

Post-Secondary Education in the Yukon: The Last Thirty Years

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“In the North,” goes an oft-repeated truism, “geography is the challenge.” Yet, as intimidating as the region’s geography may be, a second challenge also figures prominently in the development of social, educational, and judicial services in the North: addressing the disparate and sometimes conflicting needs of a small, culturally heterogeneous population. This is especially obvious in the history of post-secondary education in the Yukon. It is the brief, yet intense, story of adopting and adapting institutional values, practices, and structures from elsewhere in the country to meet the challenges of the territory’s geography and the diverse educational needs and aspirations of its residents.¹

If this history is to make theoretical and practical sense to the reader who, following traditional definitions of higher or post-secondary education, expects a discussion of university education or who, based on experience outside the region, expects dollars spent or students served to cross certain thresholds of significance, some qualifications are necessary. First, the Yukon—which is geographically much larger than Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia together—is demographically a very small community. In 1941, just 4,914 people lived in the territory (Yukon Census Figures). In 1992, just 31,000 lived here; of these, 22,000 lived in a single community: Whitehorse (Yukon Statistical Review, Second Quarter, 1992).² To put this in perspective, the entire population of the territory is smaller than that of some of Canada’s universities.

Not surprisingly, then, the Yukon’s economic, social, political, and educational apparatus is conspicuously less developed than those of other regions of the country. Because of its small population, simple economy, and federal dependence, the Yukon, along with the Northwest Territories, has often been regarded as a developing region or even as a northern “colony” (Coates, 1987). As such, it is arguable that the Yukon is more interesting, in terms of the

development of its institutions, for what it might yet do rather than what it has already done (Stenbaek and Senkpiel, 1989).

Second, the entire formal history of post-secondary education in the Yukon spans not several centuries or even several lifetimes. Even if one uses 1963, the year in which the Whitehorse Vocational Training School was opened, as the start of formal higher education in the territory, it spans just thirty years. Moreover, it is really the history of two institutions: the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Centre and its successor, Yukon College.

These observations suggest that a study of post-secondary education in the Yukon must necessarily be on a much smaller scale than such a study would be if it were conducted in another region of the country. They also suggest that such a study must necessarily be more qualitative than quantitative. There is, for example, almost no scholarly literature to cite. As well, when dealing with such small numbers, even the simplest of statistics can mislead. Clearly, the scholarly distance easily attained by scholars writing in other jurisdictions is more difficult, if not impossible, to attain here.³

Third, if by the term “post-secondary education” it is meant, as it often has, university education, then even today some conceptual liberty must be taken to use it to describe events in the Yukon. To state the obvious, the Yukon, like the Northwest Territories, does not have a university. Indeed, if one accepts the sixtieth parallel as the southern edge of Canada’s Far North (Maslove & Hawkes, 1990, 13), then Canada does not have a truly northern university. This fact is of national and international consequence. It not only makes the North unique among the regions of Canada, but it also makes Canada unique among circumpolar nations.

In an odd fashion, however, these very facts, which make the inclusion of the territories so difficult in the study of post-secondary education in Canada, also make it essential. To discuss what has not happened in the North or is just now starting to happen in the North is to identify not just a major gap but a major opportunity within post-secondary education in the country, in terms of both education and research.⁴

Given these observations, it is interesting that in the Yukon, as in the Northwest Territories, the emergence of a representative territorial government and the establishment of the Yukon’s first post-secondary institution are contemporaneous events. Indeed, Yukon College, like Arctic College, can be seen as a very tangible expression of the Yukon’s resolve to be a self-determining region. Consequently, the development of post-secondary education in the Yukon—which is, as noted above, very recent—can be usefully divided into two periods. The 1960s and 1970s were a time of articulation and aspiration; the 1980s and early 1990s have been a time of realization.

The 1960s and 1970s—Simple Beginnings, Growing Aspirations

The history of formal post-secondary education in the Yukon begins with the official opening of the Whitehorse Vocational Training School on 11 June 1963. About one hundred students registered for the various vocational programs the school's twelve faculty, four administrators, and seven support staff offered. As principal Jack Bredin stated several years after the school opened, students could "learn a skill which would enable [them] to gain employment in a chosen field" (quoted in Yukon College commemorative edition, 2). From the outset, then, the primacy of "training for employment" was firmly established. Although the school grew considerably over the next fifteen years—it was renamed the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Centre in 1965—this vocational focus was not to shift significantly.

