Transitioning Beyond High School: A Case Study of Student Expectations in Vernon, British Columbia

by

Siobhan Mary Oliver
BA Simon Fraser University

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APPROVAL

Name: **Siobhan Mary Oliver**

Degree: **Master of Arts**

Title of Thesis: **Transitioning Beyond High School: A Case Study of Student Expectations in Vernon, British Columbia**

Examining Committee:

Chair: **Dr. Nadine C. Schuurman,**
Associate Professor, Department of Geography

Dr. Roger Hayter
Senior Supervisor
Professor, Department of Geography

Dr. Geoff Mann
Committee Member
Assistant Professor, Department of Geography

Dr. David Edgington
External Examiner
Associate Professor, Department of Geography
University of British Columbia

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ABSTRACT

The transitional expectations of youth, as they anticipate leaving school to enter the job market, are profoundly shaped by broad socioeconomic trends working across society and by place, that is, where they live. The effects of place on youth transitional expectations are represented notably by a combination of influences within the home, school, community, and the local labour market. This thesis examines the nature of youth transitional expectations in Vernon, British Columbia, specifically with respect to high students at the Clarence Fulton High School. Conceptually, the study frames these expectations in terms of a model that distinguishes immediate and distant logics and with respect to broad shifts towards labour market flexibility in the Canadian economy. Empirically, the study draws on a questionnaire survey (n = 19) of grade 12 high school students at Clarence Fulton High School and in-depth interviews with selected students, teachers, and local career counsellors. The research reveals the transitional expectations of youth to be highly varied, shaped by various place-based influences as well as broader trends. Surprisingly in terms of local labour market demands, and the region's desirability as a place to live, many students want to leave. More generally, the distinctions between work and school are breaking down while students are still at school and the distinction between the immediate and distant logic of youth expectations is becoming blurred.

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1: INTRODUCTION

In the context of youth, 'transition' refers to the life stage in which young people make their way from childhood to adulthood. During this phase or period, youth are involved in multiple transitions- to working life, economic independence, and establishing a household, among others. Labour market entrance is a particularly important dimension of this transition. According to Bowlby *et al.* (1998), "paid work, and different types of jobs, bring with them particular social identities which play a major part in conferring social status and public acceptability as an adult" (229). For youth, obtaining employment adds to their adult identity as they gain a degree of economic independence from their parents. The process of transition from high school to the labour market, and all it entails, from post-secondary education and training to student employment, is widely known as 'school-to-work transition'; which, for the purposes of this project, I will refer to simply as 'transition'. This thesis focuses on the transition of youth in Vernon, British Columbia.

Throughout the transition process youth make a number of choices. Guiding youth's choices are their transitional expectations, or their expectations regarding the pathway to settling into the labour market, including their post-secondary education and occupational expectations. Discussions of the transitional expectations of youth commonly focus on the 'occupational' expectations and aspirations of youth, or career goals and their pathways to these goals. According to Andres *et al.* (1999), *occupational expectations* are distinguished from *occupational aspirations* in that they represent a

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more realistic view of the future, with factors such as personal ability and structural constraints taken into consideration. Occupational aspirations are "hopes relatively untempered by considerations such as ability or accessibility" (Andres *et al.* 1999). In practice, these distinctions are hard to identify, and youth's career goals do not always fit into either category. An expectation for one might be an aspiration for another, and vice-versa. Because of the impossibility in distinguishing between expectations and aspirations in many cases, this thesis will not attempt to separate the two, but rather will treat them as intimately connected.

Expectations play a central role in the school-to-work transition process, yet they are often neglected in the literature (Andres *et al.* 1999). Indeed, youth expectations guide future educational and occupational decisions, and expectations act as predictors of future educational activity and eventual occupational attainment status (Andres *et al.* 1999). Of course, the expectations youth hold while in high school are not necessarily realized later in life. Indeed, when youth leave compulsory schooling their expectations may shift. Levin (1985) found that approximately half of the students he studied did something other than intended within about two years. Empson-Warner and Krahn (1992) found that Canadian teenagers' expectations with regards to occupational status are higher than their eventual outcomes. Despite the fact that expectations do not necessarily reflect outcomes, their study is critical to understanding youth transition from school to the labour market. Making sense of youth's often shifting perspectives of the future and their place in it is crucial to understanding the outcomes of the transition process. As well, the nature of youth expectations are reflective of the environments in which they develop.

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1.1 Formulation of Transitional Expectations

A large body of school-to-work research explores the multiple factors that play a role in the formulation of transitional expectations. According to Peck (1989b), labour supply and demand-side factors shape the transitional expectations of youth. On the supply-side of the labour market, or the sphere of reproduction, factors such as personal characteristics and socialization in the family and at school play important roles in the reproduction of labour. Here, the home and school are critical places that pattern the transitional expectations of youth. Simultaneously, the transitional expectations of youth are shaped by demand-side factors that stem from the local labour market. These factors originate in the sphere of production and evolve around the demands of employers in the local labour market (Peck 1996).

Indeed, the formulation of expectations is inherently geographical, as youth make choices influenced by micro-level spaces such as the home and the school, and macro-level spaces such as the community and the local labour market. Dragastin and Elder (in Looker 1993) criticise literature that depicts youth as living in 'placeless' society, and argue that young people spend their lives in specific contexts, such as schools, neighbourhoods, and communities. These spaces should not be seen as bounded, but instead as interrelated, often influencing one another. As Bowlby *et al.* (1998) argue:

> For every young person the process of transition takes place in specific social and physical 'spaces' which strongly influence the experience and its outcome. For most, it is the spaces of home, school and the local labour market which are crucial. It is through locally based experiences that young people develop their job aspirations, attitudes to and experiences of education, training and employment and gain ideas about the opportunities available in the locality for people 'like them'.
>
> (Bowlby *et al.* 1998: 24)

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Therefore, the transitional expectations of youth and their outcomes are inherently geographical, as youth live in specific contexts. They are influenced by local experiences at multiple levels, and their expectations and eventual choices regarding their transition to the labour market reflect these influences. However, Bowlby *et al.* (1998) fail to explain that youth may not always aspire to positions in the locality for people 'like them', and there are indeed exceptions. Teachers, parents, siblings, or friends may influence youth to aspire to positions that are not typical for youth in a specific locality.

While the role of the household in patterning the expectations of youth is well documented, economic geographers argue that the local labour market plays a significant role that is often neglected. According to Ashton, "local labour markets appear to generate distinctive cultures which influence the behaviour and attitudes of youth" (1988: 4). Youth receive messages about the local labour market in multiple spaces, such as the home, the school, and the community. As Lowe and Krahn state, "restructuring of labour markets is mediated through messages that youth receive about such changes from parents, school, the media and friends" (2000: 4). People who influence youth's transitional expectations, such as parents, friends, and teachers, are themselves influenced by information they receive about local labour market conditions.

Despite the importance of 'place' to the transitional expectations of youth, there is relatively little literature that examines the effects of locality on youth's transitional expectations in the BC context (Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03; Looker 1993). This thesis seeks to respond to this gap by identifying and analysing the transitional expectations of high school students in Vernon, a community in the North Okanagan, BC. Beginning with a brief discussion of current labour market trends affecting British Columbian, and

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specifically Okanagan youth's transition to the labour market, the remainder of this chapter outlines the research question, main research objectives, and methodology of this research.

1.2   Transition in British Columbia

With the exception of Behrisch *et al.* (2002/03) and Looker (1993), little literature explores the impact that local labour markets have on youth transition in BC. Such research is timely given the strength of the BC economy and its labour market in recent years. Indeed, youth's transitional expectations, as well as the nature of transition itself, change alongside restructuring in the labour market. Across BC, local labour markets have experienced profound changes since the 1970s, often summarily characterised in terms of a transformation from Fordist to more flexible labour markets. As the labour market has shifted, so to have the transitional expectations of youth (Empson-Warner and Krahn 1992; Krahn and Lowe 1999; Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03). What was once a relatively linear process from full-time school to full-time work is today much more complex, with youth combining work and schooling in a variety of ways. As well, it is now the norm for BC high school students to pursue a post-secondary education (Ministry of Education 2006a).

Since 2001, the BC labour market has made steady gains in employment, and in 2006, the employment participation rate was at its highest level (62.1 percent) since the 1980s (Purcell 2006). In 2006, BC's job creation rate was 3.4 percent, the second highest among provinces in Canada (Purcell 2006). Despite such changes, no recent literature has explored how such strong labour market conditions have affected the transitional expectations, and further, the transition of BC youth. However, data collected by the BC

Ministry of Education is useful as it tracks high school students' post-secondary education activities. According to the most recent data available, 51.8 percent of 2003 BC high school graduates enter some form of public post-secondary education immediately after graduation, a further 10.6 percent enter one year after graduation, and 37.6 percent do not pursue public post-secondary education (Ministry of Education 2006b). The provincial average masks large variations throughout the province. For instance, students in the Lower Mainland have higher rates of immediate post-secondary entrance, while those outside the Lower Mainland have higher rates of delayed post-secondary entrance and no post-secondary entrance (Ministry of Education 2006b). While this geographical comparison is admittedly crude, it indicates that students do not experience transition the same in different parts of the province.

1.2.1 Transition in the Okanagan

Although British Columbia has made employment gains in recent years, growth has been uneven throughout the province. The Okanagan region has fared particularly well, becoming very dynamic in recent years. This growth has entailed a shift to a predominantly service based labour market. Between 2002 and 2005, the Thompson-Okanagan region had the strongest job growth in BC (seventeen percent), double that of the provincial average (Purcell 2006). According to Christine Juba (in Young 2006), a labour market analyst at Service Canada, the jobless rate in the Okanagan was at a record low in 2006, and employers were beginning to have trouble attracting and retaining staff. Companies in the Okanagan "no longer enjoy the luxury of easily accessible replacement workers and have recognized the cost of training new staff" (Service Canada 2006: 3). Indeed, in order to attract and retain employees, many companies have been forced to

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raise wages, provide benefits, offer bonuses, and offer more flexible hours to employees (Foord-Kirk 2007; Muuren 2007).

Despite such profound growth in the Okanagan in recent years, no research has investigated what this growth has meant for high school students who are transitioning to the labour market. The BC Ministry of Education has been involved in a study called the Student Transition Project, which tracks high school graduates' public post-secondary entrance across the province. Data collected suggests that 36.34 percent of 2003 Okanagan high school graduates entered some form of public post-secondary education immediately after graduation, while 12.40 percent entered one year after graduation, and 51.26 percent did not pursue public post-secondary education (Ministry of Education 2006b). Although such data is useful in analyzing trends in the transition to public post-secondary institutions, it is limited in that it does not account for private post-secondary education entrance, nor does it in any way track the pathways of those who did not choose to pursue a public post-secondary education. Most important, these studies do not adequately question students about their transitional expectations nor do they investigate the factors that influence these expectations.

1.3 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of the contemporary transitional expectations of youth in the Okanagan, specifically Vernon. Conceptually, the literature review draws upon recent literature on the flexibility imperatives driving labour markets and on the logics of high school student expectations. The empirical research focuses on the transitional expectations of youth in Vernon, exploring how these expectations are formulated in 'place', with a particular focus on the role of the local

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labour market. The following central research question and three main objectives guided

the research design, implementation and analysis phases of this study.

Research Question:

How are the expectations of high school students regarding their transition to the labour

market shaped by place?

Research Objectives:

- To identify the transitional expectations of high school students in Vernon, BC
- To identify factors that have contributed to the formulation of Vernon high school students' transitional expectations
- To understand how high school students in Vernon view the local labour market, including the barriers and/or opportunities it may present now, and in the coming years, to their entrance to the workforce

1.4 Research Methodology

The research design for this thesis consists of a case study of Grade 12 high

school students, teaching staff, and local career development experts in Vernon, BC. A

case study approach provides the opportunity to collect in-depth qualitative data at a local

scale, and responds to the lack of such data pertaining to the Okanagan. As Ashton *et al.*

(1990) state "it can be very misleading to either generalize down from national databases

to the local level, or, alternatively, to generalize up from the study of one local area to the

level of society as a whole" (199). Given the diversity in the nature of transition across

the province and the importance of 'place' to transition, a single case study approach

allows for a focused in-depth analysis of the transitional expectations of high school

students in a particular place, and the role that that specific 'place' has on these

expectations. This research focuses on Vernon, a mid-sized municipality in the North

Okanagan with a population of 35, 994 (Statistics Canada 2008a). As shown in Figure

1.1, Vernon is approximately 46 kilometres from Kelowna, the largest city in the

Okanagan, with a population of 106, 707 (Statistics Canada 2008b). Students and

teaching staff were recruited from Clarence Fulton Secondary School, one of five high

schools in the municipality of Vernon. In terms of post-secondary education institutions

in Vernon, students have access to the Okanagan College (OC), as well as a private

institution, the Okanagan Valley College of Massage Therapy, which are both accessible

by public transit. In nearby Kelowna, many students from Vernon attend the University

of British Columbia's Okanagan (UBCO) campus, which is not accessible by public

transit.

Figure 1.1: Location of Vernon, British Columbia
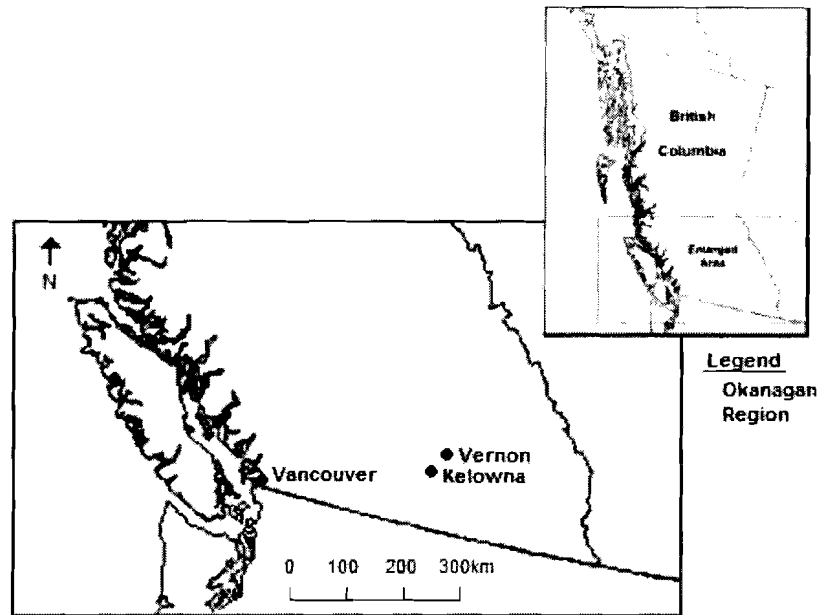
Source: Prepared by Author

1.4.1 Data Collection

Primary data collection was implemented in three phases. The first phase

involved administering a questionnaire to high school students at Clarence Fulton

Secondary on June 1, 2007. The public school system was the most efficient method of

reaching youth. The questionnaire was administered in one Grade 12 English class, of

which all nineteen students present participated. A Grade 12 English class was chosen to

provide as random a sample as possible, as approximately 90 percent of the 176 Grade 12

students at Clarence Fulton were enrolled in English 12 (Ministry of Education 2007).

The month of June was chosen to administer the questionnaire as the Grade 12 students

were nearing the end of their high school career, and many had already made choices

relating to their transition to the labour market, such as looking for work or applying to

post-secondary institutions. The questionnaire was composed of both open and closed questions, and was designed to question students about their high school experience, post-high school expectations and career expectations and goals. The goal of this phase of the research was to identify the transitional expectations of students, as well as to explore factors that contributed to these expectations. The results of this survey also provided structure for the second phase semi-structured student interviews. A copy of the questionnaire is attached (Appendix A).

The second phase of data collection involved semi-structured interviews with a small sample of students (5) who completed the survey in the previous phase of research. McGuirk and O'Neill (in Hay 2005) argue that questionnaires are helpful in providing a framework for more in-depth interviews, providing concepts, meanings, and key themes to explore further. In this case, participants were chosen based on their survey results, such as gender, post-secondary plans, and willingness to participate. Interviews were held over the telephone in June and July of 2007, and questions revolved around the elaboration of questionnaire results. The goal was to gain in-depth, qualitative data on the role of places such as the home, school and specifically the local labour market on the formulation of transitional expectations, for which in-depth interviews are imperative. As Dunn (in Hay 2005: 80) argues, interviews are particularly useful for investigating complex motivations, and they "fill a gap in knowledge that other methods, such as observation or the use of census data, are unable to bridge efficaciously".

The third phase of data collection involved semi-structured interviews with teaching staff and counsellors at Clarence Fulton Secondary, as well as with local employment experts from Community Futures Development Corporation, the economic

development institution of the North Okanagan. Participants from Clarence Fulton include two Grade 12 Teachers, as well as the school's Career Coordinator and Senior Counsellor. Interviews were conducted in-person, and interview questions revolved around their perspective on students' transitional expectations, including any recent changes, and the degree to which they think 'place' matters in the formulation of these expectations. Clarence Fulton staff members were also questioned about the ways students have begun their transition to the labour market while still in high school. Participants from Community Futures include three employment counsellors, of which two specialize in youth employment. These interviews were conducted between July and September 2007, two in-person, one over the telephone. These participants were chosen based on referral and the nature and level of their experience in the local community. Interview questions for Community Futures staff focused on their perspective of local labour market conditions and the effects these conditions have on youth's transitional expectations today and in the past.

1.4.2 Data Analysis

Interview data was promptly transcribed to prevent error in the process. Questionnaire results were totalled, and cross-tabulated where effective. Both interview and questionnaire data were organized in a manner conducive to effective comparison. I examined the data and generated categories, themes, and patterns that ran throughout the data. This empirical data was pulled together with conceptual research to analyse the connectedness between my findings and existing theory.

The analysis intends to identify the transitional expectations of high school students in Vernon, BC, and determine the role of 'place' in the formulation of these

expectations. Research results from this case study seek to broaden our understanding of the role of the local labour market, among other 'places', on the transitional expectations of youth in the Okanagan region.

1.4.3 Limitations

Given that this research involved an in-class questionnaire for high school students, its results are limited in that students who took Communications 12 instead of English 12 (approximately ten percent) are not in the sample. Also unaccounted for are those students who had previously dropped out or been expelled from school, or students who did not attend class the day the questionnaire was administered.

Since the research focuses on a single case study, the generalizability of findings is limited. Indeed, as Ashton *et al.* (1990) argue, given the importance of 'place' to transition, local level data should not be generalized to the level of society as a whole. However, although communities within the Okanagan region are by no means homogenous, research findings may prove useful for communities throughout the region whose high school students face similar labour market conditions.

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis is organized in six chapters. This chapter serves as an introduction and presents the research objectives and methodology. Chapter Two provides the conceptual framework, focusing on the labour market dynamics and the logics of transitional expectations. Chapter Three discusses current labour market trends in Vernon and explores what these trends mean for Vernon's high school students. Chapter Four examines the ways students conceptualize the link between school and employment, and

identifies and discusses the short-term transitional expectations and post-secondary education expectations of Clarence Fulton students. Chapter Five explores the longer-term career expectations of Clarence Fulton students, and discusses the importance of their perspectives of the local labour market to the formulation of these expectations. Chapter Six serves as a conclusion and offers directions for future research.

2: YOUTH AND TRANSITION

2.1 Introduction

The main goal of this chapter is to review recent literature pertaining to the nature and formulation of the school-to-work transitional expectations of Canadian youth, and, where appropriate, British Columbian youth. It emphasises a geographical interpretation of the interwoven factors that pattern the transitional expectations of youth. The first part contextualises the BC labour market in terms of its shift from largely Fordist organizational principles in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, to the imperatives of flexibility that emerged after the recession of the 1980s. Along with this restructuring, new forms of segmentation have become visible. The second part of the chapter suggests that along with these macro-socioeconomic shifts, the nature and transition, and subsequently the transitional expectations of youth have shifted. While transition patterns of the past were relatively linear, recent transition patterns are more complex, and the roles of student and worker increasingly blurred. Finally, the chapter reviews literature on the formulation of transitional expectations, focussing on the role of micro-level spaces such as the home, the school, and the community in patterning the transitional expectations of youth.

