Adult Education at Aurora Campus, Inuvik, NWT

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Abstract: *Aurora Campus, Inuvik, NWT, as part of a three-campus model of its parent Aurora College, displays two views to adult education: one view is that adult education consists of industry-driven vocational skill training while the other view is that adult education programs should respond to the internal feelings, values of the community/ cultural model. Aurora Campus in 2004 has begun to move away from exclusive vocational education programming toward programs that are designed in response to the unique community/ cultural values of Inuvik stakeholders. This tension is not necessarily negative. It is also one of several other tensions that exist in the north. This tension is better understood when you look at the Tyler model of program design that the College has used since its inception. Similarly, there is another factor that sheds light on the reasons for this tension: Aurora Campus, with pressure from its parent Aurora College, practices a preserving system approach towards its organizational structure which is placing limitations on the delivery of adult education at Aurora Campus.*

Part I - Introduction and Thesis

Aurora Campus, at Inuvik, NWT, opened in 1987. It is one of three campus sites that its parent organization Aurora College operates in the Northwest Territories. A second campus is located in Yellowknife. The third and primary campus of this thirty-five year old institution is located in Fort Smith, NWT. Aurora Campus is the sole provider of adult education services in the Western Arctic. Its programming is aimed at the 3300 residents of Inuvik and the 4700 residents of the eight settlements in the Inuvik Region.

It is my thesis that Aurora Campus in Inuvik represents a fruitful tension between two views of adult education. One view is that adult education consists of an external, industry-driven series of programs intended to develop solely the vocational needs of people. The other view is that adult education should consist of programs that reflect the internal community/ cultural "values, sentiments and feelings that act as basis for action" (Smith, 1956, p. 56).

This tension between views is not a new one and has been similarly explored by other researchers. For example, "Contemporary practices in adult education focus primarily on the vocational needs of individuals. This fragmented, industry-driven and competency-based approach is not reflective of the grassroots historiography of adult education" (Kawalilak, 2004, p. 1) and "Vocational education as dictated by industry has taken precedent over programs that promote literacy and citizenship skill development"
(p. 3). This report explores Aurora Campus programs and initiatives that reflect both points of view. It does not attempt to quantify or group the respective initiatives but merely illustrate that Aurora Campus represents a microcosm of a philosophical tension that exists in other post-

secondary institutions elsewhere in Canada.

It is through my lived experience as a thirty-four year resident of Inuvik that I conducted this research. Over the years, I have not only taken local training courses at Aurora Campus, but also, as a teacher, I have assisted students with the necessary skill development in order that they could gain entry into different campus programs. In the formative years of Inuvik adult education in the 1970s, I was also employed part time, for two years, as the Continuing Education coordinator for adult evening classes.

Northerners are accustomed to tension existing between two elements. A common tension is when the winter sun is shining warmly in the sky but it is a cool -30 on the ground. The tension within Aurora Campus adult education programming exists because of the evolution of the primary purpose of adult education. Welton highlights this evolution when he says "Our disquiet as Canadian adult educators stems from our sense that 'social liberalism' fought for by the pioneering adult educators in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s is unraveling day by day…" (Welton, 1998, p. 369). In the Inuvik area, the key stakeholders involved have discussed around campfires and around boardroom tables this tension between the two views outlined in my thesis. Should adult education in the Inuvik Region be specifically for career goals related solely to economic relationships or should adult education be for what is considered the higher ideal, that of social relationships (Kawalilak, 2004)? For the majority of residents of the Inuvik Region, the social relationships are in the context of the centuries old values and customs of the Inuvialuit (Inuit) or Gwich'in (Dene). Another underlying tension is the pull between the traditional, on-the-land lifestyle while working seasonally for wage employment and the modern township lifestyle of wage employment (confining their contact with the land to weekends or holidays). It could be said that there is a tension between the traditions of the past and the attractions of

modernity. While there is tension and difference, most northerners share a common value of wanting to monitor, control and share in resource development. All levels of government in our area (Aboriginal, Territorial or Federal) want to ensure that northerners benefit, both through jobs and joint venture corporate profits, from all resource development projects (Cadieux, 1989; Gruben, 1989: Kakfwi, 1988). Together, northerners are working cooperatively in a systematic plan of developing the riches from renewable and non-renewable resources alike.