That the Centre was devoted to vocational training is obvious from the fact that neither it nor its staff figured significantly in the considerable public discussion about new higher education opportunities in the territory that emerged in the 1970s. This might have been because the Centre simply did not figure in the educational planning of affluent Yukoners, who equated "post-secondary education" with "going Outside." To them the Centre was seen as largely irrelevant. Put baldly, many viewed it as a place for those members of the community who, while they might be "trained," could not be educated. By the mid-1970s, the Centre seems to have been firmly entrenched in the public's mind as an example of what the territory had been, not of what it might become.

These discussions of post-secondary education grew out of the general spirit of optimism that pervaded the territory at the time. In the early 1970s, rising energy costs, federal cutbacks, and frequent disruptions in production at the Cyprus Anvil mine in Faro had caused a recession. However, by 1976, things were changing. The federal government was once again publicly expressing interest in the development of its northern territories. The Alaska Highway Natural Gas Pipeline was being promoted. A settlement of the North's land claims, which had been given considerable impetus by the recommendations of the Berger and Lysyk inquiries, seemed imminent. And, perhaps most importantly, representational government and party politics were being pursued by the territory (Smyth, 1991). When the 1979 session of the Yukon Legislative Assembly was opened, Commissioner Ione Christensen captured some of this optimism in the speech from the throne. She spoke positively of the introduction of party politics as "necessary to continue our evolution towards full responsible government," and then went on to outline the newly elected Progressive Conservative Government's agenda:

We seek an early and just settlement of Yukon Indian land claims; a full state of preparedness for the construction of the Alaska Highway Natural Gas

Pipeline and the development of a firm and aggressive development policy for the Yukon. (Speech from the Throne, 1979)

The significance of this growing spirit of self-determination cannot be overstated. As Kenneth Coates and Judith Powell note in *The Modern North* (1989), “since the mid-1970s, the North has been set on a radically different course” (xv). Clearly, at the start of what Coates and Powell rightly call a “period of transition” (xv) many people anticipated a new prosperity, one built on an economy expanded by resource exploitation and the settlement of land claims. This optimism fuelled, in turn, various and at times contradictory efforts to establish a truly northern, post-secondary academic institution.

In fact, if the economic projections of the 1970s seem optimistic today, some of the educational plans of the times seem downright “futuristic.” Spurred on by all the federal talk of the country’s future lying in its North, Richard Rohmer and a diverse group of northern Canadians secured letters patent for the University of Canada North (UCN) in March 1971.⁵ However, as Amanda Graham has noted, UCN was unable to do the things that would have established it in the public’s mind as a bona fide institution: namely, have recognized faculty teach students in classrooms. Consequently, public support for the initiative waned and, by 1979, UCN was seen as something of a joke. The 25 January 1979 editorial in the *Northern Times* observed:

The so-called University of Canada North, which currently exists as little more than a file folder...and an office in the T.C. Richards Building...is probably worse than useless in the attempt to get a real institution of higher education in the North. (4)

At the same time that UCN was trying to secure support for its endeavours, another quite separate, “national” effort to establish a northern university was underway. Given the renewed federal interest in the North—no doubt because of the oil rush in the Beaufort—there was an increase in grant money available for northern scientific research and, consequently, an increase in scientific interest in the North. It was specifically with a view to improving northern research that the Science Council of Canada, in 1977, urged the establishment of a northern university (Northward Looking, 1977). From the Council’s perspective, the “most immediate value of a University of the North would be to provide a focus for the development of northern research activities specifically designed to solve northern problems” (57). It was in the context of securing grant monies that the Council should have “all the prestige that attaches to the word ‘university’” (58). The actual educational role of the university was seen as of secondary importance (58-59).

Then, in December 1978, William Gauvin, director of research for the Noranda Research Centre and head of the Science Council’s special committee

on northern development, released a paper entitled *A Northern Resource Centre: A First Step Towards a University of Canada North* in which he too supported the establishment of a northern university. Again, a facility of primary use to southern scientists was envisaged:

The resource centre could provide adult education, be a focal point linking northern education institutions with those in the south, a meeting ground and a forum for discussion of northern problems and a training ground for young northerners...While the focus here is on science and technology and the development eventually of an indigenous northern scientific community, it should be understood that the University of the North must be seen in a wider educational context. (quoted by Orton, 3)

Clearly, the Science Council was looking northward, but from about as far south as one could get in Canada.