2.2 Labour Market Restructuring and Segmentation in British Columbia

With respect to the transitional expectations of youth, it is important first to understand the processes through which those providing labour, in this case youth, and those requiring labour, meet in the labour market. Neoclassical or orthodox economists

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interpret the labour market as any other commodity market, functioning according to the laws of supply and demand. They argue that a balance in labour supply and demand can be established if the price of labour is free to fluctuate according to the 'free' or competitive market (Peck 1989b). The price of labour is generally referred to as a wage or salary. Orthodox models of the labour market thus locate the causes of inequality *outside* the labour market. For instance, factors such as education and training are seen to create inequality, thereby "people [are] seen to get out of the 'even-handed' labour market precisely what they put into it" (Peck 1989a: 45).

Labour market segmentation theory originated in opposition to the established orthodox tradition in the late 1960s. Segmentation theorists argue that labour market competition does not and cannot function freely as there are persistent inequalities in the process of matching workers and jobs. Labour markets are unlike other commodity markets because they are structured by institutional relations and social forces (Kerr 1954; Doeringer and Piore 1971; Gordon *et al.* 1982).

Segmentation theory suggests that labour markets produce and reproduce non-competing segments of labour. According to Hayter and Barnes (1992), the labour market discriminates by basing the treatment of workers on the segment in which they are employed, and further by erecting barriers between the segments, effectively preventing upward movement of workers across segments. Early segmentation theory developed under Fordism, and suggests that the labour market is composed of two sectors, primary and secondary. The primary sector contains relatively stable, well-paid jobs, which are often 'protected' by internal labour markets. In contrast, the secondary sector contains

relatively unstable, low-paid jobs, often subject to the competitive economy (Hayter and Barnes 1992).

While early segmentation theories emphasised the role of employer demand in the production of segmentation in the workforce, contemporary theories understand both labour demand and labour supply factors, such as ethnic and gendered divisions of labour, play a role in creating a segmented workforce. With an emphasis on youth as new entrants in the workforce, this research primarily holds a supply-side perspective.

2.2.1 From Fordism to Flexibility

During the Fordist era of the 1960s and 1970s, labour markets in Western economies were primarily organized around large, stable, 'core' firms, generally involved in primary and secondary industries. These firms served stable product markets, and were able to offer employment stability and relatively high wages to employees in order to secure a stable and highly skilled workforce and prevent costly labour turnover (Hayter and Barnes 1992). Employees in such firms were often governed by internal labour markets. Constructing their own rules and procedures, such as seniority ladders, these internal labour markets essentially removed themselves from supply and demand in the competitive market, insulating employees from external labour markets (Hayter and Barnes 1992).

Popularized during the Fordist Era, dualist models of the labour market interpret segmentation as resulting from the demands of the production process, such as technological change, skill specificity, and the need to maintain control over the workforce. Doeringer and Piore's (1971) dual labour market is one of the foundational concepts of segmentation theory. According to Doeringer and Piore, the dual labour

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market consists of primary and secondary sectors. Jobs in the primary sector are generally characterised by high wages, good working conditions and employment stability (Doeringer and Piore 1971). These jobs can be considered 'jobs for life', as internal labour markets insulate employees and prevent labour turnover by providing such benefits and stability. According to Hayter and Barnes (1992) in the BC context, such jobs were typical in the Fordist sector's large, capital-intensive firms. On the other hand, jobs in the secondary sector are characterized by "low wages and fringe benefits, poor working conditions, high labour turnover, little chance of advancement, and often arbitrary and capricious supervision" (Doeringer and Piore 1971: 165). These secondary jobs generally do not involve internal labour markets, and instead are subject to the competitive or external labour market.

Gordon *et al.* (1982) breakdown the primary sector further, suggesting that segmentation exists between primary independent jobs and primary subordinate jobs. According to them, primary independent jobs are generally highly educated professional, managerial, or technical positions characterised by very high wages, substantial job mobility, and lack of specific instruction and authority (Gordon *et al.* 1982). By contrast, primary subordinate jobs are generally semi-skilled blue or white-collar positions, often routinised and repetitive, characterised by formal work rules, specific supervision, and decreased job mobility (Gordon *et al.* 1982).

During the Fordist Era in BC, youth, especially males, could expect a relatively good job in the primary subordinate sector with few educational qualifications (Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03). During this time, men were easily able to obtain a primary subordinate position while women were often confined to pink-collar jobs such as clerical work or

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secondary sector positions. Primary independent sector jobs were generally reserved for

those male individuals with educational qualifications (Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03).

Dual labour market theory emphasised the role of demand and how workers were

organized among workplaces. Supply side considerations were neglected.

> In the dualist models, the supply side of the labour market was inadequately
> conceptualized, with the result that connections between labour supply and
> demand often constituted no more than reading off labour supply
> characteristics from labour demand conditions.
>
> (Peck 1996: 57)

This neglect of supply side considerations is especially clear in regards to the

conceptualization of youth entrance to the labour market, which ignores the processes of

social reproduction such as occupational socialization within the family and education

system, household division of labour, and the gendering of work (Peck 1996).

In the late 1970s, the relative stability of Fordist labour markets began to shift.

During the recession of the early 1980s, methods of production and industrial structures

throughout Western economies underwent significant changes. In the context of an

overall shift from the primary and secondary sectors towards services, many jobs were

undermined or radically altered as a result of technological change, new market demands,

and intensifying competition (Hayter and Barnes 1992). The 1970s and 1980s was a

period of considerable uncertainty for workers, especially those that enjoyed the benefits

of employment in Fordism's primary sector.

The changes underway during the recession of the 1980s contributed to the need

for a more 'flexible' labour force. According to Atkinson (1985), a workforce is flexible

in three ways: functionally, numerically, and financially. Functional flexibility refers to a

highly skilled workforce that can adapt to new production methods and technology. "As

products and production methods change, functional flexibility implies that the same labour force changes with them, in both the short and medium term" (Atkinson 1985: 17). Numerical flexibility refers to a workforce that can easily be increased or decreased as demand for labour increases and decreases (Atkinson 1985). Financial flexibility refers to the employers' desire or need for cheap labour. Indeed, this can come in the form of rate-for-the-job systems of pay or assessment-based pay, which facilitates numerical and functional flexibility (Atkinson 1985).

The imperatives of flexibility popularized in the mid-1980s challenged dualist segmentation theory. As firms sought flexible workforces, new patterns of segmentation became visible. Atkinson (1985) suggests a new core-periphery model to replace Doeringer and Piore's dual labour market segmentation. In Atkinson's model, the core consists of functionally flexible, full-time permanent employees that benefit from employment stability and high wages (1985). Most importantly, "their skills cannot readily be bought-in", or in other words, their skills are firm-specific (20). The core is surrounded by a numerically and financially flexible periphery that performs non-firm specific tasks. The periphery is subdivided into two groups, the first peripheral and the second peripheral. Like core employees, first peripheral employees are full-time employees, but "their jobs are plug-in ones, not firm-specific" (Atkinson 1985: 20). These positions include generally low-skilled positions like clerical and assembly work, where job content revolves around a narrow range of tasks not specific to the firm. Sharing similar tasks with first peripheral employees, second peripheral employees are those who do not benefit from full-time employment, and instead are part-time or temporary employees who are deployed when required. Lastly, in order to maximize

numerical and functional flexibility, jobs (both skilled and unskilled) may be outsourced through subcontracting, temporary agencies, or self-employed individuals.

In a 1992 study of British Columbian firms in the aftermath of the recession, Hayter and Barnes (1992) conclude that employment changes fit Atkinson's (1985) core periphery model and three types of flexible workers. They argue that Atkinson's notion of flexibility provides "a more plausible and coherent story about labour market segmentation in BC" in the post-recession context (Hayter and Barnes 1992: 351). While Hayter and Barnes conclude that Atkinson's model describes the changes occurring in the province, they stress that the model cannot fully explain the dynamics of labour market change given its generality. Indeed, no general model can adequately capture and explain local labour market dynamics. However, the imperatives of flexibility have become well established in British Columbia, and this thesis will draw broadly upon Atkinson's core-periphery model and characterization of the flexible workforce.

2.2.1.1   Post-Fordist Labour Market Trends

It is widely supported in the literature that since the 1980s, labour markets in Canada have restructured towards more flexible forms of organization. In BC, these changes have occurred alongside the shift in industrial structure from the primary and manufacturing sectors to the service and knowledge sectors (Krahn and Lowe 1999, 2002; Barnes *et al.* 2000; Saunders 2003). Indeed, blue-collar jobs are increasingly being replaced by white-collar jobs. The service sector encompasses a variety of activities, from retail and food services to management consulting.   According to Barnes *et al.* (2000), the workforce is becoming 'professionalized', and even in traditionally blue-collar sectors like manufacturing and resource extraction, the workforce is increasingly

white-collar in nature. Canada has also seen an increase in entrepreneurialism. Since the mid-1980s, self-employment in Canada has risen, and a large proportion is represented by generally well-educated wage-earners who leave their employers and begin their own businesses (Krahn and Lowe 2002).

One of the most pervasive changes in Canadian labour markets is that more flexible forms of service sector employment entail increasing polarization in the workforce. Literature widely acknowledges that in Post-Fordist labour markets, there are many low-skill, low-paid jobs and a smaller number of high-skill, high-paid jobs, with a decreasing number of jobs in the middle (Ashton 1988; Empson-Warner and Krahn 1992; Bynner 1999; Krahn and Lowe 1999, 2002). Such polarization reflects Atkinson's (1985) core-periphery segmentation theory, in which highly skilled individuals are concentrated in the highly skilled core jobs and highly skilled peripheral jobs, and less skilled individuals are concentrated in the often financially and numerically flexible peripheral sector. As Behrisch *et al.* (2002/03) state "there is now a division between those workers who are flexible, and are thereby suitably rewarded, and those who are not, and who suffer the consequences" (2).

Krahn and Lowe (2002) argue that two segments have emerged within the secondary, or peripheral labour market in Canada. The first is the 'student labour market', which consists of low-skill, low-paid, often part-time positions in the service sector, particularly the retail and food services. This segment generally employs students who are seeking part-time work while in school, but can include women who are unable to work full-time positions due to family responsibility, and those who are simply unable to find full-time work (Krahn and Lowe 2002). The popularity of post-secondary

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education among youth in Canada has led to a large number of students who are available

for part-time work, many of who need to hold part-time jobs to pay for post-secondary

education (Ashton 1988; Andres *et al.* 1999). The second segment is the

temporary/contract labour market, which includes temporary and contract workers for

both low and high-skilled service sector jobs. Jobs in this segment can range from retail

and janitorial staff to management consulting. Primarily, this workforce provides

employers with a numerically flexible workforce. While workers in the lower skilled

segment are similar to those in the student labour market, workers in the higher skilled

segment of temporary/contract labour market are often well-educated young adults who

work temporary or contract work before they are able to obtain a permanent full-time

position (Krahn and Lowe 2002).

British Columbia's growing service economy has increasingly been demanding

workers with higher levels of skill (Andres *et al.* 1999; Saunders 2003). As Ashton

(1988) discusses in the Canadian context, the loss of low and semi-skilled manufacturing

jobs coupled with technological change has increased the demand for more theoretical,

information processing, and computer-based skills. However, at the same time, the

service sector opens up much opportunity for low-skilled workers, often filled by youth.

Unlike the 1960s and 1970s, in today's labour market some training past high school is

critical to obtain a stable, skilled, well-paid job. As Saunders of the Canadian Policy

Research Network states, "in Canada, unlike many other countries, getting a high school

diploma (and no further educational credentials) does not improve one's chances of

finding a skilled job" (2007: 1). For instance, unlike Britain, Canada does not have a

well-established apprenticeship program that facilitates high school graduates' entry into

trades. Indeed, high school graduates who lack credentials have a much harder time finding stable well-paid employment than post-secondary graduates (Crompton 1995).

The 'flexible' labour market has a gender dimension. According to Peck (1996), many employers expect that women are likely less stable workers due to family responsibility, and this perception may restrict their access to core or primary jobs. Temporary and part-time work is often reserved for women who are unable to work full-time positions because of family responsibilities (Krahn and Lowe 2002). In a study of occupational segregation in Canada since the 1960s, Fortin and Huberman (2002) find that while the wage gap between men and women has narrowed over time, women are still concentrated in lower strata within organizations. One reasons for this pattern is women's difficulty in moving up the job ladder because of family responsibility. As Costa (2000) suggests, more women than men have a harder time sacrificing family for career.

2.3 Labour Market Dynamics and School-to-Work Transition

As the labour market restructured to the imperatives of flexibility, so have the transition of youth, and the transitional expectations of youth. Indeed, youth transitioning in the Fordist Era faced very different labour market realities than youth transitioning today. In order to examine the shifts in transition, and the shifts in transitional expectations, the concept of 'vocationalism' is useful. In her research on transitional expectations of high school students in Vancouver, Jane Gaskell (1985) introduces the concept of 'vocationalism' to describe the way in which high school students conceptualise the link between school and the labour market. She found that students generally exhibited one of two forms of vocationalism, either 'immediate logic' or

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'distant logic' of the labour market. Those displaying immediate logic of the labour market generally do not plan on pursuing post-secondary education or training and are optimistic about finding a job immediately after high school with the skills they attained in high school (Gaskell 1985). Students adhering to a distant logic are more likely to pursue post-secondary education and choose high school courses that fulfil distant post-secondary or job requirements. These students have more distant career goals, and believe that they will need education and training beyond high school. Of course, these categories are quite crude, as they cannot represent the range of existing student attitudes towards their transition from high school. However, they do provide a marker with which to compare the vocationalism of youth today.

During the Fordist era, patterns of youth transition to the labour market were more linear than those of today. The typical transition pathway of youth in the 1960s and 1970s was from full-time education to full-time employment, and this pathway was reflected in the transitional expectations of youth (Krahn and Lowe 1999; Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03). Behrisch *et al.* (2002/03) argue that Gaskell's (1985) vocational logic is useful in analyzing high school graduate transition in the Fordist era. Indeed, vocationalism was conceptualized in the mid-1980s, during the recessionary period in BC, when the economy began its shift away from the Fordist era. Behrisch *et al.* (2002/03) argue that vocational logics - immediate and distant- acted as a funnel through which students were streamed into different segments of the labour market -primary subordinate and primary independent (Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03). During this period, youth, especially males, choosing to enter the labour market immediately after high school were generally able to get a decent, stable job (Empson-Warner and Krahn 1992; Behrisch 1995). Youth

choosing to pursue a post-secondary education were often able to secure a higher status job, such as administrative or managerial positions. During the Fordist era then, because youth could more easily find a decent job right out of high school, an immediate logic was more common than it is today (Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03).

With a shift towards the flexible labour market, including a demand for highly skilled workers and increased polarization in the workforce, it is now harder for students to attain a stable, well-paid job without any post-secondary education. In their study of high school students in Powell River, BC, Behrisch *et al.* (2002/03) argue that the imperatives of flexibility are linked to a shift towards a distant logic. Given the pervasiveness of a more distant logic among students in BC, Gaskell's (1985) vocational logics may require some modification to better reflect student expectations in today's labour market context.

The employment changes of the recessionary period resulted in severe youth unemployment in BC. Youth transitioning into the labour market during this period were termed 'the lost generation' as job opportunities were limited, especially for unskilled youth, and competition was high for available jobs (Empson-Warner and Krahn 1992; Behrisch 1995; Gaskell and Rubenson 2004). According to Behrisch *et al.* (2002/03), students pursuing Gaskell's (1985) immediate logic, hoping to get a decent job right out of high school, faced bleak job prospects. Given the weak economy, youth, with their lack of work experience and low seniority, faced tough competition from older, more experienced workers, who were preferred candidates for employers (Anisef *et al.* 2000: 12).

Interestingly, student expectations during this period remained similar to those

before. In a longitudinal study of Canadian youth from 1973 to 1996, Andres *et al.*

(1999) find that despite poor labour market conditions throughout the 1980s, student

expectations rose. This is attributed to both expanded educational opportunities and high

school students' knowledge of the relationship between high status jobs and further

education (Andres *et al.* 1999). The strongest improvement to expectations during this

period was among females. As the economy has shifted away from Fordism, more

women aspired to enter professional and managerial occupations and fewer aspired to

more traditional clerical and service positions generally reserved for women (Andres *et*

al. 1999).

As the labour market shifted according to the imperatives of flexibility, the nature

of transition changed. The process of transition has become non-linear, longer and more

complex. Transition patterns have been prolonged due to both higher rates of student

employment and higher post-secondary enrolment (Krahn and Lowe 1991, 1999). Unlike

the 1960s and 1970s, student jobs and post-secondary education have become the norm.

With the rapidly expanding service sector in British Columbia and the demand for low-

skilled workers, it is now common for students to hold a job throughout their high school

and post-secondary education. Indeed, youth now combine the roles of student and

worker. The OECD (2000) labels this 'blurring', and argues that students are

increasingly 'blurring' their transition to the labour market through apprenticeships, part-

time jobs, and summer jobs, and as a result the transition from student to employee is less

sharp than it once was. Making transition patterns further complex, transitions today

often include moving in and out of, and mixing, education programs and work in a variety

of ways (Krahn and Lowe 1991; Andres *et al.* 1999). However, this is not to say that some youth today do not follow linear, straight-forward patterns.

While generally Fordist patterns of transition were more linear than today, there were some variations. Goodwin and O'Connor (2005) argue that the linear typology of past youth transitions remains relatively unchallenged. In their study of student pathway data from the 1960s in Britain, they find that in the first year of labour market entrance, job-hopping was evident among youth (Goodwin and O'Connor 2005). Indeed, it was common for students to move between several low paying jobs before settling into a position. More recently, acknowledging the complexity of past transitions, Bradley and Devadason (2008) argue that the period of moving in and out of relatively low paying jobs is prolonged among more recent transitions, often continuing into the late 20s and early 30s.

With numerical and functional flexibility, it has been suggested that as the labour market shifted away from Fordism, it marked the end of the 'job for life', or in other words, the end of an employee staying in a job with one company. For instance, as Sennett claims "flexible capitalism has blocked the straight roadway of career, diverting employees suddenly from one kind of work to another...people do lumps of labour, pieces of work, over the course of a lifetime" (1998: 9). This notion of an end of 'jobs for life' is contested (Bradley and Devadason 2008). Moreover, with the exception of Bradley and Devadason (2008), little research examines youth's perspectives on the 'end of jobs for life'. Based on a study of young adults in Britain, they term the youth of today as the 'adaptable generation':

> Our research indicates a distinctive mentality among this generation. We call this structure of feeling 'internalized flexibility' and it was displayed by many young adults. They accept the necessity for change and adapt themselves to cope with it; some positively embrace it.
>
> (Bradley and Devadason 2008: 132)

Youth in their sample seemed to acknowledge and accept the notion of an 'end of jobs for life', and have 'adapted' flexibility, even embraced it. Unfortunately, there are no similar studies in the British Columbian or Canadian context.

The growing popularity of post-secondary education is the most significant change in transition. It is now the norm for high school youth in BC to anticipate pursuing a post-secondary education in some form. The consensus among researchers is that youth are choosing this pathway to get a good job in an increasingly polarized labour market, in which those with credentials win the stable, well-paid jobs and those without are left with the low-wage, less stable jobs (Bynner 1999; Lowe and Krahn 2000; Jones 2002; McDowell 2003). It does seem that youth are receiving the message about the importance of a post-secondary education in accessing well-paid, stable jobs, and transitional expectations have shifted accordingly. Behrisch *et al.*'s (2002/03) study of youth in Powell River BC shows that the demand for a flexible workforce has shifted student attitudes towards Gaskell's distant logic in hopes of gaining the credentials needed to get a decent job. This resonates with Krahn and Lowe's (1999) five-year study of 1985 Canadian high school graduates, which found that youth have a strong belief in the value of post-secondary education in improving job opportunities.