> Non-renewable resource development in northern Canada presents Aboriginal communities and other northerners with tremendous opportunities…diamond mining and the production of natural gas have opened up a new era for resource development…long term production of both commodities is likely…construction of a pipeline to ship gas from the Mackenzie Delta to southern markets…The potential for direct employment, indirect economic opportunities and revenue flow to government is particularly significant … (These) can generate economic development in a region that is chronically under-developed and heavily reliant on the public sector… Along with these opportunities, however, come potentially high risks. All too often the benefits flow south while the long-term costs remain behind in the north.
>
> (*National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, Aboriginal Communities and Non-renewable Resource Development*, 2001, p. 1).

However, since the land holds such significance to all northerners, and particularly the aboriginals, there is a fear that non-renewable resource development will endanger a way of life

that people have known for thousands of years.

> Aboriginal communities have a profound social, cultural, and spiritual attachment to the land…many aboriginal people engage in renewable resource harvesting (trapping for furs to sell) and rely on the land for subsistence purposes (caribou hunting and open water beluga and bowhead whale hunting for food). Threats to the environment from non-renewable resource development are therefore taken seriously in Aboriginal communities (*National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy*, 2001, p. 1).

It is from these two resource perspectives, renewable and non-renewable management and development initiatives, that we gain a better understanding of the tension that exists in adult education programming at Inuvik's Aurora Campus. Aurora Campus is providing a vocational education series of programs that is industry-driven and, through joint ventures with the College, partially industry-funded. This industry demand has been a significant causal factor in the growth of the Aurora College network of campuses.

> Aurora College is a "decentralized system of three regional campuses offering a variety of certificate, diploma, trades, and university transfer programs…in areas such as applied communications, office administration, management studies, health, human services, teacher education, and natural resources technology. In

> addition, the college provides adult basic education, skills development courses, trades training, and contract training on behalf of local employers…Aurora College has transfer arrangements with a number of institutions in the south, including McGill University, the University of Alberta, Trent University, Athabasca University, the University of Regina, the University of Calgary, and the University of Saskatchewan (CICIC, April 9, 2004).

From a cultural perspective, Aboriginal communities feel torn between two worlds as they confront the prospect of increased non-renewable resource development.

> Aboriginal people see their traditional culture, languages and way of life as unique and valuable. Preserving these traditions is essential to individual and community well being. At the same time, many Aboriginal people want development and opportunities that accompany it. They see the need to return to traditional roots as a source of strength, while reaching out to embrace the new challenges that come with closer economic, social and cultural contact with non-Aboriginal society (*National Round Table on the Economy and the Environment*, Executive Summary, January 2001, p. 2).

Whether it is a character trait of mine or a result of my many years of living among aboriginal political structures where, in serious matters, adversarial positions are only taken as a last resort, I do not see this tension as destructive. It is understandable that within any system there must exist some paradox. Briskin gives us hope in the examination of this process with the

following statement:

> In grappling with contradictions, the soul is stirred into being. Soul resides in the tension between apparent opposites, born from our own experience and reflection on experience. Soul is paradoxical in its essence. What kills soul in organizations is the wish to cleave the paradox in half, to ignore one side or to ignore the tension between the two sides. The coexistence of preserving and purposeful perspectives is one example of this tension" (Briskin, 1998, p. 239).

As my literature search yielded very few written references to my topic, I have supplemented my references with personal communications I received about this project. Due to time limitations and a scarcity of historical records, I examined the range of programs offered in 1987-88, the year Aurora campus opened, and for 2003-2004. This examination revealed some of the sensitivities and the tension created as they honour these two views: vocational education to met industry's needs or adult education with a community/ cultural focus.

Part II – The Social-Political Setting

In order to provide a better understanding of adult education in the Inuvik area, it is necessary to review some of the social-political features of our area. Inuvik is the supply centre for the Western Arctic. All levels of government and industry are located there along with numerous storefront businesses. Located at the end of the Dempster highway, supplies for resource development are shipped to Inuvik for use in resource development. There are seven outlying

settlements in our area that look to Inuvik for goods and services. Aurora Campus draws students primarily from within our area although students from all over the NWT have completed studies there. In this setting, the dynamics of interactions between aboriginal and non-aboriginal viewpoints represents a microcosm of the larger northern scene. But let me take you back in our history and relate some of the significant changes that have come about in a relatively short time frame. The people in our area went from the stone age to the modern age within just forty plus years. In this context, it is understandable that there would be tensions.

