.

[38] VI Collection, Box 1-5, Minutes, 25 February or 16 March, 1916. (Reference to The Vancouver Institute minutes hereafter "VI Minutes.")

[39] Vancouver City Archives, Art, Historical, and Scientific Association Collection, Add. Mss. 336, Box 2-10, Minutes, 23 November, 1916. (Hereafter the "AHSA Collection.")

[40] VI Collection, Box 4-5, Programs; Wesbrook Collection, Box 3-1, Report to Minister of Education.

[41] University of British Columbia Special Collections, University of British Columbia Senate Collection, Minutes, 11 October 1916.

[42] University of British Columbia Special Collections, University of British Columbia Department of Extension Collection, Box 1-2, Report of the Extension Lecture Committee, 1923-24. (Hereafter "UBC Extension Collection.")

[43] *Journal of the Art, Historical, and Scientific Association of Vancouver, B.C.* (Vancouver: Trythall & Son, 1917); Hunt, "Mutual Enlightenment," 41; AHSA Collection, Vol. 2-10, President's Report, 1916; VI Collection, Box 5-6, Vancouver Natural History Society program; Academy of Science Collection, Box 1-2, Constitution; Phyllis Reeves, *History of the University Women's Club of Vancouver* (Vancouver: The University Women's Club of Vancouver, 1982), 4.

[44] The AHSA, for example, was losing status and membership: Hunt, "Mutual Enlightenment," 260; AHSA Collection, Vol. 2-10, Minutes, 1916 passim. Similarly, the University Women's Club sought new members through the VI. Vancouver City Archives, University Women's Club Collection, Vol. 1-1, Minutes, 18 September 1916.

[45] Gordon Selman, "A History of the Extension and Adult Education Services of the University of British Columbia 1915 to 1955" (M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1963), 28.

[46] VI Collection, Box 4-5, Programs.

[47] VI Minutes, Secretary's Annual Report, 1917-1918, 27 April 1925.

[48] Vancouver City Archives, Microfiche 2667, *Vancouver Sun,* Obituary of W. R. Dunlop, 6 January 1941.

[49] VI Minutes, 3 April 1925.

[50] University of British Columbia Special Collections, E. D. MacPhee Collection, Box 3-1, Correspondence, Henry M. Stone to C. Spencer, 8 December 1919. This and other letters testify that many Vancouver businessmen were unenthusiastic about courses in "Commercial Science" and the university in general.

[51] Logan, *Tuum Est*, 95; Roy, *Vancouver*, 92, 103, 110, 168; Gordon Shrum, *Gordon Shrum: An Autobiography*, eds. Peter Stursberg and Clive Cocking (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1986), 49.

[52] VI Collection, Box 3-13, Treasurer's statement, 15 April 1926; VI Collection, Box 3-10, Invoice; VI Collection, Box 3-13, Treasurer's Report, 1928; VI Minutes, 8 April 1927.

[53] VI Minutes, 8 April, 1927.

[54] Ibid., 30 March, 1928.

[55] Ibid., 5 April 1929.

[56] VI Collection, Box 4-5, Programs.

[57] VI Minutes, 30 March 1928.

[58] Ibid., 4 March 1929.

[59] Ibid., 5 April 1929.

[60] Ibid., 22 April 1929.

[61] UBC Board Collection, Box 1-1, Minutes, 27 May 1929.

[62] Lawrence Ranta, "British Columbia Academy of Science," 3.

[63] Academy of Science Collection, Box 1-1, Minutes, 19 November 1924.

[64] VI Collection, Programs, Box 4-5.

[65] Academy of Science Collection, Box 1-2, Constitution; Box 1-13, Executive Minutes, 14 February 1934.

[66] Academy of Science Collection, Box 1-13, Minutes, 11 April 1929.

[67] Vancouver City Archives, Institute of Architecture Collection, Add. Mss. 326, Vol. 1-2, Personal note. The unidentified author (circa. 1914) wrote notes describing the sorts of courses UBC could offer to architectural students. Vancouver City Archives, Vancouver Teachers' Association Collection, Add. Mss. 994, Constitution [1916].

[68] The Institute of Architecture and the Music Teachers Federation both made recommendations to the UBC Senate; University of British Columbia Special Collections, University of British Columbia Senate Records, Box 1-1, Minutes, 17 December 1924.

[69] UBC Senate Collection, Box 1, Minutes, 14 May 1919; 17 December 1919; 18 February 1920; British Columbia Medical Association Archives, Box 41-1, Minutes, 23 August 1922, 12 March 1923 and Box 41-2, Minutes, 1 September 1925, 24 March 1926.

[70] Gidney and Millar, *Professional Gentlemen*, chap. 17.

[71] Conrad Jarausch, ed., *The Transformation of Higher Learning, 1860-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

[72] Lee Stewart, *"It's Up to You": Women at UBC in the Early Years* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990), 35; J. Harry G. Smith, *UBC Forestry 1921-1990: An Informal History* (Vancouver: Faculty of Forestry, The University of British Columbia, 1990), 5-6; Earle D.

MacPhee, *History of the Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration, The University of British Columbia*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1976), 3.

[73] Fritz Ringer, *Fields of Knowledge: French Academic Culture in Comparative Perspective, 1890-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[74] Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (New York: Routledge, 1989).

[75] By "the university" I mean the institution as represented by the administration; individual faculty members may have held different political objectives.

[76] VI Collection, Box 5-3, [unidentified] Newspaper clipping, 1929.

[77] Ibid, Box 3-2, Correspondence, Winter to [unknown], [1935].

[78] VI Collection, Box 2-4, Correspondence, Alpine Club of Canada to Vancouver Institute, 13 September 1929; University Women's Club Collection, Box 4-44, Minutes, 24 September 1931; VI Collection, Box 2-14, Correspondence, 10 September, 1932.

[79] AHSA Collection, Balance sheets in Minutes, 27 April 1933 and 28 September 1933; Presidents Report, 1933.

[80] Hunt, "Mutual Enlightenment," 140, 255 also suggests this motive for initial AHSA association with the VI.

[81] VI Collection, Box 4-5, Programs.

[82] Logan, *Tuum Est*, 129; Shrum, *Shrum*, 146.

[83] Peter B. Waite, *Lord of Point Grey* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987), 23.

[84] VI Collection, Box 4-5, Programs; Box 1-2, M. Y. Williams, "A History of The Vancouver Institute."

[85] VI Collection, Box 2-15, Correspondence, Dunlop to Timms, 29 June 1933.

[86] Logan, *Tuum Est*, 110-119.

[87] UBC Extension Collection, Box 2-5, A. F. Barss, "A Proposal to Improve relation of University to the Province by the establishment of a University Extension Service."

[88] VI Collection, Box 4-5, Programs; Barrs, "A Proposal."

[89] Williams, "History of the Vancouver Institute," 14, 15.

[90] VI Collection, Box 2-15, Correspondence, Klinck to G. Winter, 2 August 1934. Klinck refered to the VI as a valuable extension service in 1932: UBC President's Office/L. S. Klinck Collection, Box 1-20, Transcript, 8 October 1932.

[91] VI Collection, Box 4-5, Programs; Damer, "Town and Gown," table 16.