Given the segmented nature of the Canadian labour market, youth's strong belief in the value of post-secondary education makes sense, as it is harder for youth to find a stable, well-paid job without some form of post-secondary education. For instance,

according to a study of Canadian university and high school graduates (Krahn and Lowe

1991), while university graduates were concentrated in teaching,

science/engineering/math professions and managerial/administrative jobs, those with only

a high school graduation were found in lower status white-collar and manual jobs (Krahn

and Lowe 1991). Remarking on the segmented labour market and the role of further

education to success, Krahn and Lowe (1991) state, "clearly the high school and

university graduates who have made the transition from school into full-time or part-time

employment inhabit very different segments of the labour market" (151). Youth seem to

understand that such divisions exist in the labour market, and have prioritized post-

secondary education accordingly.

2.4   The Formulation of Transitional Expectations

In the transition from school to work, youth make a number of choices, from

selecting high school courses and applying to post-secondary institutions to holding a

student job and choosing a career. These choices are guided by transitional expectations

and aspirations. Of critical importance to youth are decisions they make while in their

last year of high school, when they face the question of what they are going to do after

leaving compulsory schooling. Indeed, their transition to the labour market has already

begun while in high school, in the form of course selection, part-time employment, and

post-secondary applications.

Transitional expectations are patterned by many factors, and this area of research

falls under the term 'school-to-work'. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, school-to-work

research revolved around 'socialization theory', which stressed the importance of

structural influences on youth, particularly socialization in the family and school, as well

as gender, class, and ethnicity (Rudd 1997). However, in the late 1970s research began to acknowledge that youth were not always 'passive agents' of structural forces, but held some degree of influence over their transitions. According to Rudd (1997), during this time "it was shown that young people in minority groups, whether these were class, gender or ethnically based, could resist socializing influences or accommodate them on their own terms and sometimes to their own advantage" (260). One example of agency is Willis' (1977) classic study of working class 'lads' in Britain, which was conceptualized during Fordism. Willis found that the 'lads' embraced a counterculture in which conformity in school and authority were resisted. As Willis argues (1977), instead of being pushed into jobs they did not want, the 'lads' exercised a degree of choice in their transition.

Willis showed that while structural influences are indeed important in school-to-work transition, youth are active decision-makers when it comes to thinking about their futures. More recently, although there is no dominant school-to-work transition theory, current literature stresses the importance of both structure and agency, and the complex relationships between them (Rudd 1997; Lehmann 2007). In their review of research in the Canadian context, Anisef *et al.* (2000) remark:

> Agency and structure are embedded in each other...attempts to desegregate
> the relative effects of agency and structure may be less useful than efforts to
> determine, in a particular time and place, just how structural and institutional
> factors influence individual choices.

(Anisef *et al.* 2000: 21)

Attempts to separate the effects of structure and agency are futile given their inherent interpenetration. Alternatively, because the products of structure and agency vary greatly

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in different contexts, context-specific research may provide more interesting accounts of the relation between structure and agency.

Contributing to the school-to-work transition literature, economic geographers suggest that labour market dynamics play an important role in transition that should not be overlooked. According to them, it is critical to examine both labour supply and labour demand factors that lead to youth settling in the segmented labour force (Behrisch 1995; Peck 1996). According to Peck (1996), on the supply-side of the labour market, or the sphere of reproduction, factors such as the role of marginal groups in the labour market, and the role of socialization at the household and school levels are critical in the reproduction of labour (Peck 1996). Simultaneously, transitional expectations of youth are shaped by demand trends in the local labour market, which shift with broader socioeconomic changes (Behrisch 1995). This market-based view of transition represents a compelling account of youth transition into the segmented labour market, wherein expectations reflect both labour supply and demand factors and the interactions between them. However, while economic geographers acknowledge the importance of personal agency in transition, its role is not well developed in the literature given the difficulty differentiating between the roles of structure and agency in transition.

Youth's transitional expectations are inherently geographical as they live their lives in specific contexts, such as the home, the school, and the local labour market. Indeed, youth are influenced by locally based experiences at multiple levels, and their expectations and eventual choices regarding their transition to the labour market reflect these influences. The remainder of this section will review the literature revolving around

the role of specific 'places' on the transitional expectations of youth, specifically the

home, the school, and the local labour market.

2.4.1 Home

It is well documented that the family is a major influence on youth's transitional

expectations. According to Peck (1996), "as expectations about the world of work

evolve, [families] affect the terms under which individuals will make their labour

available"(66). He stresses that the notion that youth conceptualize certain types of work

as acceptable or not acceptable, and these conceptualizations reflect socialization in the

household. Important influences in the household can range from parental expectations

and motivation to sibling experience and knowledge of the world of work.

Literature widely acknowledges the critical role that family socioeconomic status

has on youth's expectations (Empson-Warner and Krahn 1992; Andres *et al.* 1999; Krahn

and Lowe 1999). The effects of parental income and parental education on the

transitional expectations of youth have been widely documented throughout the last 40

years. For instance, in a longitudinal study of Canadian high school students throughout

the 1970s to 1990s, Andres *et al.* (1999) conclude that higher parental education and

father's higher occupational status are associated with higher occupational expectations of

youth throughout these periods.

With the exception of Crysdale *et al.* (1999), few authors have delved into how

exactly socioeconomic status patterns youth's expectations. For instance, as Crysdale *et
al.* (1999) state:

> Class is the most persistent structural determinant of youth's goals and
> attainment. It operates through the educational and occupational levels of

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parents, with all that these entail – understanding, prestige, income, lifestyle, and social skills.

(Crysdale *et al.* 1999: 23)

Crysdale and his colleagues suggest that the socialization youth receive, such as beliefs, attitudes, and values (in this case especially in regards to their occupational expectations), are ultimately linked to the educational and occupational levels of the parents.

The role of gender and ethnicity in labour supply are also linked to occupational socialization in the home. Because of the parameters of this study, specifically the small sample size, the role of ethnicity is not discussed in depth. However, there is an ethnic and cultural dimension to the formulation of transitional expectations (Bowlby *et al.* 1998). In regards to gender, as discussed above, the Canadian labour market continues to be organized in gendered terms. Gender differences are evident in the transitional expectations of youth. As Looker (1985) writes, "[youth] see the world of work in gender-specific terms and make their choices accordingly" (151). Literature widely acknowledges that men and women, through socialization from the family and wider society, supply their labour in different ways, reflecting social expectations attached to roles (Gaskell 1992; Peck 1996; Escriche *et al.* 2004; Fenwick 2004). Unlike the expectations of the male as the family breadwinner, it is generally more socially acceptable for women to work part-time jobs or stay at home to raise children. Therefore, in formulating career expectations, women face juggling their career and familial roles.

The expectations of young women in Canada have shifted over the last 30 years. While in the 1970s more men than women aspired to professional or managerial positions, by 1985 the situation was reversed (Andres *et al.* 1999). Indeed, in the 1980s more women were aspiring to professional positions, and fewer were aspiring to clerical,

sales and service positions (Andres *et al.* 1999). According to Andres *et al.* (1999), the rise in young women's aspirations is associated with increases in female labour force participation and shifts in gender role beliefs. However, this is not to say that gender beliefs no longer play a role in expectations. For instance, according to a longitudinal study of Canadian youth (Looker and Magee 2000), while young women had similar or higher expectations than young men for highly skilled and highly paid careers, most still assumed that they would need to leave their jobs to have a family and take primary responsibility for childcare.

2.4.2 School

Youth are socialized at the household level and receive simultaneous socialization through teachers, counsellors, and course curriculum at the school level. While generally not as strong as the influence of family, teachers do play an important role in the formulation of high school students' transitional expectations (Levin 1985; Anisef *et al.* 2000). For instance, in a study of high school graduates from Kelowna, BC, 22 percent of students agreed that teachers played a part in their decisions to pursue a post-secondary education (Hofmann and Morrison 2006). The role of guidance counsellors was not as strong, with only six percent of students agreeing that they played a part in their decision to pursue a post-secondary education (Hofmann and Morrison 2006).

Course curriculum also plays a role in shaping transitional expectations of youth. According to Levin (1985), Canadian schools are academically centred institutions, and they focus on preparation for further academic studies, particularly in university, instead of focussing on the preparation for work. He notes that because teachers themselves are trained academically in universities, "their socialization is heavily supportive of the

academic emphasis" (Levin 1985: 274). Indeed, the education system has been criticized for not offering enough vocational courses, or devaluing vocational courses. According to young Canadians that took part in the 2005 Youth Summit, hosted by the Canadian Policy Research Network, the education system is too focused on academic achievement: As one student states, "Some of us are more oriented to... hands-on and practical learning options... But the education system, our parents and peers seem to devalue vocational trades and technology training" (Maxwell 2007). Though arguably still quite academically oriented, the BC education system has in place both co-operative education and apprenticeship programs for students interested in vocational studies. As well, BC has become the first province in Canada to make work experience a mandatory component of graduation.

2.4.3 Community and Local Labour Market

Along with the home and the school, the community is a critical space that patterns the transitional expectations of youth. Youth from affluent suburbs, inner city neighbourhoods, and small rural communities grow up in different social realities. As Andres and Looker point out, "communities as well as families shape definitions of 'people like us'" (2001: 6). These geographic influences are most apparent in the differences in the transitional expectations of youth from urban and rural communities, and numerous Canadian studies (Looker 1993; Andres et al. 1999; Andres and Looker 2001) have found that rural youth have consistently lower expectations than urban youth.

According to Andres and Looker (2001), more parents in rural areas have lower levels of education than those in urban areas. So are lower expectations of rural youth simply a result of socialization in the family? In their study of Canadian rural,

urban/rural, and urban youth, Andres and Looker (2001) find this is not the case. They argue that parental education obviously does affect youth expectations, however, when comparing youth from families with similar levels of parental education, rural youth still have different expectations than urban youth.

The literature acknowledges a number of factors that explain the differences in expectations between urban and rural youth. First, the availability of post-secondary institutions is more extensive in urban areas, and urban youth often face a wider range of opportunities for post-secondary education. According to Andres and Looker (2001), "the availability of postsecondary institutions can facilitate or constrain young people's perceptions and eventual decisions about after high school options" (3). In rural areas with few post-secondary opportunities, the expectations of youth can indeed be relatively constrained. Often the decision to continue on to postsecondary studies means leaving their families and communities (Andres and Looker 2001).

The lack of labour market opportunities often compounds the situation for rural youth. Overall, rural communities have fewer opportunities for advancement than their urban counterparts (Looker 1993). Indeed, for rural youth 'moving up' often means 'moving out' (Andres and Looker 2001). Those who place more importance on ties to their local community, including those to family and friends, are often faced with poor job prospects in their decision to stay.

The scope of rural-urban research is limited in that many communities are considered neither rural nor urban. With the exception of Andres and Looker (2001), few studies in the Canadian context examine communities falling in between urban and rural. Andres and Looker (2001) extend the rural-urban dichotomy by examining the

expectations of youth from areas considered urban/rural, and found that the expectations of youth from such areas are more similar to the expectations of youth from urban areas.

2.5 Conclusion

This geographic review of the transitional expectations of youth reveal that expectations are a result of many interwoven factors. On a broad level, as Canada has shifted way from Fordism towards flexibility, the transitional expectations of youth have changed. Compared to youth of the past, youth in recent times have higher expectations, place greater importance on a post-secondary education to labour market success, and exhibit more adaptability to the notion of change in their careers. While broad socioeconomic changes are associated with shifting expectations, micro-level influences stemming from the home, school, and community are equally important. These are the contextual spaces in which youth live their lives, and these spaces, and the beliefs and attitudes they help produce, are critical in the formulation of expectations. Indeed, as this chapter suggests, from the broadest to the most specific levels, 'place' matters in the transitional expectations of youth.

3: VERNON AS A JOB MARKET FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

3.1 Introduction

In order to understand the transitional expectations of high school students in Vernon, the characteristics of the local labour market is crucial. The main goal of this chapter is to identify recent trends affecting the local labour market in Vernon. This will be achieved by analyzing interview data from staff members at Clarence Fulton Secondary, as well as employment counsellors from Community Futures of the North Okanagan, the region's community economic development organization. In general, Vernon's labour market has been particularly robust in recent years. In 2007, the city was one of two municipalities in BC in which the unemployment rate (2.9 percent) was below three percent (Pendergast 2008). Youth transitioning to the labour market today face a much stronger labour market than those in the 1980s and 1990s. While the strength of the local labour market has been widely documented, a more in-depth look at the types of employment opportunities, and the quality and quantity of such opportunities, has been neglected. The first part of the chapter examines job opportunities in the local labour market and identifies shortages of labour. The second part investigates what this strong local labour market has meant for high school students in Vernon. This discussion includes exploring the level of job opportunity for students as well as examining the extent of student employment among Clarence Fulton students.

3.2 Vernon and the North Okanagan Labour Market

The economy of British Columbia has been characterised as consisting of two

distinct economies: the core or urban economy, and the peripheral hinterland economy

(Davis and Hutton 1989; McGillivray 2000). The core is the economically diverse and

service-oriented Greater Vancouver region (as well as Victoria on Vancouver Island),

which employs the majority of BC's population. The periphery is considered to be the

largely resource-based hinterland of the rest of BC. However, this duality oversimplifies

the differentiation in the province's economy. A case in point is the Okanagan region. In

1989, Davis and Hutton described Kelowna as a third or fourth-order centre, in 2000,

McGillivray described Kelowna as "the most important service, administrative, and

manufacturing centre" (13) in the Okanagan, with a regional airport and links to the coast

via the Coquihalla Highway. Indeed, centred in Kelowna, the economy of the Okanagan

has been particularly strong in recent years. Between 2002 and 2005, the Thompson-

Okanagan region had the strongest job growth in BC, double that of the provincial

average (Purcell 2006). The Okanagan is no longer specialized in resource extraction,

yet, its economy has not reached the scale of that of the core in Greater Vancouver.

Rather, it is a region in transition between the two.

Vernon is the major commercial centre of the North Okanagan Regional District,

approximately 45 kilometres from Kelowna. Traditionally, the economy of the North

Okanagan was dependent on primary industries, mainly forestry and agriculture

(Community Futures 2007). While these are still important for the region's economy, the

last five years has witnessed massive growth in the service sector. Of those employed in

Vernon in 2006, just over 70 percent were employed in the service sector (Statistics

Canada 2008a). Service sector growth in the area can be attributed to the availability of highly skilled workers, the advanced education and training facilities in the area, the high quantity and quality of technological infrastructure, and the portability of the service industry (Community Futures 2007).

The economy of the North Okanagan region is dominated by small and medium-sized firms. In 2003, 91 percent of businesses were comprised of twenty employees or less, and only 0.5 percent had over 200 employees (Community Futures 2007). As one Community Futures staff member points out, given the large numbers of small businesses in Vernon, there is not a great amount of opportunity for membership in worker unions.

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 1:* There's not many large unionized institutions here aside from health care and education...there is a glass factory and a brewery though, both of which have unions. There are much more smaller businesses here.

Along with small business, self-employment is also prevalent in the North Okanagan. Compared to the provincial average of 14.1 percent, the North Okanagan has a self-employment rate of 17.2 percent (Community Futures 2007). According to the Community Futures Development Corporation, the region's economic development organization, much entrepreneurialism has grown in the service sector, particularly in high technology and tourism (Community Futures 2007).

The labour market in Vernon and the greater North Okanagan region fluctuates seasonally. Nestled between Okanagan Lake and Kalamalka Lake, the area is a major tourist destination in the summer season. In the winter, it is also a major tourist destination given its proximity to skiing opportunities like Silver Star Resort (Lauritsen

2007). During the summers, the warm climate allows for a productive agricultural industry, including cattle ranching, grains, and tree fruits.

3.2.1 Job Opportunity and Labour Shortage in the North Okanagan

There is currently considerable job opportunity for workers in the Okanagan region. Unlike many other labour markets across the province, the Okanagan faces a demographic crunch affecting labour supply. Because it is an attractive place to live, many people like to retire in the area. Janis Foord-Kirk (2007) remarks:

> The Okanagan Valley itself is in a unique situation. Our increasing cost of living on one hand, but also the large numbers of mature workers that are moving here of their own choice because it is a lifestyle destination.
>
> (Foord-Kirk 2007)

Thus, while baby boomers are attracted to the Okanagan as a place to retire, the increasing cost of living discourages younger workers from settling in the area. Indeed, from the perspective of a Community Futures staff member, the cost of housing makes a difference with regards to labour security.

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* Housing makes a difference. Housing is very expensive, yet wages are slightly lower than the rest of the province. So, young people especially may find it hard to live and work here. For instance, it is very hard to find lower cost rental housing in the area now.

With the baby boomer generation reaching retirement, a large portion of the population will be leaving the labour market. According to Foord-Kirk (2007), "[the region] is in a somewhat unique situation...large numbers of aging workers on one hand, fewer younger workers coming up to take their place". This demographic crunch, coupled with strong job growth and increased cost of living, is leading to fears of labour shortage in the coming years.

> *Employment Counsellor:* With the baby boomers getting ready to retire..it's going to have a tremendous impact because baby boomers are such a large part of the labour market. It's going to make a big difference.

Indeed, Vernon is already facing labour shortages in many industries. There are generally three types of shortages with regards to labour; labour shortage, skill shortage, and knowledge shortage (Janis Foord-Kirk 2007). A labour shortage refers to a shortage of generally low-skilled individuals, such as students, to fill low-skilled positions like retail and food services or manual unskilled labour. These jobs are characteristic of Atkinson's (1985) first peripheral groups and second peripheral groups, given their emphasis on numerical and financial flexibility and non-firm specific tasks. A skill shortage refers to a shortage of trained individuals to fill more complex jobs. These jobs generally correspond to Atkinson's (1985) core group, as well as skilled external labour, given their skilled status and the functional flexibility they can often offer employers. A knowledge shortage is a lack of individuals with specific in-depth knowledge in certain industries, including procedures and business partners. Such in-depth knowledge is generally gained and held by individuals who have worked in a particular industry long-term (Foord-Kirk 2007). These jobs are characteristic of Atkinson's (1985) core jobs, as their level of knowledge cannot easily be 'bought-in'.

According to a youth counsellor from Community Futures, all three types of shortage are becoming apparent in Vernon.

> *SO:* What types of shortages would you say Vernon is dealing with, labour, skill, or knowledge?

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* I'd say all three. We have shortages in areas like retail services, and that's the major industry here. Then we also have alot of management positions becoming available as boomers retire, and these types of jobs are knowledge jobs. There are also skill shortages in the trades, for instance.

While both skill and knowledge shortages are apparent in some industries, the most persistent shortage appears to be that of low-skilled labour. Indeed, staff at both Community Futures and Clarence Fulton have noticed the incredible opportunities in Vernon for low-skilled workers.

> *Grade 12 English Teacher:* Right now there are many many opportunities in the local labour market. Basically a student can go almost anywhere and get an entry level job. Now , everywhere you go there are signs posted saying that they're looking for workers. I actually can never remember seeing it like this in all the years I've been working, where there are so many jobs everywhere, you know.

> *Employment Counsellor:* There's lots of entry level opportunities, and then there's more skilled opportunities. And you know, the entry level ones are kind of the ones going, you know, to the point where there's signs up on their board type of thing. And then, you know the skilled ones are hurting too, for some of them as well. It's a hot labour market.

Indeed, the shortage of low-skilled labour for service sector jobs such as retail is most pervasive, to the point where hiring signs are readily displayed throughout the community. However, there are also many sectors facing skill shortages.

> *SO:* Do you think there are any areas in the local labour market which have skill shortages?