The delivery of education in Inuvik has its very roots in the very unique 1965 anthropological make up of the citizens in the new township. The "land" people and the "Inuvik township" people disagree on the type of adult education: bush skills or job skills. There was also disagreement between aboriginals and non-aboriginals as to how the type of education and the standards northerners, compared to southerners, should be held to (Maher, personal communication, 1971).

In 1969, the administrative offices that had been located in Ottawa were transferred to Yellowknife. In 1970, the first Northwest Territories government was formed. One of their first actions was to establish the first, and to date, only post-secondary institution: the NWT Adult Vocational Training Centre in Fort Smith, NWT. (CICIC, April 9, 2004).

The 1970s saw a full range of vocational education programs consisting primarily of trades programs (e.g. construction trades training, heavy equipment operator training, and driver's education) and English language academic upgrading. Students from all over the NWT predominantly spoke English since many had been taken from the families and communities to live and study in English-language residential schools. Other adults stayed at home and, as a

result, maintained a fluency in the aboriginal language of their community. When attending Fort Smith programs, they had to learn English as a second language (Aurora College staff, personal communication, 2004).

Back then, the NWT consisted of a million and a third square miles of land that stretched from Aklavik in the west over to Frobisher Bay (Iqaluit) in the east. Within this Territory, eight different aboriginal cultures lived in respectful harmony on lands their ancestors had occupied for centuries. The languages spoken were Chipewyan, Dogrib, South Slavey, North Slavey, Gwich'in, Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun, and Inuktitut (GNWT, Office of the Language Commissioner, 2001).

In 1979, the three key power groups, the Dene/ Metis, the Inuvialuit and the eastern Arctic Inuit, growing tired of the having the majority non-native Members of the Legislative Assembly dominate the political agenda, formed the first majority aboriginal Legislative Assembly. "Since 1979 white hegemony has been firmly and probably permanently ended…the Inuvialuit, the eastern Inuit, and the Dene/ Metis are reluctant, or perhaps, not properly organized to wield their power to the political full" (Jull, Policy Options Politiques 1985).

With the election of the first aboriginal assembly, and a review of the governments program successes and failures, the members were shocked at the poor statistics (for academic success) and recommended that there be a major debate on Education by consultation with people all around the North (Kakfwi, 1988). Implementation of literacy and academic upgrading programs became an immediate priority. When community consultations were completed, the final report was compiled. This report became the blueprint for northern education for the eighties.

In the 1980s, responding to the people's request for a decentralized college system

(Kakfwi, 1988, p. 60) and in response for the ever increasing demand by northerners for training at home, the Fort Smith Vocational Centre set aside its "DACUM" charts for vocational skill development and added certificate and diploma level programs. They renamed their institution Arctic College. This new approach to post-secondary education was reflected with the setting up of regional campuses as well as a number of community learning centres in the smaller settlements. (CICIC, April 9, 2004).

At a 1988 Conference on Native Education, GNWT Education Minister Stephen Kakfwi spoke of the desire by his people for a change in the Euro-Canadian foundation of the then education programs.

> Our schools must, in the next ten years evolve into a culture-based system, where not only are the parents in control but also, the language and culture of the community become the fundamental basis of school life - where teaching and learning is built on the experience the young person brings to school. In this system, the languages and cultural values of the aboriginal people have the status and the prestige which is now accorded solely to the majority language (English)…I am only too well aware of the implications of this concept. Curriculum development and teacher education, are certainly our greatest challenge. It will take more than vision, more than words - It will take political will, patience, money and hard work" (Kakfwi, 1988, p. 8).

Back in Inuvik, in 1986, the area was going through a recession primarily due to the oil patch pull back in exploration and drilling and the withdrawal by the Department of National Defense of CFB Inuvik. As a result, the Government of the NWT acquired the entire military

facility for one dollar. The Inuvik campus opened its doors in the fall of 1987.