Other groups were also pursuing the notion of a northern institution. Anticipating the imminent and lucrative settlement of land claims and displeased by the inattentiveness of the Yukon government, which was seen as a vehicle of the non-Native population, Native groups like the Yukon Native Brotherhood and the Yukon Association of Non-Status Indians were making their own plans. For example, the *Whitehorse Star* of 27 November 1978 notes that Jennifer Mauro of the Yukon Native Brotherhood had approached the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College about the possibility of delivering its programs in the Yukon. Then in December 1978 delegates to the general assembly of the Council for Yukon Indians passed a "resolution to establish a Yukon Indian education centre" as a "focal point from which native people can be served" (Yukon Teacher, 6).

A fourth line of inquiry, the one that was finally to succeed, was being pursued by the Yukon government. The government, no doubt influenced by aspirations of the Indigenous non-Native community that went back at least to 1960 when James Smith and F. H. Collins (both of whom had served as Commissioners of the Yukon) had identified a site for a university, was eager to do something substantial to address the growing interest in and support for university-level education. It, like the electorate it represented, was clearly not satisfied by the current programming offered by the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Centre or by the extension courses that were occasionally offered by the University of Alberta in Whitehorse. Consequently, it undertook work on several fronts. Given that these were to "merge" in the creation of Yukon College in 1983, they merit discussion.

In July 1977, the Government of the Yukon signed an agreement with the University of British Columbia (UBC) for the establishment of a program to train long-time Yukoners to teach in Yukon elementary schools. That fall the Yukon Teacher Education Program (YTEP), the territory's first full-time

university-level program, started classes in a small group of portables in Whitehorse. The program continued uninterrupted until 1982. At that time, the need for locally-trained teachers was considered met. However, a growing number of local residents had found that if they claimed that they wanted to become teachers, they could acquire up to two years of university-level coursework. Consequently, the Yukon government, now quite consciously working towards the establishment of a college and feeling pressure from the University of British Columbia, agreed to convert the teacher education program to a two-year liberal arts program. Thus, in the summer of 1982, “UBC Programs” was created.

Whether or not the Yukon Teacher Education Program was successful depends a great deal upon with whom one talks (Senkpiel, 1986). For those who believed the program was to train “native Yukoners,” meaning students of First Nations ancestry, the program failed. For example, of seven native students admitted to the program in 1981 after a year of preparatory studies, none graduated. However, for those who believed the program was to train “native Yukoners,” meaning students born in the territory, as the Yukon government was careful to state in the first YTEP contract, it was reasonably successful. In its five years, it trained seventy-three teachers—many of whom still teach in Yukon schools. But from the perspective of this study, the importance of the program is that it resulted in the first university-level liberal arts program in the Canadian North, what was ultimately to become the Arts and Science Division of Yukon College.

The other major step taken by the government during the late 1970s was its decision to ask a group of educational researchers from the University of Alberta’s Centre for the Study of Post-secondary Education and the Department of Educational Administration to undertake a major study of continuing education opportunities in the Yukon. More specifically, the research team—led by Professors Ingram, Konrad, and Small—was asked to “ascertain the educational aspirations of adults in the Yukon, examine promising alternative program, delivery, governance and financing arrangements, and recommend alternatives for continuing education that might be most desirable and feasible in the Yukon” (Ingram, Konrad, & Small, 1979, iii). The primary recommendation of the 173 page report published at the end of the study, *Toward a Yukon College* (1979), was the creation of a comprehensive community college. Significantly, it took the idea of a “Yukon post-secondary institution” out of the conjectural realm and articulated a philosophy of continuing education and an institutional structure that still figure prominently in current decision-making in Yukon higher education.

Working with a committee of interested community representatives, the research team conducted personal interviews with 128 “knowledgeable

persons" (Ingram et al., 1979, 39) from across the territory. As well, to try to identify "levels of involvement, barriers, interests, and preferences in continuing education" (47), the team sent out a continuing-education needs assessment that was completed by over 1,000 Yukon residents. Based on the data from the interviews and the survey, the team was able to confidently describe current educational opportunities in the territory and, as well, Yukoners' educational aspirations.