> *Employment Counsellor:* Yes, there's lots of areas. Management has skills shortages, trades has skill shortages, health care system has shortages, construction has shortages. Lots of areas.

Thus, although less apparent than the shortage of low-skilled labour, sectors ranging from trades to services are also short of skilled individuals. However, because there are fewer of them, there is often more competition for higher skilled positions.

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* There is lots of opportunity for low-skill jobs. There is also opportunity in some sectors for higher skilled jobs, but generally there are not as many and so there is more competition for these positions...so there is more competition among those that do have skills.

3.2.2 Labour Shortage and the Employer

As employers have begun to feel the effects of labour shortage in Vernon, many have faced the problem of staff recruitment and retention. In September 2007, Community Futures of the North Okanagan hosted a conference for local employers called 'Shifting Directions', about methods of attracting and retaining staff. As John Wright, Senior Vice-President of Ipsos Reid states, "there's been a complete transition over the past 15 years, from 'You're lucky to have a job' to 'I'm lucky I have you'" (Foord-Kirk 2007). But has this shift resulted in Vernon's employers improving job characteristics to attract and retain staff? Evidence from employment counsellors suggests that employers have slowly been forced to make positions more attractive, either financially or otherwise. As one employment counsellor remarks:

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2*: Employers are slowly starting to raise their wages as they find out that they just can't keep staff anymore. You can just move on if you find better wages elsewhere.

The career coordinator at Clarence Fulton discusses the decline of the so-called 'sunshine tax' of the Okanagan, whereby wages are slightly less than other parts of the province given the attractiveness of the area. According to her, this 'tax' may slowly be disappearing given the labour shortages in the area.

> *Career Coordinator:* The Okanagan is known for having the so-called sunshine tax...Where, you are doing the same job as in some other city, but you are not making as much because you're living in a nice place...
>
> *SO:* And they could get away with it?
>
> *Career Coordinator:* And they could get away with it because many people did want to come here. It's still here to some degree, but it's gradually going away because people are so desperate for workers they are realizing they have to pay more.

Given labour demand is greater than labour supply, especially in low-skilled sectors, such statements suggest that employers may not be able to secure as financially flexible employees as they may like. Here John Wright's statement is significant, as the employer is now lucky to have the employee, and not vice-versa as it may once have been.

While some interviewees do believe that wages in Vernon are slowly rising, an employment counsellor from Community Futures does not know to what degree it is happening in the area, although she has heard of it happening elsewhere.

SO: Are employers also starting to offer higher wages would you say?

Employment Counsellor: Well, I don't know about that. You do hear stories. You hear stories that in McDonald's in Fort St. John they make eighteen dollars an hour. You do hear stories about some employers needing to offer really high wages to get people to come.

Other financial benefits take the form of bonuses or non-wage benefits. For instance, local employer Gary Muuren (2007) of Kal-Tire says that when it comes to staff attraction and retention, the company has had great success with referrals from current employees. Thus, they have begun to offer a 'recruitment bounty' of $500 to an employee that refers someone who stays with the company for at least three months (Muuren 2007).

Some companies may not be able to afford the luxury of attracting workers with financial incentives such as higher wages, bonuses, or benefits. According to an employment counsellor, those that cannot provide financial incentives have to be good employers to attract and retain staff.

Employment Counsellor: A little while ago we had a workshop here, ways of finding good employees and ways of keeping them. You know, there are still employers out there that are really bad employers. There's lots of good ones, but like there are some that their bottom line is so tight that they can't offer more

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financial security to their employees. You know, they have to be good employers.

Instead of offering financial incentives, employers can help retain staff by offering flexibility in hours, leveraging employee strengths, providing a comfortable work environment, and treating employees with equality and respect (Foord-Kirk 2007).

From the perspective of Community Futures staff members, the labour shortage in the area has meant that some employers in certain industries have been forced to lower job requirements in order to find workers.

> *Employment Counsellor:* It used to be in the past where employers would say 'must have Grade 12', and that would be just it. You know, a device to sort of sort some people out. Now, they're having to relax that. We had a guy in here, from a production job, you know, just basic labour stuff, and they used to say Grade 12, but he told us now that they've relaxed that because they're having a hard time filling their production jobs.

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 1:* There are some skilled positions that just aren't getting filled, so for some jobs, you know, they will take a BA even if they were looking for an MA, for example. So some industries have to lower their requirements to get positions filled.

These statements suggest that employers recruiting for both unskilled and, in some sectors skilled positions have had to lower requirements in order to fill positions.

3.3 Labour Shortage and High School Students in Vernon

Unlike their counterparts in the 1960s and 1970s, more youth today take jobs while in high school and post-secondary education. As previously discussed, the rapidly growing service sector in industrialized nations such as Canada has opened up a student labour market. This distinct labour market consists of students who are willing to work temporary and part-time positions for low wages, often in retail and food services. These jobs are generally financially and numerically flexible. With the rapidly expanding

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services sector in British Columbia and the high demand for low-skilled workers, it is now very common for students to hold a job throughout high school.

The labour shortages in Vernon and the North Okanagan have translated into employment opportunities for high school students. Students can now easily get an entry-level job, and as well, they can move relatively easily from job to job if they find something better elsewhere. Vernon has a well-established peripheral student labour market, and it is the norm for high school students to work. Commenting on the high level of job opportunity for high school students, Clarence Fulton's career coordinator claims that not only is there lots of opportunity in the peripheral student labour market, but the quality of such opportunity may have improved as well.

> *Career Coordinator:* I moved back here in 2001, so that was six years...there was like a page of job adds in the newspaper as opposed to like ten pages now. So incredible opportunities for kids. And probably better opportunities because people are so short of labour they are willing to train people they wouldn't even look at before. So skilled labour, oftentimes because they can't get the skilled labour, they'll look at a younger person and take them on. More people will take on young high school students than they would in the past because they just need bodies.

The career coordinator feels that youth still in high school have better job opportunities today because employers are so desperate for labour. While many of these jobs are low-skill service sector jobs, in certain sectors, higher skilled work is also being taken on by students. According to the career coordinator, both the increasing wages and levels of student responsibility are associated with the labour shortage.

> *Career Coordinator:* Because jobs are very easy to find...I asked who makes minimum wage, and barely any of them. They're making nine or ten dollars an hour. Many of them are supervisors. I know...it kind of blows me away. I'm thinking, you're a supervisor? What kind of training did you have? Yeah, all because there is just so much work.

This shock at the level of responsibility given to high school students is common among staff members at Clarence Fulton. It is of course important to note that while the wages and responsibility given to student employees may be increasing slightly, the jobs are still generally peripheral in nature. In other words, compared to more skilled and knowledge-based positions, these are relatively low paid and offer little chance for advancement.

3.3.1 Clarence Fulton Student Employment

While taking high school courses, many Clarence Fulton students also work part-time jobs. Indeed, almost three quarters of students were employed at the time of the survey (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding employment status

Response	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
Yes (employed)	8	6	14
No (not employed)	3	2	5
Total Responses	11	8	19

Source: Author Data 2007

Of the 14 students employed, 12 hold positions in the service sector, mainly in food and retail services like fast food outlets, restaurants, and retail outlets. The remaining two students are in construction and manufacturing.

According to the school's senior counsellor, one of the biggest changes in their students since the early or mid-nineties is in regards to student employment.

Senior Counsellor: Yeah, I think that would be the biggest thing...working more hours. Like, they always did work somewhat...they had their little jobs they did on the weekend. But I'm finding that there are so many kids that work.

The senior counsellor points out that not only are many students working, but they are also working very long hours, sometimes equivalent to full-time work.

> *Senior Counsellor:* We have many many students who are already working 40 hours a week...I mean, I find it mind-boggling that parents would let the kids work that many hours. Or that the kids choose to work that many hours, and they just have a hard time giving it up. So, they're certainly thinking...our kids, many of our students are workers, and they work lots of hours. Anywhere from 15-40 hours a week, while they attend school.

Survey results confirm the sentiments of the senior counsellor. Of the fourteen Clarence Fulton students that work, six work over 21 hours per week on average (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding number of working hours per week, using aggregated categories

Response	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
1-10 Hours	0	2	2
11-20 Hours	2	3	5
21-30 Hours	4	0	4
31-40 Hours	1	1	2
Total Responses	7	6	13

Source: Author Data 2007

Survey results reveal that there seems to be a relationship between hours worked and gender, with more male students working longer hours than female students. Unfortunately, no literature examines high school students' hours worked by gender. Dave, a Clarence Fulton key-informant student, is an example of a student that works very long hours during high school.

> *SO:* How many hours a week are you working?

> *Dave:* Um...I'd say roughly 40. And it depends on what days we go too. Like, Fridays, there was no Friday off, we got Fridays as graveyard shift...Saturday

afternoon shift and the Sunday afternoon shift. And then there were a couple during the week, but it varies from time to time.

Explaining why Clarence Fulton students work while in high school, students cite money as the primary reason. Indeed, money is a motivating factor in student employment, be it for extra pocket money or to help out their families financially. This is consistent with the findings of Crysdale *et al.* (1999), who suggest that high school students work simply to earn money, sometimes out of necessity, but mainly to support a consumerist lifestyle. However, from the perspective of Clarence Fulton and Community Futures staff members, unlike previous decades, many high school students today are working because of the fact that there is currently opportunity for students in the local labour market, and it is easy for students to get jobs.

Given the diversity of students from different socioeconomic backgrounds at Clarence Fulton, one staff member finds that in contrast to Kalamalka Secondary, which is in a more wealthy catchment area of Vernon, students at Fulton often have a greater need to work.

SO: Do you find that a lot of students are employed throughout high school?

Grade 12 Science Teacher: Yeah...here in this school especially. Kal [Kalamalka Secondary] was no, I would have said. And then over the last few years its increasing, that trend...And they might work here out of necessity for the family, rather than just 'I want a phone and music and cars'...some kids here do it because they have to.

Although statistics are unavailable, these data suggest that even at the local scale, student populations are diverse in their employment trends, in this case due to differences in socioeconomic status.

According to Crysdale *et al.* (1999), although working a part-time job while in high school does not necessarily have negative implications, as it promotes responsibility, and independence, working long hours in these part-time jobs can depress school performance, and does not aid transition in the long run. While this study cannot comment on effects on transition in the long run, key-informant interview data suggest that for some students, working long hours can negatively affect school performance. For instance, John, who works fifteen to twenty hours a week at a fast food outlet says, "it's kind of hard to work, because then I get home and I am tired and it's hard to do homework". Likewise, Jennifer, who works fifteen to twenty hours a week at a department store: "every Friday I had to miss my afternoon class to work". On the other hand, Andrew works fifteen to twenty hours a week at a restaurant. When asked about the disruption of work on schooling, Andrew remarks, "there are times but my boss, he's pretty like open to me taking like days off for my school". Surprisingly, Dave, who works approximately 40 hours a week in a factory, finds that work does not interfere with school. When asked if work interfered with school, he said "No, not at all, I was actually fairly surprised".

3.3.2   The Local Labour Market and Post-Secondary Education

Although the shortage of labour in Vernon provides youth with job opportunity, transition literature clearly concedes that an education is critical to securing a good job in the flexible labour market, and Clarence Fulton and Community Futures staff members agree. The consensus is that students entering the labour market without any further education face much opportunity, but these opportunities are limited in their potential for growth. For instance, when asked about job opportunities available for students in the

local labour market, one Clarence Fulton staff member argues that students entering the labour market right away may be stuck in 'dead-end' jobs.

> *Grade 12 Science Teacher:* I think there are opportunities, I don't think they are good opportunities for them. They're the jobs, the sort of dead-end ones. We have a phone...what do you call them, the one's that call you at dinner time?
>
> *SO:* Oh...a call centre?
>
> *Grade 12 Science Teacher:* Call centres, yeah...we have a call centre in town. And, again, those look like good paying jobs but they're sort of dead end ones.

From this perspective, while some of these jobs may seem quite good to students, they offer little chance for advancement. In effect, these are just jobs, not 'careers'. The idea that students who compete in the job market with only Grade 12 education will mainly end up in 'dead-end' jobs is substantiated by Clarence Fulton's senior counsellor and an employment counsellor from Community Futures.

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* There are some great opportunities out there, like in the trades for instance, but there is still a ceiling that youth without education will find it hard to rise above.
>
> *Senior Counsellor:* ...many of them end up working on a job that doesn't, you know, it doesn't pay that much...I would say...unless they decide they are going to get a certificate or diploma...yeah, but to move up the ladder, I'm not sure where you'll do it except to be a supervisor in a store...

The interviewees argue that students who do not pursue any form of post-secondary education will reach a ceiling, or a point on the job ladder they will not be able to rise above in terms of opportunity and pay. Despite the strength in the local labour market, it appears an education is still important to securing quality job opportunities. These statements also reflect the segmentation of the local labour market, as both interviewees acknowledge that less-educated workers will face barriers in progressing to higher skilled and higher paid work. Indeed, the arguments of the employment counsellors parallel

those of researchers (Bynner 1999, Jones 2002, Lowe and Krahn 2000) who argue that

those with credentials win the stable, well-paid jobs, and those who do not are left behind.

3.3.3 Employability Skills

Broadly speaking in regards to young people, employer demand for employability

has come to the forefront. Such skills are not direct work-related skills, but rather are

employee qualities such as work ethic and reliability. According to employment

counsellors at Community Futures, these are the key qualities employers today are

seeking.

> *SO:* What skills are employers seeking today, and have there been any shifts in what employers have been seeking?

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* Yes...definitely. Above all else, employers now are looking for employability skills.

> *SO:* And what would this include?

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* These skills would be interpersonal skills, attitude, work ethic...

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 1:* Yeah...reliability. For instance, showing up on time.

Similarly, Clarence Fulton's career coordinator states that with youth, employers are

seeking 'soft skills', such as work ethic, as opposed to 'hard skills' such as the ability to

perform certain tasks.

> *Career Coordinator:* What I have heard numerous times is that employers are looking for good soft skills...for example attitude, willingness to learn, initiative, consistency, ability to follow directions, good people skills...because they say they can teach the hard skills to a young person like this. Hard skills being things like running a cash register, operating a forklift, or doing a specific task. They say that good soft skills are hard to find and when lacking are the number one reason for high turnover of young people on the job.

In order to prevent costly labour turnover among young workers, employers are looking for individuals with good 'soft skills' or 'employability skills'. When hired, these individuals can be taught 'hard skills'. Conversely, 'soft skills' are not easily taught.

According to a number of Clarence Fulton staff members, many students recently display characteristics of poor work ethic when it comes to employment. One Clarence Fulton Grade 12 teacher feels that some students are lacking the motivation to be good employees.

> *Grade 12 English Teacher:* Students tend to believe that work is going to be like school. You know, 'oh yeah, I didn't feel like coming in today'. In a job it's like 'Oh really, you're fired' 'What?'. Yeah, that type of thing. I once had a student who got fired from a job...and I asked him why he got fired and he said, 'Well, they said...that I wasn't working hard enough'. And I said 'Well, were they right?' and he said 'Well, they were paying me six dollars an hour, I was giving them a six dollar an hour effort' and I was just...I was just shocked right?...I was just shocked. And unfortunately I think that that type of view, that type of perspective is common.

This teacher suggests that many students may lack 'soft skills' or 'employability skills', notably with respect to attitude and effort.

Similarly, from the perspective of Clarence Fulton's career coordinator, students are displaying a lack of work ethic. She links the strong labour market to declining work ethic in students.

> *Career Coordinator:* When I became career coordinator in 2001...kids worked harder to get what they wanted then...it's almost too easy for them now... I hear stories from employers like 'little Johnnie didn't come to work Sunday morning because he was out partying Saturday night, and he didn't show up at his Wal-Mart job Sunday morning for this shift'. He didn't feel like it. And when the employer tries to track him down after three days they get the parents on the phone and they say 'oh, he works at Wendy's now'. Like, they don't give notice, you know, they just have a very lax attitude recently. And that really concerns me. You know, that little generational bubble is going to burst some day.

From her perspective, because jobs are easy to find, students may not be concerned with losing them, as so the work ethic may not be as strong as it was when jobs were harder to find. According to her, if there is something students do not like about their jobs, they can easily find a new one given the high demand for labour.

While high demand in the local labour market may provide security for some students as Clarence Fulton staff suggest, it is not fair to conclude that students today are somehow 'lazier' or have a poorer work ethic than those before. Indeed, while teachers may perceive that work ethic among students has declined, this is not evidence that it actually has. Contrary to the notion that youth today are lazier, not only do more youth today begin working earlier in life, but they also work more hours. Such differences in the nature of student employment make a comparison of work ethic across time difficult.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter explored Vernon as a local job market for high school students. In the last ten years, Vernon has experienced massive service sector growth. The Okanagan region as a whole is facing a demographic crunch in labour supply, and Vernon is currently experiencing labour, skill, and knowledge shortages, of which labour shortage is the most severe. Indeed, according to employment counsellors, staff recruitment and retention has become a problem and some employers have been forced to make changes, financially or otherwise, in order to find and keep staff. There is currently considerable job opportunity for students, and the quality of that opportunity may be improving as well, given the high demand for labour. Based on survey data, it is the norm for Clarence Fulton Grade 12 students to work while in high school, and Clarence Fulton and Community Futures staff have expressed surprise at the level of job responsibility given

to students in this time of labour shortage. However, while students may have slightly better job opportunities, Clarence Fulton staff and employment counsellors still argue that it is vital for students in Vernon to pursue some form of post-secondary education in order to access higher skilled positions.

4: TRANSITIONAL EXPECTATIONS OF CLARENCE FULTON STUDENTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter draws upon student survey and key-informant interview data to explore students' short-term and post-secondary education expectations. The chapter begins with some key characteristics of the student survey sample and introduces the five key-informant students who participated in semi-structured interviews. The first goal of this chapter is to examine Clarence Fulton students' short-term transitional expectations, or their expectations regarding the first year after high school. The second goal is to examine post-secondary education expectations, including expectations surrounding the timing and location of post-secondary education. This discussion includes the reasons students cite as important to their decision to pursue post-secondary education, as well as an examination of the role of socioeconomic status to post-secondary expectations. The final goal of this chapter is to outline the vocationalism of Clarence Fulton students, and explain a necessary modification of Gaskell's (1985) vocational logics.

4.2 Characteristics of Clarence Fulton Students

The findings discussed in this chapter are drawn from survey and interview data collected from a Grade 12 English class at Clarence Fulton Secondary School in Vernon, near the end of the school year in June 2007. The survey sample contains nineteen student responses, of which eleven were male and eight were female. The sample contains one Grade 11 male student who, due to his high academic achievement, enrolled

in English 12. His response is included because it reflects the reality of a Grade 12 class.

Semi-structured interviews were then completed with five survey respondents, of which

three were male and two female.

4.2.1 Achievement Level

Based on survey findings, Clarence Fulton students have a variety of levels of

academic achievement. Overall, they are an academically strong group of students. A

majority consider themselves to be motivated students some or most of the time, while

three consider themselves to be motivated students all of the time (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding level of motivation in high school

Response	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
All of the time	1	2	3
Most of the time	3	4	7
Some of the time	7	2	9
None of the time	0	0	0
Total Responses	11	8	19

Source: Author Data 2007

Female students were more likely to consider themselves motivated students all or most

of the time. This finding is indicative of Thiessen and Nickerson's (1999) study of

Canadian youth. According to them, in contrast to male high school students, female

students outperform male students in achievement, and are more likely to report they like

to learn new things and are interested in the work they do.