Two other events occurred in the 1980's that impacted on the type of adult education demands being required on Aurora Campus in Inuvik: implementation of land claims negotiations for the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit and, implementation of an "Affirmative Action Plan to bring more aboriginal people into its service" (Opportunities - Handbook for Aboriginal People, 1996, p. 45).

By 1995, in anticipation of the division of the Northwest Territories with the creation of the Nunavut Territory, the Government of the NWT set up Aurora College in the western Arctic and Nunavut Arctic College to serve the eastern Arctic. Since residents of Inuvik had already chosen Aurora to be the name for their local campus, with the GNWT 1995 decision, they became Aurora campus of the larger tri-campus (Yellowknife, Fort Smith, Inuvik) Aurora College network (CICIC, April 9, 2004).

PART III - History of Adult Education in Inuvik, NWT.

In this section, I summarize some key aspects of Inuvik adult education initiatives in the 1960s and 1970s. As well, I provide greater detail about the two program years under review: the 1987-88 and the 2003-04 calendar years.

The 1960s

When the town of Inuvik was only seven years old in 1965, it had about 2290 people. The 1399 whites, mostly workers from the south, were continuing with the ongoing construction of the new township roads and infrastructure. Eventually, most of these would move back south. The remaining population consisted of 646 Inuvialuit (Eskimos) and 245 Indians. Of these latter groups, most were able to speak English, while a few were able to read and write. The Town

Council was 80% non-native and the governance of the NWT was carried out by mandarins in Ottawa. Amongst the aboriginal people in the area, there were three distinct lifestyle groups: a) people on the land, b) settlement-dwellers not in continuous wage employment, and c) settlement-dwellers with continuous wage-employment (Smith, 1965, p.10). Adult education throughout the following years would have its mandate by addressing the unique needs of these three groups.

Regarding the "people on the land" group, Smith wrote, "Amongst themselves, however, they speak native languages with an almost complete exclusion of English. Most wish their children to continue in the native ways as hunters and fishers" (Smith, 1965, p. 22). However, the meaning of which type of education was better, bush skills or town, i.e. school skills, was a source of conflict. "One hunter whom I knew very well complained to me often that his son was not a good hunter, and that he could not learn his way about the (Mackenzie) Delta. The hunter blamed this on schooling -'if you have been to school you're no good in the Delta. This group (of people on the land) attempts to teach their sons how to be good hunters and fishers and their daughters to be good cooks, seamstresses, and housekeepers" (Smith, p. 23). The adult education programs of the 1960's consisted of literacy classes, family health lessons, and evening classes that had local people teaching the traditional crafts.

With the Government of Canada pressuring for the relocation of people from their nomadic hunting and gathering lifestyle through threats of holding back Child Allowance cheques, many people felt intimidated and coerced into moving into Inuvik (Alunik, 2003, p.1997). However, some people chose to continue traditional hunting and gathering practices and only came to town occasionally to pick up supplies. In spite of some disagreements amongst townspeople and land people, Smith described that period of time as one when "the land oriented

group retains close ties with the settlement dwellers, but is on the whole a little distrustful of the white man" (Smith, 1965, p. 23). In many ways, the adult education of that period had a predominant community/ cultural focus because it was responding to the needs of the new citizens in Inuvik.

The 1970s

Adult education programming controlled out of Fort Smith, NWT began to expand. Almost every small settlement had an Adult Educator. As the literacy rates improved, a local labour market began to emerge that could respond to job postings and training opportunities in their local area.

In the absence of a Western Arctic trades college, the private sector industries set up their own training-on-the job programs. Dome Petroleum and Esso Resources Canada were the two main oil and gas players back then. The tension between living a traditional land lifestyle and a modern, seasonal or fulltime employment lifestyle faded away in the Inuvik area once some successes were realized from the oil and gas joint venture training initiatives.

The 1987-88 Aurora Campus opens in Inuvik

With the opening of the Inuvik campus, there was a new optimism about the significance of adult education programs in our area. "Aurora Campus, Inuvik, opened in 1987. In the south, the political watchers made much of this changing north "Jobs, education continuing themes of

northern natives" (Globe and Mail, Sept 19, 1983).