Of particular significance to this study are the major themes or "inferences" that the team identified from its interviews and its recommendations. Because these continue to be major issues in post-secondary education—as evidenced, for example, by the ongoing deliberations of the Yukon College Board of Governors—these are worth noting. In all, the team identified eight inferences. First, the team noted a "cultural polarization" (40) between Natives and non-Natives. They also noted that many Yukoners, especially those in the communities, felt "too much power was...centralized in Whitehorse" (41). The team also found that "there were important differences in the continuing education needs of small communities" (41) and a strong desire to use "local resources" (42). Among non-Natives, the team concluded, "high value was placed on the opportunity to study...outside" (42-43). But it is the team's final inferences that are, perhaps, most interesting. It found that "there was an expression of general dissatisfaction with the present operation of the Vocational Centre" (42) and "little support for the creation of a Yukon University and little or no interest in [the] University of Canada North" (42). However, "strong interest...was expressed in a community college type of institution, which would offer a broad range of courses, both credit and non-credit, to high school leavers and older adults" (42).

Based on their findings, the researchers made a total of twenty-nine recommendations in five major areas: governance, finance, programming, delivery, and implementation. As noted above, their primary recommendation was:

That a college, centred in Whitehorse, be established to serve all of the postsecondary and continuing education needs of the Yukon and to assume various investigative and social critic functions. (ix)

This and the twenty-eight other recommendations delineate an institution familiar across North America: an independently governed, comprehensive community college offering a range of credit and non-credit training and educational programs using a variety of instructional techniques and media.

But, in the final clause of the first recommendation an important, additional role is given to the proposed college. That is, Ingram et al. subsumed to the college a role more often associated with the university: that of investigator and social critic. Also, having identified this as an important role, they suggested that it be for this reason that while "the present Vocational Centre

...could, at least initially, be the major component of the new college” (127), what was “needed [was] a new institution, one or two steps removed from the Government” (127). In short, they suggested a college with a difference, that difference being investigation or research.

When one looks back from the vantage point afforded by the 1990s, it becomes clear that *Toward a Yukon College*, published at the end of the 1970s, has functioned as a blueprint, guiding the establishment of Yukon College.

The 1980s and 1990s—Creating the Yukon’s College

That the Yukon Government quite methodically pursued the goals set out in *Toward a Yukon College* is evident from several steps it took during the early 1980s. It selected a site for a new college complex and began ground preparation. Then, on 23 March 1983, Minister of Education Bea Firth announced “the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Center and [UBC Programs] had been merged to form a new Yukon College” (Smyth, 130).

Initially, the proclamation of the new college was little more than the renaming of the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Centre. Admittedly, the Centre’s programming base had expanded considerably over the previous few years with the addition of a network of community centres and a new two-year “professional” business administration program, brokered from Red Deer College. Additionally, the government decided to move the UBC arts and science extension program that had continued after the dissolution of the Yukon Teacher Education Program from its own small facility on Nisutlin Drive to the old vocational centre campus on Lewes Boulevard, the latter being the new college’s home. But two points need to be stressed here. First, the college continued to be, administratively, a unit of the advanced education branch of the government’s Department of Education. Interestingly, the college did not have a “principal” or a “president”; rather, its senior officer was a “director” who reported directly to the assistant deputy minister of advanced education. That is, the Department of Education had complete control over the college. Secondly, the university-level programming offered in the college remained administratively and academically separate from it. It continued to be administered by the University of British Columbia. In short, while the establishment of Yukon College had been proclaimed, it was a college largely in name only.

Following the proclamation of the college, the government took several additional steps to realize the recommendations of the Ingram report. A detailed development plan was submitted to the government in March 1984. Later that year, a design competition for a new college complex to be constructed at a site in Takhini was announced. Then, on 28 March 1985, cabinet approved the conceptual design submitted by Carlberg Jackson Partners.

On 13 May 1985, the Progressive Conservatives, who had been in power since the advent of party politics in 1978, lost the territorial election and a new government was formed by the New Democratic Party (NDP) led by Tony Penikett. It was a nervous time for the new college. Its officials were uncertain whether the new government would support its continued development. For example, while the ground for the new Takhini complex had been prepared, construction had not yet begun. There were rumours that “they” were not pleased with the plans approved by the previous government. Several months passed before the government, somewhat reluctantly, gave its go-ahead for construction of the new campus.

However, by 1986, the NDP Government was solidly behind the continued development of Yukon College. This support seems to have crystallized just before and then during a massive community consultation initiative called Yukon 2000 that allowed hundreds, if not thousands, of Yukoners to state their views about the “future of their economy and society” (*The Things that Matter*, 1987). In March, a consultant from Manitoba who had served in the NDP Government there, Lionel Orlikow, submitted his report *The Option to Stay: An Education Strategy for the Yukon*. In it, he observed that Yukoners often did not have the “option to stay” (3) in the territory, that employment and education often forced people, who would have preferred to stay in the territory, to leave. “Education,” wrote Orlikow, “now encourages migration out” (3). Given this, he strongly advocated the continued development of the college. In fact, five of his twelve recommendations dealt with the college. All dealt with increasing the college’s autonomy and strengthening its community-based responsibilities and activities.