Under BC Ministry of Education rules, high school students are awarded a letter

grade for each completed course. Students are awarded an 'A' for 86-100%, a 'B' for 73-

85%, a 'C+' for 67-72%, a 'C' for 60-66%, and a 'C-' for 50-59%. Survey results

indicate that overall, Clarence Fulton students describe themselves as having strong

average grades (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding overall Grade 12 grade level
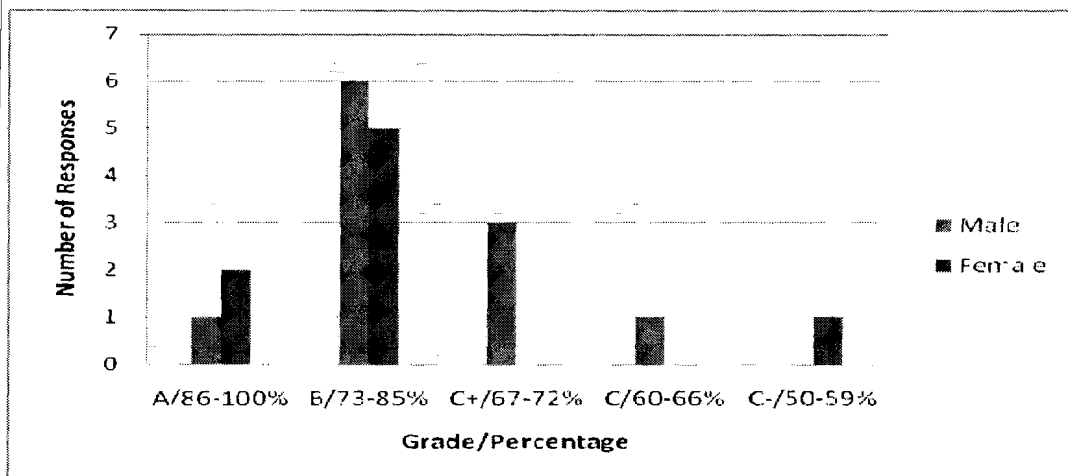
Source: Author Data 2007

In regards to both male and female survey respondents, the modal grade is a 'B', with

over half of both males and females citing a 'B' average. As this data shows, there is no

significant relationship between gender and grade.

4.2.2   Course Choice

Survey results suggest that Clarence Fulton students are diverse in terms of their

course choices. On average, students enrolled in 5.67 courses in their Grade 12 year, and

these courses include academic, fine art, and applied skills. According to BC Ministry of

Education requirements, key academic courses such as English 12, History 12, and

Physics 12 are provincially examinable courses. Clarence Fulton students' course choices

range from one to six academic courses (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: Number of academic courses taken by Clarence Fulton students
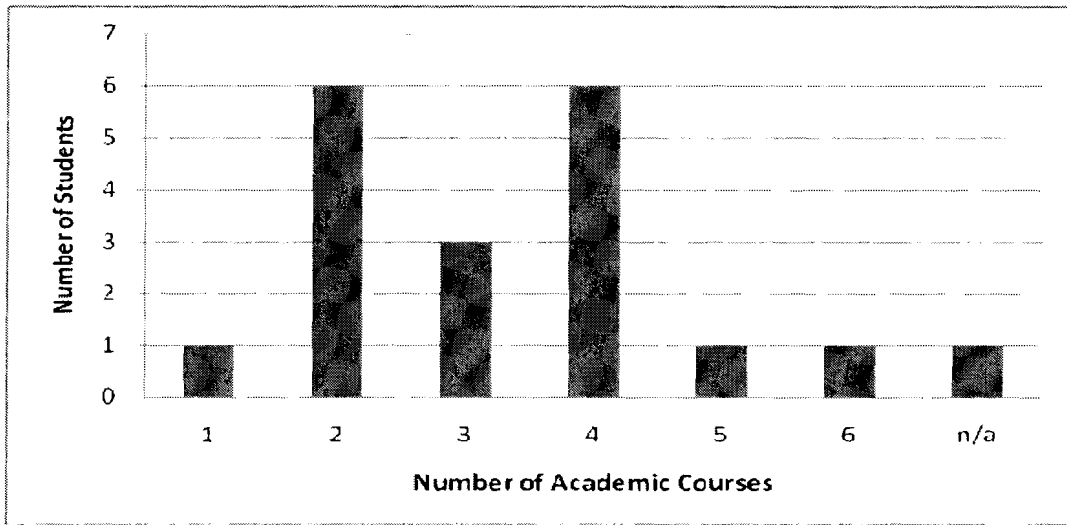
As the above table shows, most students take between two and four academic courses. The average number of academic courses taken by students is 3.17 academic courses.

4.2.3 Key-informant Students

Of the nineteen Clarence Fulton students that completed the survey, five were selected to complete key-informant interviews. Interviews were conducted throughout June and July of 2007.

Jennifer has lived with her parents and siblings in Vernon for nine years. She took six courses in her Grade 12 year, of which four were academic. She holds a 'B' average. During the school year she works weekends in the cosmetics section of the Bay department store. After high school graduation, she plans to continue working at the Bay while she upgrades her high school courses in order to gain the entrance requirements she needs to go to university. She is interested in a career as a care aid or nurse.

Andrew was born and raised by his parents in Vernon. In his Grade 12 year, he plans to take eight courses, all of which are academic. He holds an 'A' average in his Grade 11 courses. During the school year Andrew works fifteen to twenty hours per week as a cook/dishwasher at a restaurant. After high school graduation, Andrew plans to start his university education immediately, where he hopes to train for an academic-oriented job such as a dentist or engineer. He expects he will need to keep working during university to fund his education.

Anna moved to Vernon about a year ago from Edmonton and currently lives with her mother. In her Grade 12 year she took seven courses, of which six were academic. She holds an 'A' average in her courses. For the last two months of the school year, she has worked at White Spot approximately nine hours per week. After graduation, Anna plans on working part-time and taking a college course in order to gain the qualifications to teach English overseas. Concurrently, she plans to take a certificate program at the Justice Institute in the Lower Mainland. After teaching overseas, she hopes to get a degree in social work in order to become an addictions counsellor.

John moved with his family to Vernon three years ago from a very small town in BC. In his Grade 12 year he took five courses, of which four were academic. He holds a 'B' average in his courses. Throughout high school he has worked on and off, most recently at Subway, approximately fifteen to twenty hours per week. After graduation, his goal is to leave Vernon for the Lower Mainland to get a job and start a career in music or possibly writing.

Dave moved to Vernon with his family eight years ago from the Lower Mainland. In his Grade 12 year he took six courses, of which five were academic. He holds a 'C+' average. During the school year Dave worked at Tolko Industries approximately 27

hours a week. After graduation, he will be playing football for a city-based football team

in Kelowna, where he expects to get a full-time job. His passion is football and his goal

is to play football for a university, ideally in the United States. Aside from football, he

has an interest in one day joining the Canadian Armed Forces.

4.3 Short Term Expectations

For the purposes of this thesis, short-term expectations indicate what Clarence

Fulton students plan to do during the first year after graduation, in this case, from

approximately June 2007 to June 2008. Survey results indicate that thirteen of the

nineteen Clarence Fulton students plan on pursuing an education of some form within a

year after graduating high school, either through pursuing post-secondary education,

starting an apprenticeship program, or upgrading their high school courses (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding expectation of main activity during first year after graduation

Activity	Frequency
Working	4
Post-Secondary Education and Working	6
Apprenticeship	2
Upgrading High School and Working	4
Travelling and Working	2
Travelling and Post-Secondary Education	1
Total Students	19

Source: Author Data 2007

Table 4.2 reflects the disintegration of the sharp school-to-work pattern that

characteristized Fordist transition. Indeed, survey results resonate with the OECD's

(2000) concept of 'blurring', as the lines between student and employee have become

increasingly blurred. Instead of moving from full-time schooling (either high school or

post-secondary) to the labour market, survey results reveal that Clarence Fulton students hold a diverse range of expectations, including combinations of activities such as working, post-secondary education, travelling, and upgrading high school courses.

The expectations of key-informant students provide an interesting account of the complexities of short-term expectations. First, Andrew plans to attend university and hold a part-time job in order to pay tuition. Anna plans to take some post-secondary courses in the fall semester, one of which is to complete a certification to teach English overseas, after which she hopes to teach English in South America in the spring. Third, Jennifer wants to pursue post-secondary education, but plans to spend her first year after graduation working and upgrading her high school courses to meet post-secondary requirements. Fourth, Dave plans to pursue his major passion, football, after graduation. He will be playing for a Kelowna-based football team and will work, most likely full-time, to fund his football career. Last, John plans to leave Vernon for the Lower Mainland, where he hopes to find a job and start writing and playing music with a band.

4.4 Post-Secondary Education Expectations

Many Clarence Fulton students' short-term expectations include pursuing post-secondary education of some form. However, others have more distant post-secondary education expectations. Either way, like their counterparts across the province, most Clarence Fulton students understand the value of post-secondary education to their labour market goals. Evidence from both survey data and key-informants suggests it is the norm for Clarence Fulton students to anticipate pursuing a post-secondary education of some form after graduation (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding likelihood of pursuing a post-secondary education

Response	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
Yes	8	7	15
Most Likely	2	0	2
Not Likely	1	1	2
No	0	0	0
Total Responses	11	8	19

Source: Author Data 2007

Indeed, seventeen of the nineteen students surveyed think they will or most likely will pursue a post-secondary education. As Table 4.3 shows, there does not seem to be any relationship between gender and the expectation of pursuing a post-secondary education. Based on Ministry of Education statistics, it is unlikely that all Clarence Fulton students will achieve their post-secondary education goals. Forty-eight percent of 2002 Vernon School District graduates and 56 percent of 2003 Vernon School District graduates had not made a transition to a BC public post-secondary institution within three years of graduation (Ministry of Education 2006c). These statistics may be overestimates as they do not account for private institutions and institutions out of province.

4.4.1 Post-Secondary Education Entrance Expectations

While an overwhelming majority of Clarence Fulton students expect to pursue a post-secondary education, for some it is not in their short-term plans. Of the seventeen respondents that stated 'yes' or 'most likely' in regards to the likelihood of continuing their education after high school, seven expect that they will attend a post-secondary institution within one year of graduating high school (Figure 4.3). By BC Ministry of Education standards, these students are considered to be making an immediate transition to post-secondary education. Of the remaining ten students, six expect to make a delayed

transition (one year or more after high school graduation) to a post secondary institution,

while four are not sure.

Figure 4.3: Distribution of Clarence Fulton post-secondary pursuent responses to question regarding timing of post-secondary entrance, using aggregated categories

■ Students expecting an Immediate Transition to PSE

▪ Students expecting a Delayed Transition to PSE

▪ Students Not Sure of PSE Transition Time
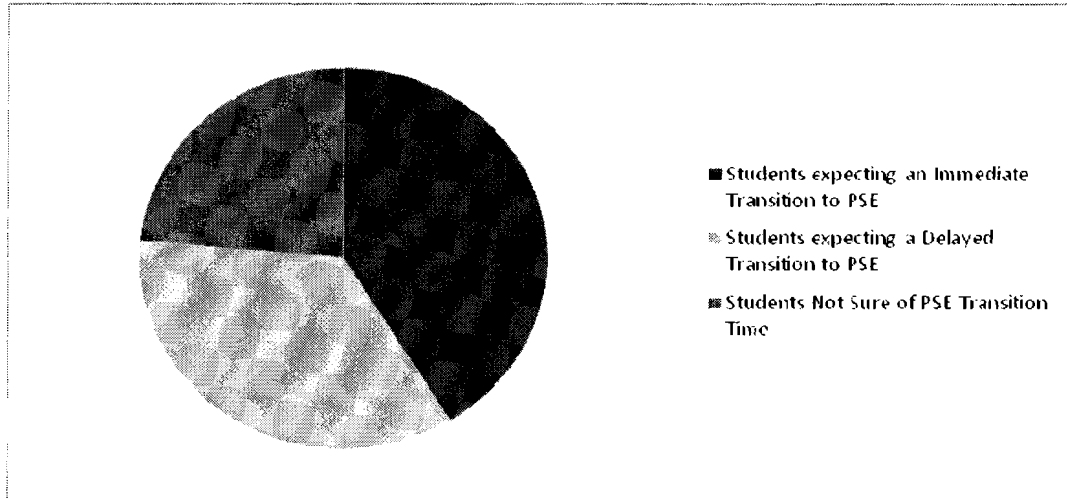
Source: Author Data 2007

Of the seven students that expect an immediate entrance to post-secondary education,

only three expect to enter for fall semester after they graduate, while the remaining four

expect to enter for spring semester.

Although I do not explore the timing of students' post-secondary education

expectations in detail, key-informant interview data provides some insight into students'

attitudes. Some students have specific expectations regarding the timing of their entrance

to post-secondary education, while others are more ambiguous and take a more relaxed,

exploratory approach, hoping to see what is out in the real world, after which they will

make decisions about their future accordingly.

Anna and John both display an exploratory attitude towards their post-secondary education entrance. Anna, who is intent on pursuing a post-secondary education, used to feel that she had to enter post-secondary education right away. However, as she is nearing graduation and has explored the different opportunities available, she has decided that there is no rush to enter school immediately.

> *Anna:* They're [parents] just like 'you have to go to university, you have to go to university'. So, I was like okay 'I have to'. But now I'm more like, 'no, I don't'. That's why like I'm waiting now. Before I was like 'no, I have to go right away', but not now I feel like it can wait.

John is not as certain if he will pursue a post-secondary education. As he explains, he may consider it in the future, but at this point he just wants to graduate high school and see how the next year goes.

> *SO:* Why do you most likely not want to pursue a post-secondary education?

> *John:* It depends on how things go in the next year. Right now I just want to get going on my path and see how things go...it's just too time consuming right now, but I might consider going back later.

On the other hand, Andrew is quite certain he wants to enter post-secondary education immediately after high school. At the time of the interview, Andrew was researching scholarship options and had applied for early entrance to a post-secondary institution.

Anna, John, and Andrew display the differing attitudes students have towards their post-secondary entrance. Although survey data are not nearly comprehensive, the fact that only three of the seventeen Clarence Fulton students expect to enter post-secondary education the fall semester immediately after high school graduation implies

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that the exploratory approach to post-secondary education, like that held by Anna and

John, is prevalent among students.

4.4.2 Student Reasons for Pursuing a Post-Secondary Education

According to Krahn and Lowe (1991), approximately two-thirds of Canadian high

school graduates plan to continue their education for job or career-related reasons.

Survey and key-informant interview data support this, as results indicate that Clarence

Fulton students who plan to pursue a post-secondary education primarily want to do so

for career-oriented reasons. Students were asked to rank the following reasons for

pursuing a post-secondary education on a scale from one to five: to reach specific career

goals, to gain the credentials to get a good job, my family expected me to go, and because

I do not want to work. On average, career goals had the highest rankings (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Distribution of Clarence Fulton post-secondary pursuent ranked responses to question regarding reasons for pursuing a post-secondary education

Response	Frequency					
	5	4	3	2	1	Average
To reach specific career goals	6	2	4	2	1	3.7
Credentials for good job	4	6	0	3	2	3.5
Family expected me to go	1	4	5	4	1	3
Don't want to work	2	2	0	2	9	2.1

Source: Author Data 2007

Although career-oriented reasons were the most popular response, family expectations

also had a fairly high average rank of three.

Students also had the opportunity to cite other factors that were important to them

in their decision to pursue a post-secondary education. Their responses can generally be

grouped in three categories: Financial (in terms of gaining a high paying job),

exploratory, and more specific responses. First, financial payoff was the most widely

cited reason for pursuing a post-secondary education. These included responses such as:

"Make big money"; "Want to be rich"; "Things are getting more expensive"; and "Make

good money". Such statements indicate that students clearly link post-secondary

education attainment with the ability to get a high paying job. Second, others expressed

more exploratory reasons such as 'To see what jobs are out there', and 'I want to learn

more about myself'. Lastly, others had more specific reasons such as: "Football",

"Travel", and "I have a scholarship I may as well use".

The attitudes held by key-informant students towards post-secondary education

further indicate that for many Clarence Fulton students, the link between a post-secondary

education and achieving career goals is strong. Anna, Jennifer, and Andrew are students

that want to pursue an education for career-oriented reasons. The following are their

responses when asked why they want to pursue a post secondary education.

> *Anna:* Well, for one thing I want to learn a bit more about a few subjects, and also, I just want to be able to get a good job.

> *Jennifer:* It's needed to get a good job and make good money, to get an interesting, high paying job.

> *Andrew:* Well, I just feel that right now, like, to get high up, if you really want to get, like, a good high paying job and be able to make it in the world, you gotta have a high education because that's what I guess like business owners and stuff are looking for in their employees.

While this career-oriented view of the importance of post-secondary education

seems to be the norm among students, Dave feels that for his career goals, a post-

secondary education is not crucial.

> *SO:* What would you say is the major reason you want to pursue a post-secondary education?

Dave: For me, I would say personally it's mostly for gain I guess. For knowledge, to gain knowledge, not really anything else. Because I don't really see no point to having a post-secondary education besides, you know, having a better knowledge of things

SO: Do you think it will help in your career goals?

Dave: Depends really on what I choose to do. Like for what I see myself doing, I don't really see myself needing something to that extent of having to pay lots of money to go to school. So, you know, I don't see myself being a lawyer anytime soon.

Thus, unlike the majority of case study students, Dave does not anticipate a post-secondary education will be necessary to reach his career goals. However, despite this anticipation, he still plans to pursue a post-secondary education.

A majority of Clarence Fulton students who want to pursue a post-secondary education appear to share Anna, Jennifer, and Andrew's sentiment that an education is necessary to reach career goals. For instance, fourteen of nineteen students think that a post-secondary education is definitely or most likely necessary to reach their career goals (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5: Distribution of Clarence Fulton post-secondary pursuent responses to question regarding necessity of post-secondary education to reach career goals

Response	Frequency
Definitely	11
Most Likely	2
Probably Not	1
No	1
Other - Definitely/Most Likely	1
Total Responses	16

Source: Author Data 2007

4.4.2.1 Recent Changes to Student Attitudes to Post-Secondary Education

While survey data indeed suggests that Clarence Fulton students value a post-secondary education for career-oriented reasons, it is difficult to determine if this attitude has shifted in recent years. Students today face a much stronger labour market than they did in the 1990s and early 2000s, and the opportunities for those just entering the labour market are great. Has the value placed on a post-secondary education decreased given the opportunity in the local community? No Ministry of Education data exists which questions Grade 12 students about their attitudes towards post-secondary education, and the reasons for these attitudes. The primary data collected for this thesis is not longitudinal. Clarence Fulton staff members, however, believe that the strong labour market may indeed be pulling students away from post-secondary education.

> *Grade 12 Science Teacher:* The labour market is hot right now...and the economy is really doing well. It's 'I'll go to work, why do I need to bother?'. And the sad thing that's true is that in the later eighties the same people suffered for it because they got laid off from the mills, from the oil fields...The bad thing is that the economy is doing well, kids are not realizing that they need that framing. Because they had a hard time meeting their quota for students last year, and the reason is kids are going well 'I don't need anymore school, I go make money just going working on the rigs'...and we have a shortage of labour right now...so, who knows?

As he suggests, the teacher feels that lower post-secondary enrolment may be linked to the strong labour market, as students are more inclined to enter the labour market given the availability of decent jobs. Similarly, another staff member indicates that students may pull out of post-secondary education because of job opportunity for high school students.

> *Career Coordinator:* So skilled labour, oftentimes because [firms] can't get the skilled labour, they will look at a younger person and take them on. More people will take on young high school students than they would in the past because they just need bodies. So it's almost a double benefit for them [students] because not

only are there more jobs, but they can go up the ladder a little bit faster, which also pulls them out of post-secondary, that way.

4.4.3 Socioeconomic Status and Post-Secondary Education Expectations

Literature widely acknowledges that socioeconomic status, including family income and parental education levels, is strongly linked to youth's post-secondary education attainment (Saunders 2007). Vernon is home to neighbourhoods of varying socioeconomic status. According to Clarence Fulton Staff, the school primarily draws from low to medium socioeconomic neighbourhoods, as well as a few higher socioeconomic neighbourhoods, particularly the Kalamalka area.