Through the rising demand of government and industry for a trained labour pool, there was a growing demand for my local adult education training programs. Some of the first programs were modifications of the more rigorous requirements for Trades apprenticeships required in southern Canada. (Kelly, personal communication, 1990). In order to train northerners for full time wage employment in the evolving, and ever expanding public service with the Government of the NWT (GNWT), one and two year programs were offered that first year for the following job skills: Community Administrator, Management Studies, Secretarial Arts, and Teaching Education. Only the Interpreter-Translator certificate and the Continuing Education format evening classes reflected Inuvik community/ cultural requests.

These types of programs would continue from 1987 right into the early 2000s with periodical funding setbacks affecting the range of Campus services. The vocational-education focus continued to dominate the Campus program offerings. However, as you will see in the 2003-2004 calendar year, the amount of community/ cultural programs began to increase.

2003-04

Much of the vocational education focus of Aurora Campus has continued seventeen years later. Literacy classes and Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses run all year. In order to smooth the way into formal trades apprenticeships or college certificate programs, four Access classes (i.e. offering skill development at the grade 11 and 12 level) were offered this year. A sizeable Oil and Gas Training department has also opened up on the campus, as this year their Coordinator announced over 1400 training modules were available at the Inuvik campus. Finally, the following certificate/ diploma courses were offered this year in Criminal Justice, Recreation

Leadership, Management Studies, Home & Community Support Worker, Teacher Education and Licensed Practical nursing.

The Gwich'in Tribal Council brought up the issue of whether enough of the local training needs are being met by Aurora Campus. "Government provides funding only related to their own policies and ignores Aboriginal policies and issues" (Gwich'in Tribal Meeting, Jan 14, 2002 - Notes, p. 1). The Gwich'in felt that Aurora Campus often make programming choices based on directives from head office, rather than going out into the Inuvik Region, gathering the wishes of the Inuvik community, and then responding with the appropriate adult education programs (Crawford, personal communication, 2004).

The concern that program planning was an external, disconnected decision made without consulting the Inuvik community was actually addressed back in 1986 when the people of Inuvik were meeting in the preliminary planning stages for the campus. At an organizational meeting of interested Inuvik residents, businesses and agencies that had representatives from the Fort Smith head office in attendance, it was pointed out that vocational-education programs were good but the local aboriginal communities did not want southern programs being put in place at the new campus that would have no relevancy to this area (Crawford, personal communication, 2004).

While slow to take direction from within the community/ cultural framework back in 1987, by 2003-2004 a large number of programs had their origins in requests from the Inuvik region (Aurora Campus staff, personal communication, 2004). It has a full range of partnerships with local aboriginal joint-venture oil and gas firms as well as with various levels of government (Aurora College, MOUs an MOC, 2004). In a program that was widely requested by local people, in 2001 the Native Artisan Certificate Program was offered at Aurora Campus. "It is a one-year Certificate program offered to all learners in the NWT who are interested in developing

artistic skills in traditional and contemporary Native arts and crafts. The idea builds on the success of previous programs delivered at Aurora Campus, such as Fine Arts Certificate, the Furrier Certificate and the Jewelery and Metalwork Certificate…Courses in cultural awareness, native art history, computers and marketing were included." (Aurora Head Office - November 2001) Their press release stated, "It will be an excellent way to enhance current initiatives that support the preservation of culture in the NWT."

While Aurora College has an excellent track record of consultation and partnership with industry, it was only in the early 2000's that I could determine evidence of program decision-making being based on consultation with the Inuvik aboriginal community/ cultural groups.

Part IV - Analysis

While much of this research paper sounds descriptive, it was required in order to develop the underlying factors that contribute to the tension between two views of adult education. This limited research project has value in that it may be the first of its kind put to paper and which addresses the uniqueness of delivering adult education in the predominantly oral culture of the NWT. Most Inuvik residents, and many other northerners, know this "historiography" through their participation in the oral culture of our area. But for academics, as well as representatives from government and the private sector, this paper could be an invaluable resource as it represents a written record of the evolution of adult education at Aurora Campus, Inuvik.