The impact of Orlikow’s report is obvious when one looks at the documents that came out of the Yukon 2000 process. For example, in *The Things that Matter* (1987) the NDP Government identified four broad goals. One of these was “the option to stay.” The other three were “control of the future,” “an acceptable quality of life,” and “equality.” Clearly, the further the government proceeded with the Yukon 2000 process the more important a strong, autonomous Yukon College became to the accomplishment of its objectives. This is particularly obvious in the Yukon 2000 document entitled *Training for the Future: The Yukon Training Strategy* (1987). In Part II, in which the government talks about “expanded local opportunities” (5–9), the continued development of the college’s community learning centres figures prominently. Specifically, the centres were not to be tightly controlled by Whitehorse but were to be directed by a need for “local decisions” and “local development” (7).

If more community control is the conclusion of Part II, then more college autonomy is the conclusion of Part III. The report states “the time has come to consider establishing an independent Board of Governors to operate

the College—a board whose agenda is fully dedicated to the College” (12). Significantly, such a board should represent “all sectors of Yukon society” (12). Clearly, the idea of an independent college with a strong, flexible network of locally directed community campuses was seen to fit, fundamentally, with the economic, cultural, and educational agendas set by a government that had been elected in the territory’s small communities. In short, although the idea of a Yukon college housed in a large new complex had been developed by the previous government, by 1986 the NDP Government was fully committed to its further development.

A little more than a year later, with the construction of the new facility nearing completion, the minister of education, Piers McDonald, released his government’s *White Paper on College Governance and Phased Implementation* (1987). Early in the paper *The Yukon Training Strategy* is quoted, thus establishing an explicit link to the Yukon 2000 process. Interestingly, the quote is one that adds another dimension to the government’s thinking about the College:

The Government believes Yukoners must participate fully in decisions that affect them. In keeping with this principle, the Government will be transferring responsibilities to Yukon College so that it can take its place as a mature member among community colleges in Canada (10).

The suggestion that Yukon College should take its place in the future of the territory was a familiar one. What was new here was the recognition that Yukon College would not just belong to the Yukon community but also to a second community: a “community of colleges.” It seems that by August 1987 the government, energized by the Yukon 2000 process, saw its actions as not just regionally significant, but nationally as well.

Part III of the report describes the government’s “preferred college governance model” (13–16). The model entrenches strong community and First Nations representation on the board:

The permanent Yukon College Board will consist of a minimum of ten public members, of which at least three shall be Indian representatives, three shall be regional Community Campus representatives... (13).

That is, while the main college facilities were to be in Whitehorse—the new \$50 million Ayamdigut campus was nearing completion—power on the board was to be held by the predominantly native rural communities. As well, the paper urged the development of a program advisory council that would be appointed by the board and advise it on programming matters. This council was to have as members all the chairs of what were now being called the community campuses, thus further securing community control.

The duties of the new board were to be considerable; it would have all the powers of a corporation but “primary authority for identifying and analyzing overall territorial post-secondary educational and training needs [were to be]

retained by the Minister” (15). The paper also recommended the establishment of an “interim” board (13) that would sit during a three-year transition period. During that time it would, with the assistance of a conversion team made up of government officials, effect the necessary transfers and put the necessary policy and administrative structures in place.

Given the release of the White Paper, there were no major surprises in the new College Act, which was assented to on 18 May 1988.⁶ The number of governors to be appointed by “the Commissioner in Executive Council” (10) was increased slightly to twelve, including a student representative. Also, it entrenched the role of, and community representation on, the Program Advisory Council and the existence of community campus committees. It also allowed for the creation of an interim board of governors that would sit until the transfer was effected, which would occur “on a date to be specified.” Later, it was decided that independence would occur on 1 January 1990.

The new campus was nearing completion, the College Act had been passed, board governance was guaranteed, and the conversion team was working. It was an impressive range of accomplishments. One would have thought it would have been considered enough. But during this time, the department of advanced education and college officials were also busy working on the third side of the triangle: programming. They felt that when the college moved to the new campus in 1988, with governance assured in the immediate future, some new programs should be in place. A territorial election was also in the offing.