> *Senior Counsellor:* Our population is a big mixture of students from a variety of socioeconomic groups. More than probably 50 percent of our students, their parents did not graduate from school. And we have a few people that are professionals and live out on the lake, but we also draw from trailer courts and the lower rental areas of the town. So there's huge differences. We do not have the same population of students that [Kalamalka Secondary] does, for sure.

> *Grade 12 English Teacher:* If there is such a thing as an inner city in Vernon, then probably Fulton and Seaton, Fulton more so, the demographic that we pull from at Fulton is quite interesting. We pull from both the poorest and one of the richest areas of Vernon. Seaton High School is, their demographic probably tends to be mostly middle class, with some people that would be considered lower class. And then Vernon Secondary probably some of the same but mostly middle class. And then you have [Kalamalka Secondary], which is probably middle to upper class. So very different demographics.

Indeed, Clarence Fulton staff maintain that the school has a diverse socioeconomic demographic when compared to Kalamalka Secondary, which is in a very wealthy neighbourhood. This socioeconomic difference results in higher student post-secondary education expectations at Kalamalka Secondary compared to Clarence Fulton. For instance, the Clarence Fulton career coordinator says that opposed to Kalamalka Secondary students, the lower socioeconomic status of many students at Fulton means

that often they are not as academically-oriented, and therefore not as many students

pursue a post-secondary education in comparison.

> *SO:* Do think there are any major differences between schools in the way that, or
> the numbers of students pursuing post-secondary education?

> *Career Coordinator:* Yes. Kalamalka Secondary is much more academically
> oriented. But it's a higher socioeconomic feeder area. Coldstream has the highest
> number of millionaires in Canada. They all feed into that Kalamalka Secondary.
> Very high expectations for academics. And it always comes up high in Fraser
> Institute ratings, that kind of thing. Our school is in some ways, almost like an
> inner city school, very low socioeconomics, 13 percent First Nation students, lots
> of single parents, lots of high risk kids. So that makes a difference, because
> you're dealing with a bigger load of fallen, challenged and at-risk students, so
> that makes a difference as to how much they can pursue.

Statistics from the Ministry of Education support the Career Coordinator's

conclusions. For instance, 35 percent of 2004 Clarence Fulton graduates entered a BC

public post-secondary institution in the first year after graduation compared to 47 percent

of Kalamalka Secondary graduates (Ministry of Education 2006c). On average, 33

percent of Grade 12 graduates in the Vernon School District entered a post-secondary

institution in the first year after graduation (Ministry of Education 2006c). Thus, despite

having a lower percentage of students entering post-secondary education immediately as

opposed to Kalamalka Secondary, Clarence Fulton is still above the district average.

4.4.4 Post-Secondary Education Locational Expectations

According to Andres and Looker (2001), the availability or unavailability of post-

secondary education institutions in the local community facilitates or constrains youth's

expectations and eventual decisions about after high school options. For youth in more

rural communities with fewer post-secondary institutions, 'moving up' often means

'moving out'. Vernon is neither a small rural community nor a large urban core. It is a

mid-sized community that has seen rapid growth in recent years, especially in terms of

post-secondary opportunities. Within Vernon, students have access to the Okanagan

College (OC), as well as a private institution, the Okanagan Valley College of Massage

Therapy, both of which are accessible by public transit. In nearby Kelowna,

approximately 46 km away, many students from Vernon attend the University of British

Columbia's Okanagan (UBCO) campus, which is not accessible by public transit. And

further in Kamloops, approximately 117 km from Vernon, is the Thompson Rivers

University (TRU), which is again not accessible by public transit.

When asked about the level of opportunity in the locality for students, Clarence

Fulton staff believe that students generally have good access to a variety of institutions.

> *Senior Counsellor:* There's excellent opportunities for the kids, right across from
> trades to degrees. I would say that there's very very innovative programs that are
> being set up for the local kids...For instance, at what TRU offers; they offer
> wonderful programs that will allow kids to bridge from the trades into diploma
> programs into university programs. And even here in our own community kids
> can get a very good foundation as a start to university...

> *Grade 12 Science Teacher:* At UBCO they're always putting in more and more
> programs. We just went on a tour of it, looking at UBCO's science department
> and talking about all the things that are going to be happening there. It's going to
> be expanding so much that I wish I could go back in time. I had to go all the way
> to Vancouver...

Another Clarence Fulton staff member discusses that while the variety of opportunities

has increased in the area, the opportunities still may not be as great as they are in a larger

urban centre.

> *SO:* Do you think the local area, in terms of reasonable commuting distance,
> offers high school students enough post-secondary education opportunities?

> *Grade 12 English Teacher:* If we're talking right now today, with the addition of
> UBCO, I think it's offering a greater variety. But I think most of the programs
> are still fairly general programs. It's not the size yet where it would offer a lot of
> specialized programs. I believe Okanagan College works very very hard to

provide employment training in different areas. Like there are trades training. So they do work to try to offer young people advantages. Is it enough? No, I don't think it is. I think only in a fairly big city do you get all the opportunities you need.

When asked about the level of post-secondary opportunity in the local community, a majority of Clarence Fulton students, like their teachers, feel there are sufficient opportunities. Admittedly, 'local community' was not defined in the survey, and so student perceptions of what is local and what is not may differ, but it is unlikely to extend beyond the Okanagan. Of the nineteen students surveyed, thirteen feel that the community offers sufficient post-secondary opportunities, while six do not. Of those that do not, a number of students indicate that while Vernon itself may not provide sufficient opportunity, the level of opportunity increases when extended to Kelowna (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Clarence Fulton student comments regarding lack of sufficient post-secondary opportunities

Comments
• Not for certain things
• OC is just a college
• OC only offers courses and not many specific degree programs
• Vernon is very lacking of realistic opportunities; the closest I would attend a post-secondary institution would be Kelowna
• For one thing, I have to travel at least to Kelowna to take the courses I desire, and there are much better programs on the Lower Mainland

Source: Author Data 2007

A number of students feel that Vernon itself does not have enough post-secondary opportunity, only having a local college (Okanagan College). Such comments suggest that students see that opportunities improve in the surrounding area, especially in Kelowna. However, depending on the circumstances of the students, Kelowna may or

may not be accessible. For instance, because there is no public transit between Vernon

and Kelowna, students planning to commute to Kelowna must have access to a vehicle.

Survey results indicate that many Clarence Fulton students hope to stay in the

Okanagan region to pursue a post-secondary education. Indeed, eight of the post-

secondary pursuers plan to stay within Okanagan (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Distribution of Clarence Fulton post-secondary pursuent responses to question regarding expectant location of post-secondary education, using aggregated categories

Response	Frequency
Within Okanagan	8
Within British Columbia	3
Within Canada	1
Outside Canada	1
Other:	
Not Sure	3
Incomplete	1
Total Responses	17

Source: Author Data 2007

From the perspective of Clarence Fulton staff, students generally do not have the

mentality that 'moving up' means 'moving out' in terms of post-secondary education.

According to them, students can generally find a good education locally, but many choose

not to. As one Clarence Fulton staff member explains, students may have had that

mentality in the past, but they now generally leave Vernon because they want to, not

because they have to.

> *SO:* Do you think that Grade 12 students have the attitude or idea that they would need to leave the local area to get a post-secondary education?

> *Grade 12 English Teacher:* I don't think that's necessarily true anymore. I think a lot of them see UBCO as a way to stay home and make it a little less expensive. Although there are lots of Grade 12s that want to leave the local area and see schooling as a way to get away from home, which I think is slightly different.

Staying local is often an attractive option for students for financial reasons. Key-informant student Andrew holds this view. He hopes to attend UBCO to cut down on costs.

> *SO:* So you expressed interest in going to UBCO?
>
> *Andrew:* Yeah...I just thought because it's relatively close to here, and that way I could drive back and forth and cut down on costs.
>
> *SO:* Yeah, you wouldn't have to leave home. But are you open to leaving the area as well?
>
> *Andrew:* Oh yeah, it's just the money factor right? You gotta pay for your schooling and then the accommodations of staying there and paying all that stuff. It adds up right?

Other students like the idea of leaving Vernon to attend post-secondary education. According to Clarence Fulton's career coordinator, students may see leaving the local community as somewhat glamorous.

> *Career Coordinator:* ...I think it's the glamour of leaving wherever you're from. So it's not that they can't do it, they just choose not to do it here sometimes. They want to go to the University of Victoria, they want to go to Calgary, they want to go to Alberta, or they want to go to the Lower Mainland, just somewhere else, to live somewhere else.

Key-informant student Anna wants to leave Vernon for schooling. Anna hopes to go to school in a bigger city. Specifically she likes the idea of attending the University of Victoria, since according to her they have a good social work program.

> *SO:* Would you find it hard to leave the Okanagan?
>
> *Anna:* No, I like to move. I like it here but I'm finding that I like bigger cities better. It's nice to vacation here but it gets small after a while.
>
> *SO:* Right, so if you did go to [University of Victoria], you would be doing it because you want to, and also because it has a good program? You wouldn't prefer to stay in the Okanagan?

Anna: Right, well like I like exploring new places and I like moving to different places and like, starting over. So that would just be like a side thing. I've just like done it [moved] so much that it's just like I can't have roots so I might as well just move tonnes.

4.5 Vocationalism at Clarence Fulton

'Vocationalism' is the way that students conceptualize the link between high school and the labour market. In Gaskell's (1985) terms, students adhere either to a 'distant logic' or an 'immediate logic' (See Chapter Two).

Based on survey results, a distant logic is more widespread among Clarence Fulton students than an immediate logic. The high number of students that plan or plan most likely to further their education implies a more distant logic. Indeed, seventeen of the nineteen students surveyed plan to do so. This result does not mean that all of these students will achieve this goal, but at this point, the expectation is that they will. Surprisingly, only one Clarence Fulton student exhibits what Gaskell defines as an immediate logic, in which students are confident to enter the labour market with only the skills they acquired in high school. The prevalence of a more distant logic is consistent with Behrisch *et al.*'s (2002/03) Powell River study, which suggests that as British Columbia's economy has shifted away from Fordism, vocationalism has shifted away from an immediate logic.

Gaskell's (1985) notion of vocationalism was developed during the recession in BC, when the economy was beginning its shift away from Fordism. During the Fordist era, youth could more easily find a decent job right out of high school, and so an immediate logic was more common (Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03). With the shifts toward the flexible labour market, including the demand for highly skilled workers and the increased polarization in the workforce, it is harder for students to attain a stable, well-paid job

without further credentials. Given the shift towards a more distant logic, Gaskell's (1985)

distinction between distant and immediate logics needs modification. While there may be

students adhering to an immediate logic, the results from this case study indicate that

students more often trend towards a distant logic, if to varying degrees. There is now a

wide diversity of students who fit within the distant logic group.

In their interviews, Clarence Fulton staff reveal the differentiation among students

in terms of their attitude towards high school. As Clarence Fulton's career coordinator

says, while about half of students actively anticipate their transition while in high school

and make choices towards a distant future goal, the other half do not have the same level

of motivation.

> *SO:* From what you know, are students actively anticipating their entrance to the labour market in Grade 12, like through volunteering or course selection? Are they taking steps now?

> *Career Coordinator:* From what I saw, because in their portfolios they had to do that kind of thing and show it to us. I say about half and half is my guess. About half of them are actively anticipating, they're applying for scholarships, applying for post-secondary schools, they're, you know, realizing that their courses are important now. And there is the other half that is kind of sitting. Yeah, that's my lead on it...

While a majority of students may have more distant goals, as indicated by survey results,

not all students are planning to take steps towards these goals while in high school.

Similarly, a Clarence Fulton teacher suggests that while some students are extremely

motivated and take high school very seriously, others, while still having distant career

goals, have not actively begun to pursue these goals while in high school.

> *Grade 12 English Teacher:* ...those that are going on to university, especially those that have very specific goals in mind, are looking to get scholarships... Those students are very focused and are doing things like volunteering, have part-time jobs saving up money for what they need, making sure that they have the proper course requirements... The other group is more focused on the fact that

they're finishing high school than on the fact that they're going elsewhere... We have exit interview for Grade 12s. They either have to do a portfolio presentation or an exit interview... when I did the exit interviews I spoke with five students, and most of them had career ideas, but when I asked them about classes, courses, where they were going, the ones I spoke to were kind of 'well I think something is offered here'. 'Do you know how much it costs?' 'No' 'Do you know if there's a waiting list?' 'No'. So, in some cases they have a direction but they haven't really done any of the background research that goes with it.

As the above quote suggest, while both groups of students the English teacher describes have career goals, and often plan on pursuing post-secondary education, not all students are willing to act on these goals while in high school. For some students, acting on these goals is not in their short-term plans. For instance, based on survey results, sixteen of the nineteen Clarence Fulton students think that a post-secondary education is definitely or most likely necessary to reach their employment goals. Of these sixteen students, eight plan on pursuing this education within the first year after graduation. These students can generally be considered to be actively moving towards their more distant goals in the short-term. The other eight students, while agreeing that a post-secondary education is necessary to reach their career goals, do not plan on beginning their post-secondary education within a year after graduation. However, are these eight students just 'sitting'? Four of the eight students plan to upgrade their high school courses while they work. While each student's motivation for doing so is unknown, this is more likely than not to achieve post-secondary requirements. For instance, key-informant student Jennifer planned to take Biology 12, Physics 12, and French 12 for post-secondary requirements. In this case, Jennifer, and students like her, can be considered to be actively taking steps towards distant career goals. The remaining four students plan to work and/or travel. In anticipation of pursuing a post-secondary education, one student plans to work for a year after high school to save money for

schooling. The remaining three students, however, while having more post-secondary

and career goals, do not plan on actively moving towards their more distant career goals.

These students may want to take a break from school, to experiment with employment, to

make some money, or to travel. This is not to say that these students are lazy or somehow

lack motivation. Indeed, they may want to get out into the world and figure things out for

themselves before committing to a specific path. This may be crucial for some students

given the high cost of pursuing a post-secondary education.

Case study results suggest that few students in this context adhere to an immediate

logic, rather, they possess a distant logic with varying degrees of fuzziness. Based on the

literature (Behrisch *et al.* 2002/03; Ashton 1988), the pervasiveness of a more distant

logic can be linked to the popularity and, often, necessity of post-secondary education to

obtain a stable, high paying job in a polarized service-dominated labour market in which

highly skilled workers are in demand. Students with a distant logic hold career goals that

are not attainable right out of high school, and high school is treated as a more distant

post-secondary education requirement. The pervasiveness of a more distant logic calls

for a modification in Gaskell's (1985) vocational logics given the great diversity apparent

among students holding this logic. Based on Clarence Fulton student survey and key-

informant data, students holding a more distant logic can broadly be categorized into two

groups: distant pursuers and distant delayers. Distant pursuers are those students who

plan to actively pursue their distant post-secondary or career goals in the year after high

school, either through beginning post-secondary education, volunteering, pursuing on-

the-job training, or upgrading high school courses. Like distant pursuers, distant delayers

share distant career goals, but they do not plan to pursue these goals within the year

following high school. Among distant delayers, however, case study results suggest that there is again a diversity of students. Some plan to work the year after high school as a break from schooling and to save money for their return to post-secondary. Such students have somewhat clear plans for the years following high school. Others have less clear plans, and hope to get out in the world of work and try to figure things out before committing to a specific path.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter shows that Clarence Fulton students' short-term expectations are complex. These findings support the body of literature that characterises Post-Fordist transitional expectations as non-linear and prolonged. Students hold a diverse range of expectations for their first year after graduation, including combinations of activities such as working, post-secondary education, travelling, and upgrading high school courses. Also, representing a characteristically Post-Fordist perspective, Clarence Fulton students strongly believe in the value of a post-secondary education to labour market success. Like their counterparts across BC, a majority of Clarence Fulton students plan to pursue a post-secondary education (Ministry of Education 2006a). This chapter also suggests that while students in small rural communities may hold a 'moving up means moving out' mentality, Clarence Fulton students generally believe the local area offers adequate post-secondary opportunities. However, many students still desire to leave Vernon to attend a post-secondary institution.

This chapter also support the Post-Fordist vocational trend towards Gaskell's (1985) distant logic. Indeed, with their high expectations in terms of post-secondary education, a more distant logic is widespread among Clarence Fulton students. However,

among those adhering to a more distant logic there is great diversity, most notably in the ways in which they are moving towards their more distant goals in the short-term. Therefore, this chapter calls for a modification to Gaskell's (1985) vocationalism to expand upon the definition of the now widespread distant logic, and to acknowledge the differentiation among students who adhere to this logic.

5: CLARENCE FULTON STUDENT CAREER EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE LOCAL LABOUR MARKET

5.1 Introduction

Because high school students' transitional expectations are formulated in place, the perspective students hold towards the local labour market is an important factor in the formulation of these expectations, especially in regards to career goals. In examining the career expectations of high school students in Vernon, it is critical first to understand students' perspectives and attitudes towards the local labour market. This chapter has two main goals. The first is to examine Clarence Fulton students' perspectives on the local labour market. These include the skills students think employers are demanding, and their perceptions of the quality and quantity of jobs available in Vernon. The second goal of this chapter is to identify the career expectations of Clarence Fulton students, and to explore their nature and formulation.

5.2 Clarence Fulton Student Perceptions of the Local Labour Market

The importance of places such as the home and school to the transitional expectations of youth is well documented. However, the role of the local labour market has not been given the same amount of attention. According to Bowlby *et al.* (1998) youth's perspectives of and attitudes towards the local labour market also strongly influence their transitional expectations. These perspectives and attitudes are largely formulated through messages about local labour market, which are transmitted by friends,

family, teachers, and the media (Lowe and Krahn 2000). Thus, when examining the formulation of high school students' transitional expectations, it is crucial to understand the perspective and attitudes youth hold concerning the local labour market.

5.2.1 Skills in Demand from Employers

As discussed in Chapter Four, Clarence Fulton students stress the importance of an education to getting a good job in today's labour market. When asked what skills employers today are looking for in their employees, education-related comments were common and survey responses include: "Grade 12 education"; "computer skills"; "smart and educated"; "a diploma"; "intelligent"; "post-secondary for higher up jobs".

Students also know that the demand for educated employees is stronger now that it may have been when their parents were at school. For instance, when asked how skills employers are looking for today differ from the skills employers were looking for when their parents were growing up, students' responses include: "Lots has changed since then and more people are able to go and afford college and university so employers are looking for that higher education"; "It is much harder now to achieve a career if you do not have good grades, back then it was not really this hardcore"; "Post-secondary will become more necessary as time passes"; "They could leave in Grade 10 and still get a decent job". Such statements suggest that Clarence Fulton students understand the labour market has changed. In this case, they understand that when their parents grew up (during Fordism), an education was not as necessary to get a good job as it is today. A case in point is Jennifer's statement in interview regarding her father's occupation.

> *Jennifer:* My dad works for Telus, and my brother wanted to follow in his footsteps. My dad didn't have post-secondary education and got a good job, but

now my brother is having alot of trouble following in his footsteps. Now you need an education for a job that you didn't before.

Jennifer understands that the labour market has changed since her father entered, in this case regarding the higher demand for educational qualifications.

Clarence Fulton students highlight how much more technologically-driven today's labour market is compared to the labour market their parents faced when they were young. When asked how the skills employers are looking for today are different from the past, responses include: "Employers are looking for educated people because the technology is out there"; "This is a new generation with something that made a difference between that generation and this generation and it's called technology"; "Less physical labour, more office jobs"; "It's all about computers now". Such statements suggest that students strongly believe in the importance of being able to handle technology to success in today's labour market.