As has been discussed earlier in this paper, there has been a shifting of the tension between the two viewpoints stated in my hypothesis. The reasons for the shift in the tension are

analyzed below. For the purposes of this paper, I define analysis as the process of going beyond the accumulated data to examine some of the reasons for this tension. Through many of the graduate level courses in this M.Ed program, I have been exposed to the teachings and viewpoints that will bring some clarity to underlying reasons for the vocational-ed- community/ cultural tension in Aurora Campus programming.

The following four points are analysed:

a) The effects of a Tyler/ Knowles model being used at Aurora Campus
b) Lessoning tension though Critical Theory
c) Different preferences for different generations
d) The impact on Aurora Campus of the use of a preserving system over a purposeful system of organization by Aurora College

a) The effects of a Tyler/ Knowles model being used at Aurora Campus

A review of planning notes and an examination of a curriculum outline for the trades courses revealed that most courses and programs seemed to have been constructed along the Tyler Rationale. “What became known as the Tyler Rationale is organized around ‘four fundamental questions, which must be answered in developing any curriculum and plan of instruction’ which focused on purposes, content, method and evaluation" (Tyler, p.49, p. 1).

In both the academic years of 1987-88 and 2003-2004, the traditional trades, upgrading programs, oil and gas driven industry training and some of the certificate/ diploma programs have the Tyler Rationale component. In their Adult Education Certificate program, Aurora College delivers a course on program design that follows the Tyler format (Robinson, personal communication, 2003).

However, a much greater number of programs, offered in the 2003-2004 year, have their origins in responding to community/ cultural requests of the Inuvik stakeholders: e.g. Home and Community Support Worker, Teacher Education Program for Aboriginal Language teachers, Recreation Leader Program, Natural Resources Technician Program and the Native Artisan certificate.

My research has shown that adult education that responds to community/ cultural issues as well as vocational training needs of industry is an expectation by the Inuvik stakeholders in 2004. However, there is an inherent limitation for Aurora Campus continuing with its traditional Tylerian model to program planning in that "Responding to needs as a way to justify program planning implies that developing education and training programs is primarily a reactive versus a proactive process…In addition, developing programs on identified educational ends of learners, organizations, or communities may have little to do with programs being successful" (Caffarella, 2002, p. 114). Aurora Campus staff reported that they were often frustrated that a full range of training courses and programs were offered but people just did not enroll in them (Aurora Campus staff, personal communication, 2004). The reasons for this can be found both in an examination of the adult population in our area, and for Aurora College, in an inward examination of why there is this disconnect. This is explored in the next section.

b) Lessening tension through Critical Theory

The tension would be more manageable if Aurora Campus moved away from the Tyler model towards a critical theory model of education programming. This would mean that the type of program, whether vocational-ed or community/ cultural in origin would have a greater chance of success if the program resulted out of community dialogue and a recognition of the wants and needs of the people in the Inuvik region.

Caffarella provides insight on some of the reasons for this tension to be taking place: "Organizational ideas and needs, for example, which often drive education and training programs, are frequently at odds with what individuals in the organizations believe they need or perhaps want to know more about" (Caffarella, 2002, p. 115).

We gain further insight into the tension at Aurora Campus as stated in my thesis when we remember an anthropological feature of aboriginals and non-aboriginals as they approach adult education program design. The non-aboriginal view of life, and, in this case, view of adult education, is based in an individualistic model of competition and achievement (Stringer, 1999). However, the aboriginal view of life is communal wherein sharing and cooperation values drive the society. Friere echoes this concern and "his ideas contrasted sharply with those of mainstream theorists, like Tyler and Knowles who focused on the individual, largely ignored power relations, and who assumed that reasons and consensus were dominant features of planning" (Sork, 2000, p.173). The aboriginal stakeholders in adult education are the people who sign up for the programs. My research shows that local Inuvik leaders desire adult education that empowers their traditional culture and values of communalism and consensus decision-making (Crawford, personal communication, 2003). Currently, Aurora Campus programs ask adult students to leave the support of their family and settlement to obtain adult education at the Inuvik campus. Their safety network is removed and when enrolled, they feel the full burden of the individualistic model of achievement and success. Some former Aurora Campus students reported that they prefer to take the vocational-education courses and programs because they are shorter than certificate/diploma programs. This allows them to return to their home community a lot sooner.