This impending “happy confluence” had been recognized early in 1988 by some college faculty. Following a three-year transition plan, academic responsibility for the university transfer program had been transferred from UBC to the college. The transfer had, in fact, been completed in two years and the college’s new Arts and Science Division—now the North’s first autonomous university-level academic program—was anticipating a major influx of students because of its new, more flexible admissions criteria and the completion of the new college campus. Given what had happened and what was about to happen, the faculty prepared a major proposal for the government. Entitled *The Diploma in Northern Studies: A Proposal for Integrated Programs in Native Studies, Northern Science, and Northern Outdoor and Environmental Studies* (March 1988), the proposal urged the establishment of the first comprehensive, university-level northern studies program in Canada. Such a program would, if implemented, allow northerners to do what people from other regions of the country could do: learn about their region while living in it. Senior college and government officials both supported the proposal and, after some modifications, funding was granted.

On 1 October 1988 the new college was officially opened. The official guests represented both traditions of learning that, it was hoped, were to flourish at the college: elders from many of the territory's communities sat beside senior university officials. Two other things stood out that day. Government Leader Tony Penikett bestowed a \$1 million gift to the college so that it could establish a permanent Northern Studies Research Fund. And Tagish Elder, Mrs. Angela Sidney, bestowed on the campus a new name. Ayamdigut is Tagish for "the house that moved." A year later, on 31 December 1989, the "moving" process that had begun ten years earlier with *Toward a Yukon College* was completed. The following day, on 1 January 1990, the independent college envisaged by Ingram et al., was finally a reality.

It should be clear from the preceding discussion that the Yukon's decision to create its own post-secondary institution—a step taken by the government but with almost unqualified community support—was made in faith, in the belief that such an institution would help the territory take control of and shape its own future. As such, it was a decision probably not dissimilar to that taken by other ambitious communities early in their development. As such, it was done more with a view of what a community can or should become than what it currently was. The institutional model that was finally chosen—the comprehensive community college—was a sound one. Unlike the University of Canada North concept, the somewhat more modest college model better fit the actual educational needs and economic resources of the community. Rather than focusing only on the more advanced educational needs of the community, the comprehensive college could meet very broad educational and cultural needs, from basic literacy training in the communities to first- and second-year university education in the capital. Indeed, Yukon College provides a useful example of an institution that has been able to marry, somewhat successfully, the community development values more often associated with adult education and the academic or scholarly values more prevalent in discussions of higher education. Given the breadth of expectation and responsibility, it is not surprising that Yukon College has sometimes stumbled. What, perhaps, is surprising are the many times that it has not.

Aron Senkpiel lived in the Yukon from 1980 until he passed away in February 2003. He was the founding dean of the Arts and Science Division of Yukon College.

Notes

1. This paper was first prepared, in a somewhat different form, for a special study of higher education in Canada sponsored by the Canadian Society for Studies in Higher Education.

2. Statistics Canada gives the population of the Yukon in 1986 as 23,360 (Maslove & Hawkes). The difference between the 1992 Yukon government and 1986 federal figures should not be interpreted as growth, but rather the result of different methods of data collection. Traditionally, the Yukon Government's Bureau of Statistics gives higher figures. There has been only limited population growth during the last two decades. [In 2006, the population of the Yukon was just over 30,000, and that of Whitehorse almost 20,500.—Ed.]
3. This question of objectivity is not theoretical. The author came to the territory in 1980 to lecture for the University of British Columbia in its Yukon Teacher Education Program. Since then he has personally been involved in many of the events described in this paper and his own notes have served as an important source of dates and names.
4. The longstanding absence of post-secondary opportunities in the territories, which are under federal jurisdiction, can be seen as just one result of the British North America Act's assignment of responsibility for education to the provinces. Another consequence, of course, is the enormous variety of post-secondary systems in Canada.
5. Amanda Graham has just completed the first comprehensive study of this important initiative. Some of the data given in the following discussion of the University of Canada North are from her MA thesis, "The University That Wasn't: The University of Canada North, 1970–1985" (see Works Cited).
6. The Act did include one provision that might be considered "surprising": it includes a "cop out" clause. Section 16(1) reads: "If the board of governors fails to direct the programs and activities of the College in accordance with this Act, the Executive Council Member may appoint an administrator to replace the board and manage the programs and activities of the College until a newly constituted board is appointed."

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