5.2.2 Local Career Opportunity

A majority of Clarence Fulton students believe there are sufficient employment opportunities locally. However, female students are more likely than male students to believe the locality does not provide enough employment opportunities (Table 5.1)

Table 5.1: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding sufficiency of local employment opportunities

Responses	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
Yes	9	4	13
No	2	4	6
Total Responses	11	8	19

Source: Author Data 2007

Similar to the data above, only four Clarence Fulton students think the local community constitutes a barrier that may prevent them from attaining their long-term career goals, while the remaining fifteen do not. Here it is important to note that what counts as 'local' will vary among students. For instance, for those with access to a car, the outlying areas of Vernon and even Kelowna may be easily accessible.

Key-informant students provide a much more revealing account of students' perceptions of local career opportunities in Vernon. Overall, key-informant students see job opportunities in Vernon as good, and improving as the city grows. For instance, Anna and Jennifer are of the opinion that Vernon has experienced significant economic growth in recent years, which has improved job opportunities.

> *Anna:* Vernon seems to be growing from what like I've seen and what I used to know. Right now all I hear of is what my parents talked about, and that's construction opportunities. But I'm sure that there's going to be like more and more different types of employment needed as well because it's getting bigger so they need people to do stuff... I see it slowly growing and stuff like that, and new buildings are popping up...and new franchises and chains and stuff like that, like the Wal-Mart came here.

> *Jennifer:* ...In Vernon there are lots of places to work...there is more need because the city is getting bigger, and there is so much building going on. So lots of people and staff are needed.

Both Anna and Jennifer link the building boom in Vernon to the demand for labour. Commenting on this demand, Andrew and Dave suggest there is no shortage of job opportunities in Vernon.

> *Andrew:* There's been a pretty big rise in like the available opportunities for jobs around here in the past year. Because before in the paper the help wanted would only be like a page or two, and now it's four to five.

> *Dave:* There's definitely a lot of jobs out there. You just have to look right? Like, if you go in our newspaper there is a whole page and a half of 'job application here blah blah blah', it's like, 'alright'. Yeah, we're not short of jobs, that's for sure.

While the notion that job opportunities are plentiful in Vernon is widespread among key-informant students, students' opinions of the quality of these opportunities differ. According to John, the quality of job opportunities in Vernon is poor. Describing the available job opportunities as 'teenager jobs', he hints at the low-skilled nature of these jobs.

John: Well, alot of jobs around here are fast food jobs, grocery store jobs, just mediocre jobs. Alot of them are teenager jobs, and are minimum wage.

Similar to John, other key-informant students recognize the demand for minimum wage, low-skilled workers. However, unlike John, they also see a need for higher skilled workers in certain sectors in Vernon. For instance, Dave indicates that low paying jobs are easier to come by in Vernon, but there are opportunities for higher skilled work, particularly in the trades.

Dave: That's the thing that's hard to find around in Vernon is a good paying job. Because everything around here is usually, you know, the eight dollars an hour minimum, and you don't get more than maybe nine dollars an hour. But there's some pretty good jobs out there, it depends on what you do, because, like, it changes from every week to week, right. So there's the glass plant you can work at. They offer, you know, really good money out there. Do basically an apprenticeship for a bit and then you make about $23 an hour, which is really good. Lots of people are looking for the whole trades area.

Dave's opinion of the high demand for trade workers in Vernon leads him to believe that if he was to stay in Vernon and look for a job immediately after graduation, he could obtain a decent job. Like Dave, Andrew thinks that trade workers are in demand in Vernon, but does not see many other high-skilled opportunities, particularly for highly educated workers.

SO: Do you think there are good jobs available for highly educated people?

Andrew: Um, around in like Vernon, I don't think as much. But if you get into a bigger town, like where you start getting bigger businesses and stuff and where you need like those high up CEOs and stuff I think so. Because around here there's not many big businesses, just a lot of small, like, self-employed ones.

Here Andrew suggests that aside from self-employment, there is not much opportunity for highly skilled workers, and he thinks this is because there are not many larger businesses in Vernon.

John, Dave and Andrew's differing views of the quality of jobs in demand in Vernon reveal the very different ways youth understand their local labour market. Aside from John's more negative opinion of the job opportunities available locally in Vernon, the consensus among key-informants is that while there are plenty of low-skilled, low-pay workers in demand, there is also a demand for higher skilled workers, particularly in the trades, self-employment, as well as in the many businesses that are moving to Vernon. However, key-informants do recognize a division in the labour market, with fewer highly skilled surrounded by plenty of lower skilled jobs.

5.3 Career Expectations of Clarence Fulton Students

In order to examine the types of jobs Clarence Fulton students expect or hope to obtain, students were asked questions regarding their long-term career goals. Based on survey results, Clarence Fulton students' long-term career goals vary greatly in terms of their stage of formation. Students' goals can broadly be grouped into one of three categories in regards to their formulation: specific, broad or vague. Specifically formulated goals indicate a particular field of work, such as carpentry or nursing. Broadly formulated goals are those that may indicate general area/s of work, but do not have the same level of specificity. For instance, such goals may be 'a career in business'

or 'a career in politics'. Vaguely formulated goals do not indicate any particular field or

area of interest, but rather ill-defined career paths, such as 'a good job' or 'a high-paying

job'. As Figure 5.1 displays, a majority of Clarence Fulton students have specifically

formulated career goals, followed by broadly formulated goals and vaguely formulated

goals.

Figure 5.1: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding long-term career goals, using aggregated categories
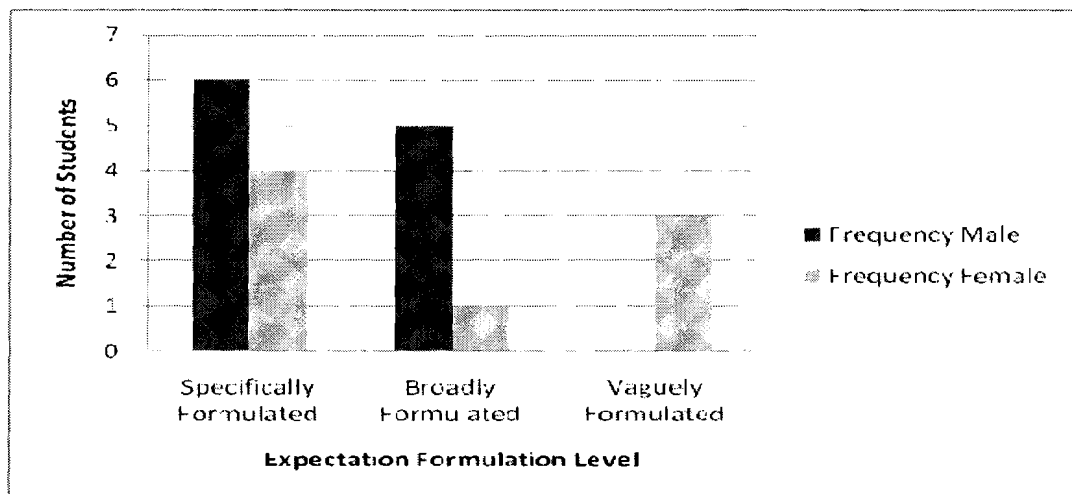
Source: Author Data 2007

Overall, students' career expectations are quite high. The specifically formulated

career goals held by students vary from careers in trade skills to health care, and

responses include: 'Own construction company'; 'Carpentry/build my own furniture';

'Journalism/work for a newspaper'; 'Real estate'; 'Massage therapist'; 'Care aid or

nurse'; 'Addictions counselling'; 'Alternative medicine'. Likewise, broadly formulated

career goals vary across sectors, and include: 'Business or computer science';

'Dentistry/engineer/architect/teacher/lawyer'; 'Football and Armed Forces';

'Entrepreneur and Politician'; 'International worker'; 'Hospitality'; 'Musician and/or

writer'. Of those students with vaguely formulated career goals, responses were based around either uncertainty and/or general employment qualities with no specific field or area of interest. Vaguely formulated response include: 'secure jobs/good career'; 'not sure yet/good well-paying job'; 'I am not sure right now'.

Data suggest slight gender differences in the nature of students' career goals. As indicated in Figure 5.1, female students are more likely than male students to have vague career goals. In fact, no male students have vague career goals. In terms of specific and broad career goals, there are minor differences between genders. Most notably, no female students expect or want a position in trades, a field which is traditionally male dominated. Conversely, careers in the health care industry are more desirable among female students.

Many of the career expectations of Clarence Fulton students will change in the coming years as they leave high school and begin their post-secondary education or enter the labour market. According to Levin (1985) approximately half of high school students will have done something other than intended within about two years. Do high school students believe that their expectations and goals are concrete, or do they acknowledge that their expectations and goals will likely change? Clarence Fulton students were asked about the likelihood of their career goals changing in the coming years. Of the nineteen students surveyed, a majority think it is unlikely that their career goals will change (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding likelihood of change in career goals in coming years

Responses	Frequency
Yes	6
No	10
Other – Maybe	3
Total Responses	19

Source: Author Data 2007

Based on survey results, student perspectives on the likelihood of a change in career goals may be related to the level of formation of the expectation itself. As Table 5.3 suggests, it is more likely that students with specific career goals think their career goals will likely not change in the coming years. Conversely, those with more vague career goals are more likely to think their career goals will likely change.

Table 5.3: Likelihood of change in career goals in coming years and level of formulation of career goals of Clarence Fulton students

Responses	Likely Change	Unlikely Change	Maybe Change	Total
Specific Formulation	1	6	3	10
Broad Formulation	2	4	0	6
Vague Formulation	3	0	0	3
Total	6	10	3	19

Source: Author Data 2007

This pattern may be explained simply by the fact that those students who have put more thought into their career goals are more invested in their particular career expectation, while those who put less thought into their career goals are not nearly as invested in a particular expectation of the future.

As the labour market has shifted away from Fordist to more flexible forms of organization, employees are more able to take charge of their careers and make career changes with relative ease, especially when self-employed or in contract work (Fenton

and Dermott 2006). At the same time, today's youth may be more inclined to see a future that includes career changes. According to an employment counsellor from Community Futures, when compared to generations before them, youth today embrace change when thinking about their careers.

> *SO:* Do you think that youth's career aspirations today are different from those of the past?

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* Yes, definitely since the baby boomer time. Youth today see themselves not just going into one job for their lifetime...they see a variety of paths. Now you can 'drive' your career more, choose where you want to go. Today's world is quick paced, and to youth growing up in this world, change is good.

As the youth career counsellor discusses, youth's expectations today, as opposed to those of their parents, often include a variety of paths, or changes. At the same time, labour market conditions in Vernon, especially with the extent of self-employment and labour shortage, favour such change.

Survey results indicate that a majority of Clarence Fulton students do not hold a 'job for life' attitude. Indeed, of the nineteen students that participated in the survey, only three expect they will stay in one occupation, changing changes relatively little. The other 16 expect more change in terms of their occupation and/or jobs. Included in this group of students are those who expect to change occupations at same point in their careers, change jobs relatively frequently, or anticipate being self-employed.

Both types of students are represented by key-informants. Anna, for example, clearly does not have a 'job for life' attitude. She expects to change occupations and explore different forms of employment throughout her working life. When asked to identify her long-term career goals, Anna responds, "To get my social work degree and

explore the many careers I can attain with it before moving to something new". As well as exploring different careers, Anna indicates during her interview that she would like to explore different forms of employment, such as working for both small and large companies, and even being self-employed. Anna's expectations clearly speak to the youth career counsellor's indication that for youth today, variety and change in one's career is oftentimes seen as positive.

In contrast to Anna, key-informant Jennifer has a 'job for life' attitude. She hopes to remain in a single occupation throughout her working life. She expects to become a care aid or nurse and work in a hospital, changing jobs relatively little. She likes the idea of working for a large institution, like a hospital, because she sees more opportunity for growth within a large firm.

Many Clarence Fulton students anticipate that at some point in their careers they may be self-employed. Of the nineteen students surveyed, eleven anticipate being self-employed in the future (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding the anticipation of self-employment

Responses	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
Self-Employed	9	2	11
Not Self-Employed	2	6	8
Total Responses	11	8	19

Source: Author Data 2007

As Table 5.4 indicates, more males than females anticipate being self-employed in the future. Unfortunately, there are no studies of expectations and self-employment with which to compare these findings. However, they reflect current self-employment trends

in Canada. While both men's and women's rates of self-employment rates have risen in the last 30 years, women are still less likely to be self-employed. In 2006, 19 percent of working men were self-employed compared to 11 percent of working women (Almey 2007).

An employment counsellor from Community Futures attributes the high number of youth at Clarence Fulton interested in self-employment to the popularity of small business in the area.

> *So:* My survey results from Fulton surprised me because so many students were interested in entrepreneurialism. Is this popular with youth here?
>
> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* Well, small business is big here, so youth see self-employment as something do-able. You know, maybe they've seen their parents do it.

According to the youth career counsellor, because small business is so widespread in Vernon, many youth grow up with self-employed parents, who in turn may influence the expectations of their children. Key-informant student Anna is exemplary. Anna's mother is self-employed, and Anna is interested in exploring self-employment at some point in the future.

> *SO:* In your survey you state that in the future you're interested in working for a small company, a large company, and being self-employed. Do you have a preference?
>
> *Anna:* If it's a small company but it's got like a good cause, of course I'm going to want to work with them. Or if I can do that by myself and I don't need anybody to help me that's great too.
>
> *Siobhan:* So you like the idea of being self-employed?
>
> *Anna:* Yeah, for a bit at some time maybe, see what it's like. My mom is and she seems to like it, you get to like make your own hours.

As the above quote indicates, her mother's positive experience with self-employment has contributed to Anna's interest in one day being self-employed.

5.3.1 Perceptions of Student Expectations

Data collected from interviews with Community Futures and Clarence Fulton staff members reveal the ways in which student expectations in Vernon have changed from past years, and interviewees point to the strong labour market as the reason. The biggest change to expectations discussed by both Community Futures and Clarence Fulton staff is students' optimism with regards to their labour market futures. In other words, student expectations are high and they expect to do well and be successful. As the career coordinator at Clarence Fulton explains, because students have so much labour market opportunity, they are confident about their labour market futures.

> *Career Coordinator:* I think they are a bit overly optimistic in that because the market is easy at the level they are usually entering, they figure they should get big money and people should give them a lot of responsibilities before they've earned it...they have the point of view that there's opportunities and opportunities... So, I wouldn't say they are pessimistic, I think they know they have opportunities, but they have an inflated view of their own level of accomplishment coming out of high school.

As the career coordinator suggests, because students are preparing to leave high school during a labour shortage, they expect to do well and find good opportunities. Likewise, when asked about the ways that students' expectations today are different from those of former years, a Clarence Fulton teacher also thinks that students now have higher expectations than those before.

> *Grade 12 Science Teacher:* They expect to do well I think now, they expect to get a good job at most...they don't think it will be as difficult to get a job.

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Staff members from Community Futures have also found that youth today are quite optimistic and have high expectations. One employment counsellor says youth that come into the career centre today expect much more in terms of pay than youth seven years ago when there were fewer opportunities.

> *Youth Employment Counsellor 2:* Seven years ago when I started here, they would be looking at the job posting board and you'd hear them say, 'there are no jobs'. Now, you don't hear that. You hear, 'only nine dollars an hour? I could get twelve dollars over here'. They're really confident, you know.

Clarence Fulton and Community Futures staff indicate the local labour market plays a significant role in the expectations of youth. In this case, interviewees suggest that high school students pick up messages about labour shortages in the community, and these messages translate into confidence and optimism among students regarding employment.

5.3.2 Student Perception of the Formulation of Career Expectations

Career expectations are patterned through the interplay of a number of factors, including ability, past experiences, and influences at home and school. Interviews with key-informant students reveal the complexities of the formulation of career expectations. Because the following discussion revolves around the perspectives of the students, structural influences are not discussed.

Dave's career expectations are broadly formulated, and he feels that his family has played a major role in their formulation, especially in regards to the decision to pursue a post-secondary education. According to him, his parents are the main reason he wants to pursue a further education. He plans to play football at a university for as long he can, after which he hopes to find another career that pays well. One career of interest is

joining the Canadian Armed Forces. His father thinks this is a good idea, but his mother does not, so it is something he plans to consider further. According to Dave, he does not know where the idea to join the Armed Forces came from.

> *Dave:* Basically it's a personal choice. You know, I don't know how I latched onto that kind of idea, but it just seems really like a good idea to me. It's just kind of inside of my head...I want to join the army, you know, prove myself.

Dave points to personal agency and interest as important factors in the formulation of his idea to join the Armed Forces.

Anna's career plans are specifically formulated, as she hopes to pursue a career in social work, specifically addictions counselling. Anna cites her family, as well as past experience, as playing a large role in the formulation of expectations. Not only has her family been supportive in her educational pursuits in general terms, but the idea of addictions counselling stemmed from past experiences in her family. She also thinks that her past volunteer work has helped develop her interests in the field of social work.

Jennifer also has specifically formulated career expectations, and she stresses the importance of family, school, and past experience in their formulation. Specifically, she hopes to become either a registered care aid or nurse. According to her, her father and younger brother have both inspired her to do well in school and pursue a further education. She had the idea to become a care aid or nurse while in Grade 8 when she completed a project on nursing. She also visited a hospital for a surgery and was attracted to the idea and thinks she would make a good nurse or care aid.

John also has specifically formulated career expectations, as he hopes to become a freelance recording musician and/or writer. Unlike other key-informant students, John does not think his family has been a major influence on the formulation of these

expectations. Rather, he points to personal interest and a particular teacher as his major influences. According to him, he has always been interested in music, and plays the guitar, drums, piano, and sings. When he was approximately thirteen, he became interested in writing lyrics, and in Grade 10, a teacher really inspired him in poetry and writing in general.

Key-informant interview data suggests that students' perspectives on the formulation of their career expectations are diverse, and many factors shape career expectations. While the family is the most commonly cited factor among key-informant students, the roles of teachers, school projects, personal interest, past experiences, and personal agency have also contributed to the formulation of key-informant students' expectations.

5.3.3   Career Location Expectations

According to Looker's (1993) study of Canadian high school students, students from rural communities are much more likely to plan to leave their local communities than those students from urban areas. Further, a majority of rural youth plan to leave their local communities for better job prospects elsewhere (Looker 1993). Again, many rural youth expect that in terms of career opportunities, 'moving up means moving out'. Because of Vernon's growth, especially in the last ten years, it cannot be considered a rural community, yet, it is not a major urban centre. This raises the question, do high school students in Vernon feel they need to leave the city due to lack of career opportunity?

To determine the locational expectations of Clarence Fulton students' career goals, students were asked if they plan to obtain a career within the local community

(Vernon), the Okanagan Region, or outside the Okanagan Region. Surprisingly, no

students expect to obtain a long-term career in Vernon (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Distribution of Clarence Fulton student responses to question regarding expectant career location
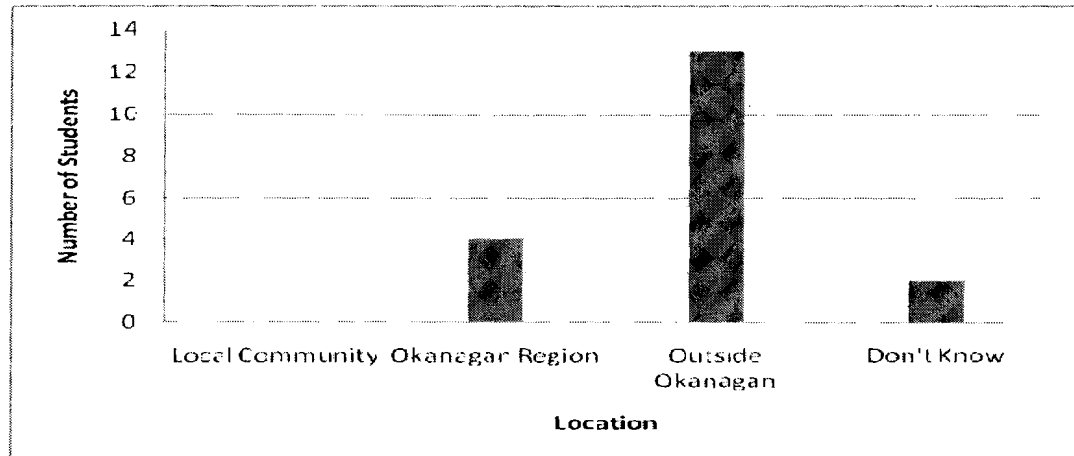
Source: Author Data 2007

A majority of students plan to leave the Okanagan Region altogether. This is not what

one would expect, given the Okanagan's strong labour market. Indeed, it is not the case

that students are entering a bleak labour market. However, at the same time, Vernon may

not offer the variety of employment opportunities available in larger urban centres.