A Gwich'in leader reported that Aurora Campus needed to have less focus on individual

work and success and realize that success in their community/ cultural focus arises out of the power connections of family and community (Crawford, personal communication, 2003).

The tension between vocational education and community/ cultural positions will lessen if decisions about adult education programming are made as a result of a shift towards critical theory as a new focus. "Cervero and Wilson (1994) suggest a radical shift of focus from the techniques of planning to the "people work of planning…Their work is grounded in critical theory…that suggests the best way to understand planning is to focus on how the actors negotiate plans within a complex social arena…" (Sork, 2000, p. 174). Thus, the complex social arena referred to here would not be the one in the head office but rather the one out in the community where programs will be delivered.

c) Different preferences for different generations

My research has shown that the tension between vocational education programs and programs that respond to a community/cultural focus exists because of the support each view is given by northerners of different generations, aboriginal and non-aboriginal alike. Increasingly, I am beginning to observe this as a form of generational rivalry. The older population of the Inuvik area understandably are spiraling back or looking back and are wanting to retain the traditional cultural focus. As the elders have for generations before them, this is the message that is delivered to the community. Meanwhile, in the consensus model of government where everyone has a voice to the issue at hand, the younger generation is looking ahead. They desire training for jobs that will allow them to continue living in their home community. These two viewpoints are not exclusive and are brought together by Inuvik stakeholders who feel that by working within their community, they also are honouring the traditional community/cultural

focus of their ancestors.

Bateson (1994) wrote of an understanding of this disagreement that has people aligned according to their generation: “Much of the difference within any society has to do with where individuals are in the life cycle, which everywhere involves ongoing learning” (p. 174). The Inuvialuit and the Gwich’in survived due to the accumulated knowledge of life lived. It is through life and, therefore knowledge lived, that they were able to survive. That is why they look to their elders for guidance and direction (Elias, personal communication, 1996; Crawford, personal communication, 1996). However, the younger generation of northerners sees vocational education as a path to new horizons of opportunity (Fraser, personal communication, 1990). Bateson’s comments are a forecast of this difference between generations: “In the United States, different generations have matured under such different conditions that cross-generational communication is almost as problematic as interethnic communication” (p. 175). Within the internal self-government models of the Inuvialuit and the Gwich’in, today’s leaders are seeking adult education initiatives that will bind and not distract from historical cultural identity but assist with the preparation of tomorrow’s identity (NWT Committee on Teacher Education - Aboriginal Cultural Perspectives Working Group - Doc # 1, January 2004).

d) The impact on Aurora Campus of the use of a preserving system over a purposeful system of organization by Aurora College

My original thesis of a tension between the two views of adult education needs to be examined in a different analytical framework. In a discussion of corporate organizational structures, Briskin (1998) wrote about two types of system model organizations: a preserving system or purposeful systems. “Organizations with a preserving system approach focus their

energies to save the "feeling states, rituals, power dynamics and habits of organizational life …(On the other hand) When we attend to the organization's aims in the community, the allocation of resources, and the revised boundaries in our mind, we are participating in the purposeful system perspective"
(p. 236).

In my opinion, Aurora Campus is pressured into an internal preserving system model by its central administration in Fort Smith, NWT. There is an inner-outer struggle between the main campus headquarters in Fort Smith and the two satellite campuses of Yellowknife and Inuvik.

In all fairness, I note that the charter institution, Aurora College, similarly has a valid reason for practicing a preserving system perspective and that is due to the need to maintain program standards (and even course outlines) that meet with the expectations and standards of its partnership agreements. The partnerships with southern post-secondary institutions, i.e. McGill, University of Alberta, Trent, Athabasca, University of Regina and their major partner, the University of Saskatchewan, assist in giving our frontier post-secondary institution some badly needed credibility on the national adult education scene in Canada (Aurora Campus staff, personal communication, 2004).

If Aurora College began to practice more of a purposeful system model, rather than an internal preserving system, the tension could conceivably disappear, as their programming would be a response to the external community wishes and wants.

Part V – Conclusion and Recommendations

I believe the written and anecdotal data presented in this report proves my thesis that tension does exist at Aurora Campus, Inuvik between the two views of adult education; industry

driven, vocational education or programming responding to the community/ cultural situation.

Further, a review of the planning binders and corporate plans revealed they aware of this tension. “Aurora Campus provides effective, relevant educational opportunities through the research, development and delivery of programs for adult learners based on the needs of the communities within the campus region” (Aurora Campus Strategic Plan - 1996-2001, Executive Summary). However, in their plans they also state that they cannot be all things to all people, and are focusing their attention, energy and resources on the students and the quality of their learning experience.

> The health of any community is determined …by the educational, social and economic strength of its residents…Stakeholders across the NWT expressed their educational hopes in People: Our Focus for the Future, A Strategy to 2010. Culturally appropriate programs and services, which are locally controlled, were ranked high on a list of priorities (GNWT, ECE, January 24, 1998, p. 35).

For those who may think that this tension between two views is only a northern problem, the comments below of the Honourable Pierre Cadieux, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, in the 1989 presentation to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, House of Commons, echo that there are difficulties in delivering successful adult education programs elsewhere in Canada. “The Government wants all Indian and Inuit young people who are willing and able to get a higher education. The trouble is that the old program was not working well enough. People were going to school, but not enough were going through school” (Cadieux, 1989, p.11). As one local resident pointed out, more Inuvik area people will get through school if there is a continual movement by Aurora College to support Aurora Campus in a purposeful

development of adult education programs that continue to honour the community and cultural values of the Inuvik stakeholders (Crawford, personal communication, 2004).

In a discussion of corporate organizational structures, Briskin wrote "Organizations with a preserving systems approach focus their energies to save the "feeling states, rituals, power dynamics and habits of organizational life …When we attend to the organization's aims in the community, the allocation of resources, and the revised boundaries in our mind, we are participating in the purposeful system perspective" (Briskin, 1998, p. 236).

In my opinion, Aurora College will be able to honour the values and wishes of the Inuvik region by reducing the use of their preserving system model. Currently, Aurora College administration continues to support the sole campus model that was implemented in 1970 in Fort Smith. On the Canadian Information Centre for International Credits (CICIC) website, its claim to having three decentralized campuses is more a reference to its espoused theory and not the theory of practice (CICIC, 2004). If a resolution to its choice of campus model could be resolved, it would in turn have an impact on Aurora Campus. If giving into the preserving practice of organizational management, they return to the sole campus model, than the satellite campuses in Inuvik and Yellowknife would have to close down. Will Northerners allow the clock to be turned back?

Connected and intertwined in a resolution of the tension is the role that paradox must play. "Soul resides in the tension between apparent opposites…Soul is paradoxical in its essence" (Briskin, p. 239). As there is tension in the weather of the Northwest Territories, so to this tension between two views of adult education programming may remain to be part of the permanent, northern environment. Northerners often prefer wood to fuel oil as a way to heat their

homes. As they say, " Wood heats you twice: once when you chop it and, a second time, when you burn it in the stove (Shingatok, personal communication, 1993). Maybe the two views of adult education are like these two types of fuel. Both are quite useful in keeping adult education alive and warm in the Western Arctic.

After completing my research, I found that the tension in the two views of adult education is firmly anchored in another type of tension: the inner-outer struggle created between Aurora College and its partnership agreements with southern post-secondary institutions (Aurora Campus staff, personal communication, 2004). While it is well and good to honour the values of the Inuvik community, Aurora Campus needs to maintain program standards and contacts in the field of adult education in order to be credible at the national level.

Again, I would recommend that future research on this topic is needed. Such research should elaborate and explore the reasons why Aurora College is reluctant to follow through with its espoused theory of having three decentralized campuses.

In closing, I would like to provide the following relevant comment.

> To think about the whole, we are obliged to hold paradox together. We can neither be solely visionary nor exclusively pragmatic. We must deal with power of individuals and groups to insist on continuity as well as the human desire to change. In doing so, we are confronted with our own role in the larger scheme of things. And in staring into this pool of self-reflection, we may be aided by understanding the difference between personal power and how we take up our authority in larger systems"
>
> (Briskin, 1998, p. 239).

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