As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, a majority of students (thirteen of

the nineteen students surveyed) think that local employment opportunities are sufficient.

Further, only four students think that their local community presents barriers to finding

the careers they want. Unlike rural youth in Looker's (1993) study, most Clarence Fulton

students do not expect to leave Vernon due to the *need* for better career prospects

elsewhere. However, Vernon may not offer students the variety of employment

opportunities they are seeking, especially in higher skilled employment.

According to Clarence Fulton staff, it is not uncommon for students to believe

they would need to leave Vernon for better prospects elsewhere. As Clarence Fulton's

senior counsellor discusses, many students may have the mindset that to get a high paying

job, they may need to leave Vernon.

> *SO:* Do you think students have the idea that to get a really good job they might have to leave Vernon?

> *Senior Counsellor:* I think they do, they would have that idea. And those that want to get a high paying job, they already have that as a mindset. They realize that they are not going to earn the dollars here that they are going to earn in Northern Alberta, or you know, different places.

Similarly, a Grade 12 teacher at Clarence Fulton thinks that students realize they may

need to leave Vernon for career opportunities, but not all will be willing to do so.

> *SO:* Overall, do you think students have the idea that they need to leave the community to find opportunities?

> *Grade 12 Science Teacher:* Yeah, I think they may realize that, but are they willing to act on it? That's the trouble coming from a smaller town, that ability to act. They may realize that, but a lot of them will be afraid to get out of town. Like I said, I graduated here and left for ten years, I went to the coast. Its good to come back to, but I think they need that support. I think the Kal [Kalamalka Secondary] kids, kids from that area would be more likely to move out and to realize they have to do it in order to expand horizons…these kids may realize it but they may not act on it.

Here the Grade 12 teacher suggests that socioeconomic status plays a role in the ability to

leave the community, with students in the high income area of Kalamalka more likely to

leave Vernon for other opportunities. On the other hand, students from Clarence Fulton,

like those from Kalamalka, may realize they may need to leave Vernon for other

opportunities, but their ability to act is more restricted given, for instance, their family's

financial situation.

Of key-informant students, only one student, Jennifer, expects to stay in the Okanagan Region. According to her, she loves the Okanagan and would not want to leave. As well, she does not feel she would have any problems finding a career as a nurse of care aid in the region.

The other key-informant students, Anna, Andrew, John, and Dave all expect to find a career outside the Okanagan Region. For Dave, it is not because of a lack of career opportunities in the area, rather, it is simply the desire to get out of Vernon and experience new places.

> *SO:* Now, down the road eventually you'd like to work outside the Okanagan?
>
> *Dave:* Yeah, that's basically the travelling thing. You know, I want to get outside the country, or maybe go to Ontario, or maybe even go to somewhere in Europe, and go do something over there...I've seen lots of things in Canada that, you know, everyone else has seen. So, it's about time I get out of the country and see some other stuff I've never seen before so...
>
> *SO:* Right, so even if the same career was available in Vernon you'd like to go somewhere else?
>
> *Dave:*Yeah

For Anna and Andrew, both stress the desire to leave Vernon for a bigger city with more opportunities.

> *Andrew:* I've been here all my life, right? Just switch it up. I'd like to go to like a little bit bigger city, just somewhere different. A bigger town with like more opportunities and stuff. Maybe down in the States, Calgary seems nice. I would not want to go to Vancouver, it's too rainy.

Likewise, Anna likes bigger cities and hopes to live in a bigger city eventually. Moreover, she does not think she could pursue a career in addictions counselling in Vernon.

Anna: For what I want to do, I don't know how I would go about doing that in Vernon, because I've looked into it and stuff like that and they don't have much in the area of like addictions counselling and social work and stuff like that. They have more of that in Kelowna.

SO: Right, so there aren't many facilities that you could actually work in?

Anna: No, like they only really have one specific one here and I've gone to it and talked to them and they were like 'no'. It's just like, it's not even anything. It's just like a walk-in clinic and then people go out and do more drugs.

For Anna then, to pursue the career she wants, addictions counselling, she feels she needs to leave Vernon, but this need is accompanied by a desire to leave Vernon for a bigger city as well.

Lastly, John dislikes living in Vernon and cannot wait to leave for the Lower Mainland. He feels that there are not enough opportunities in Vernon, nor are their many people 'like him'.

SO: Why do you want to leave Vernon?

John: I don't like it here. I hate it. There aren't enough opportunities, there aren't many like-minded people.

Overall, while a majority of students want to eventually settle in a career outside of Vernon, data do not suggest that many students believe 'moving up' means 'moving out'. Indeed, a majority of students think that career opportunities in Vernon are sufficient. Instead, key-informant data suggest that a number of students may simply desire to get out of Vernon and see new places. However, for a few, Vernon may not provide the variety in career opportunity they seek, and so they want to go elsewhere.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter shows that at this stage in their lives, the formulation of Clarence Fulton students' career expectations are varied. While some expectations are very specific, others are weakly formulated. More important, this chapter suggests that 'place' matters in the formulation of high school students' career expectations. Specifically, this chapter focuses on the career expectations of Clarence Fulton students and the way that their perspectives and attitudes towards the local labour market have shaped these expectations. Clarence Fulton students see Vernon as a growing, yet still segmented labour market, and this influences the decisions they make regarding, for instance, the educational and locational aspects of their expectations. Last, this chapter suggests that characteristic of Post-Fordist transitional expectations, Clarence Fulton students' career expectations are overall very high, with most consisting of jobs that require a post-secondary education, and many indicating entrepreneurial hopes. In terms of embracing change in their career futures, a majority of students have the desire for change, and few possess the 'job for life' attitude characteristic of Fordist transitional expectations.

6: CONCLUSION

As youth proceed through the process of transition, their expectations are influenced by the specific contexts in which they live. Indeed, expectations are a result of a number of interwoven factors stemming from 'spaces' including the home, the school, and the local labour market. At the same time, expectations shift along with broader socioeconomic changes. This thesis has demonstrated the importance of different 'spaces' to the transitional expectations of youth by focusing on a case study of high school students in Vernon, British Columbia. This case study is a response to the lack of data pertaining to the transitional expectations of youth in BC, and particularly in the Okanagan region.

This thesis revolved around three main research objectives. The first was to identify the transitional expectations of high school students in Vernon, BC. This was achieved by questioning Grade 12 students from Clarence Fulton Secondary School. On a broad scale, the shift towards a Post-Fordist labour market has been felt in Vernon since the late 1970s, and Clarence Fulton student expectations are indeed reflective of Post-Fordist transition patterns. An overwhelming majority of Clarence Fulton students plan to attend post-secondary education, and students exhibit a strong belief in the value of post-secondary education to labour market success. Overall, students' career expectations are very high, and most students expect to attain jobs that require a post-secondary education. Most important, the analysis of Clarence Fulton student expectations has shown the complex and varied nature of expectations. Expectations are far from linear

and include varying patterns of working, attending school, and travelling. At the same time, the level of formulation of expectations varies greatly, with some students exhibiting well thought out, detailed pathways to reach their goals, and others exhibiting very vague and ambiguous expectations with regards to the future.

Based on the analysis of Clarence Fulton student expectations, this thesis has called for a modification of Gaskell's (1985) notion of vocationalism. With their high expectations for post-secondary education and strong beliefs in its value to labour market success, Clarence Fulton students display a more distant logic. This analysis suggests that while Clarence Fulton students do trend towards a distant logic, they do so to varying degrees. While some students are actively taking steps to reach their distant career goals, like pursuing a post-secondary education or upgrading their high school course, others are delaying doing so, and plan to work or travel before committing to their more distant career goals.

The second objective of this thesis was to identify factors that contributed to the formulation of students' transitional expectations. This research has shown that students' transitional expectations are patterned by multiple factors, and these factors evolve around 'spaces' which high school students live their lives in and have past experiences in. The most pertinent appears to be the role of the home, including influence from parents and siblings, as well as family socioeconomic status and gender. Among key-informant students, family support and influence has played a major role in the formulation of their expectations. In regards to socioeconomic status, Clarence Fulton staff suggest (and provincial statistics confirm), that expectations vary across neighbourhoods in Vernon. For instance, students from Kalamalka Secondary, which is

in a high socioeconomic area, have higher post-secondary attainment rates than students from schools in lower socioeconomic areas, such as Clarence Fulton Secondary. Influence from the school also appears to be an important factor in the formulation of students' transitional expectations, and key-informant students cite teachers, projects, and courses as being important to their future goals. Lastly, this research suggests that factors such as personal interest and agency should not be undermined, as many Clarence Fulton students hold the perspective that their interests or personal decisions are heavily guiding their expectations.

The last objective of this research was to explore the impact of the local labour market on the transitional expectations of high school students in Vernon. In the last 30 years, Vernon's labour market shifted away from Fordist organization towards the imperatives of 'Flexibility'. Once dominated by primary industries, mainly forestry and agriculture, the service sector now dominates Vernon's labour market and small business is thriving. Recently, Vernon's labour market has strengthened, and companies are beginning to have trouble finding and retaining staff. However, employment counsellors in Vernon still stress the importance of a post-secondary education to success in the labour market.

This research suggests that Vernon's distinct labour market setting, within which Clarence Fulton students have grown-up in, is crucial to the transitional expectations of Vernon's youth. Clarence Fulton students largely see Vernon as a growing, yet still polarized labour market, and this perspective influences the decisions they make regarding, for instance, the educational and locational aspects of their expectations. Clarence Fulton students are transitioning in a very prosperous labour market, and they

are very optimistic about their career futures and they expect to do well. This optimism may relate to the fact that many Clarence Fulton students are already making well above minimum wage, and many hold a high degree of responsibility in their jobs. However, at the same time they understand the importance of an education to progressing in the labour market, and most plan to attain a post-secondary education. The importance of local labour market conditions is also evident in the interest of self-employment among Clarence Fulton students, which local career counsellors attribute to the significance of small business in Vernon.

The perspectives students hold regarding the local labour market are critical in the formulation of expectations, as students see a place for themselves in the labour market they have come to know, or conversely, expect to leave the local area. Overall, Clarence Fulton students do not exhibit Andres and Looker's (2001) suggestion that for rural youth, 'moving up' means 'moving out'. Indeed, Vernon cannot be considered rural. However, it does not have the opportunities that are found in larger urban labour markets, such as the Lower Mainland. A majority of Clarence Fulton students think that Vernon has sufficient career opportunities, yet a majority expect to settle outside of Vernon. Most of these students express a desire to leave and explore new places, while fewer express the need to leave for career opportunities that are not available in Vernon.

6.1 Future Research

This research has provided a snap-shot of the expectations of high school students in Vernon, and examined the role of 'place' in the formulation of these expectations. While transitional expectations are predictors of labour market outcomes, the expectations expressed by students often change in the years after graduation. While this research has

addressed students' thoughts regarding changes to their expectations in the future, it is unable to predict labour market outcomes. Therefore, a longitudinal study of Okanagan high school student transitional expectations and outcomes would provide an interesting account of how expectations change in the years after graduation and why. For economic geographers, such a study would reveal how post-graduation experiences, either in the labour market or in other 'places' such as the home or educational institution, change or refine existing expectations.

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APPENDIX

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

SIOBHAN OLIVER
Department of Geography
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, British Columbia
V5A 1S6, CANADA

CLASSROOM COMPLEX,
RCB 7233
Telephone: (604) 291-3321
Fax: (604) 291-5841
smoliver@sfu.ca

Student Transition Questionnaire

Thank you for your participation in this short questionnaire. Feedback from this

questionnaire will be used to better understand the effects that locality has on the

transition of Grade 12 student from secondary school to the labour market. In

compliance with the Research Ethics Policy at Simon Fraser University I wish to inform

you that you are free to withdraw from participation at any time and that your personal

anonymity will be respected.

High School

Except for English 12, please list the Grade 12 courses you have chosen to take this year in the boxes labelled 'Course #' (As an example, I have placed 'English' in the 'Course 1' box). Then, tick the box of the reason that best describes why you took that particular course (As an example, I have ticked the box 'Easy' because I took English mainly because it was easy).

	Course 1: English	Course 2:	Course 3:	Course 4:	Course 5:	Course 6:	Course 7:
Interest							
Career Preparation							
Post-secondary education requirement							
Easy	X						

1- Would you consider yourself a motivated student?

☐ All of the time

☐ Most of the time

☐ Some of the time

☐ None of the time

2- Please check your overall Grade 12 grade/percentage at this point:

☐ A - 86-100%

☐ B - 73-85%

☐ C+ - 67-72%

☐ C - 60-66%

☐ C- - 50-59%

☐ D – 40-49%

Post-High School Plans

3- What do you expect your <u>main</u> activity will be in the next year?

☐ Attending post-secondary education

☐ Working full-time

☐ Working and attending post-secondary education

☐ Upgrading high-school

☐ Apprenticeship

☐ Travelling

☐ Other (state)_____

<u>Post-Secondary Education</u>

4- Do you plan on attending a post-secondary institution at some point after graduating high-school (**Please choose from <u>either</u> 'yes, most likely, not likely or no' below**):

☐ **Yes–Why?**

Please rate <u>each</u> of the following from 1 to 5 (1 being the <u>least important</u>, and 5 being the <u>most important</u> in your choice to continue your education):

- To reach my specific career goals   _____
- To gain credentials to get a good job   _____

- Family expected me to go   _____
- Don't want to get a full time job right now   _____
- Other (state) _____

☐ **Most Likely –Why?**

Please rate <u>each</u> of the following from 1 to 5 (1 being the <u>least</u> important, and 5 being the <u>most</u> important in your expectation to likely continue your education):

- To reach my specific career goals   _____
- To gain credentials to get a good job   _____
- Family expected me to go   _____
- Don't want to get a full time job right now_____
- Other (state) _____

☐ **Not Likely–Why?**

Please rate <u>each</u> of the following from 1 to 5 (1 being the <u>least important</u>, and 5 being the <u>most important</u> in your expectation to likely not continue your education):

- I am tired of school   _____
- I want to get a job and start making money   _____
- My grades are not good enough   _____
- It is too expensive   _____
- There are no programs that interest me
  in the local community   _____
- I do not need any further education
  to reach my career goals   _____
- Other (state) _____

☐ **No–Why?**

Please rate <u>each</u> of the following from 1 to 5 (1 being the <u>least</u> important, and 5 being the <u>most</u> important in your choice to not continue your education):

- I am tired of school   _____

- I want to get a job and start making money   _____

- My grades are not good enough   _____

- It is too expensive   _____

- There are no programs that interest me

    in the local community   _____

- I do not need any further education

    to reach my career goals   _____

- Other (state) _____

If you answered 'Not Likely' or 'No', please proceed to Question 14

If you answered 'Yes' or 'Most Likely', please continue

5- When do you plan on starting your post-secondary education?

☐ Fall 2007

☐ Spring 2008

☐ Summer 2008

☐ Fall 2008

☐ Not sure

☐ Other (state)_____

6- What do you expect your student status will be?

☐ Full-time student

☐ Part-time student

7- What type of post-secondary education institution do you plan on attending?

☐ College

☐ University-College

☐ University

☐ Institute

☐ Other_____

8- Please rate <u>each</u> of the following on a scale of 1 to 5 (one being the <u>lowest</u> and five being the <u>highest</u>) based on the level of influence they have had on your decision to pursue post-secondary education:

- Family/Guardians   _____
- Friends   _____
- Teachers   _____
- High School Courses   _____
- Counsellors   _____

9- Do you have a particular institution or institutions in mind that you plan to, or have already, applied to? If so, what is the name of the institution/s and where is it located?

_____

_____

_____

10- Would you consider leaving the Okanagan region to attend post-secondary education?

☐ Yes

☐ Maybe

☐ No

Please explain your choice:

_____

_____

11- What type of employment do you hope to achieve through pursuing a post-secondary education?_____

_____

12- Do you think pursuing a post-secondary education is necessary to achieve this employment goal?

☐ Definitely

☐ Most likely

☐ Probably not

☐ No

13- Do you feel your local community has sufficient post-secondary education opportunities?

☐ Yes

☐ No – If no, how so?

_____

_____

_____

14- What kind of skills do you think employers today are looking for?

_____

_____

_____

15- Do you think the skills employers were looking for when your parents or guardians finished high school are <u>different</u> from the skills employers are looking for today?

☐ Yes – If yes, how so?

_____

_____

_____

☐ No

Employment

16- Are you currently employed?

☐ Yes

☐ No

17- If yes, what type of job do you currently have and approximately how many hours per week do you work?

_____

_____

_____

18- Do you plan on getting a new job <u>within a year</u> of high school graduation?

☐ Yes – (<u>Full-time</u>) What type of job?

_____

Where?_____

☐ Yes – (<u>Part-time</u>) What type of job?

_____

Where?_____

☐ No

If no, please proceed to Question 21

If yes, please continue

19- What do you think the chances are of you finding the above stated job?

☐ Very Good

☐ Good

☐ Average

☐ Poor

☐ Very Poor

A) Career Aspirations

20- What is/are your long term career goals?

_____

_____

_____

21- Do you expect that you will need to pursue some form of post-secondary education to achieve this career goal?

☐ Yes

☐ No

22- Do you expect that your career goals will change in the coming years?

☐ Yes

☐ No

23- In thinking about your career do you anticipate: (Please check all that apply)

    i)   Staying in one occupation _____

    ii) Changing occupations _____

    iii) Changing jobs relatively little _____

    iv) Changing jobs relatively frequently _____

    v)   Being employed by a small firm or company _____

    vi) Being employed by a large firm or company _____

    vii) Being self-employed _____

24- A) Where do you eventually hope to find a career?

☐ Your local community

☐ The Okanagan region

☐ Outside the Okanagan region

B) If you hope to find a career <u>outside</u> the Okanagan region, where do you expect to look for work? _____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

25- Do you feel your local community has sufficient employment opportunities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

26- Do you feel your local community presents any <u>barriers</u> that may prevent you from getting the type of job you want?

☐ No

☐ Yes – If so, please explain:

_____

_____

_____

_____

27- A) Please rate <u>each</u> of the following on a scale of one to five (one being the <u>lowest</u> and five being the <u>highest</u>) based on the level of influence they have had on your **career goals**:

- Family/Guardians   _____
- Friends, teachers, counsellors   _____
- Job Availability in your local community   _____
- Post-secondary education availability in your local community _____
- Other - Please state:_____

B) Do you think that most Grade 12 students have similar rankings to what you have chosen in the above question?

☐ Yes, I expect most Grade 12 students have similar rankings

☐ No, I expect my rankings are different. Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

28- In what ways do you think career aspirations of Grade 12 high school students today are different from the career aspirations of your parent's age group when they were in Grade 12?

_____

_____

_____

General – About You:

29- Name:_____ _____ _____ _____

30- Gender:_____ _____ _____ _____

☐ Male

☐ Female

31- City of Residence:_____ _____ _____

32- How long have you lived in the Okanagan region? _____ years

33- How long has your family lived in the Okanagan region? _____years

34- Would you be willing to participate in an approximately 30 minute telephone interview to elaborate on questions asked in this questionnaire? (Note- In appreciation of your time, you will receive a $15 Gift Card for Tim Horton's or Starbuck's)

☐ Yes – If yes,

Email Contact_____ _____

Phone Contact_____ _____

☐ No

Thank you for your participation!