

Full-time Conscripts: Narratives of long-term, part-time female college instructors.

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ABSTRACT

The number of part-time academics in post-secondary institutions is exceeding those of full time, and this trend is expected to continue. Concern for the academe has triggered scholarly inquiry about the impact of part-time academics upon the institution; however, questions about the effects of this issue on individuals have been subverted. This research explores the impact of long-term, part-time college instructor positions on the careers of aspiring academics. A narrative methodology was used to examine the experiences of five female participants and to interpret both the common and counter narratives within their stories. A key finding of the study is that part-time instructors are conscripted into full-time but ambiguous roles. In order to remain at the institution they engage in full-time behaviors, many of which are unpaid and invisible. Their choices and storylines are constrained by hiring, benefit, and pay policies and the insecurities of a changing role. This finding points to the necessity for academic policy that differentiates and supports the part-time instructor role.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

[it]...was equivalent to stepping from the shadows to center stage, from invisible understudy to recognized performer. In reality my role didn't change; it merely expanded. But perceptions changed. From my student's angle as audience, I had always been a key performer. But from the vantage point of the full-time cast, I was unusually invisible, swallowed by darkness.

(Bethke, 1995, cited in Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1995, p. 33)

These words in the literature inspired me to conduct this research project. I delved into a journey that revealed many truths about my work and the work of others in similar positions.

Who am I? I am a female. I am an academic. I am a statistic. I am a member of the largest growth in the workforce in academia (Charfauros & Tierney, 1999) and across North America I constitute approximately 40% of the total number of post-secondary instructors (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Rajagopal & Farr, 1992). Some call me aspiring and list me as 13% of this category (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). More often than not, I am referred to in a negative sense. Adjectives of invisible, exploited, underdeveloped professional, marginalized, and a second class citizen represent a beginning list of how I am commonly described in the literature. Positive terms are few but include words such as: hardworking, expert, and committed.

I am underrepresented in the literature; I am inconsistently documented; I am considered by some to be an invisible threat to post-secondary education and by others, its savior. I have yet to be clearly defined, as the existing research is scarce, is full of controversy, and argues about my future. I query: Am I useful to the professorate or responsible for its deprofessionalization?

Who am I? I am a part-time academic, a member of a social class that has existed

for some time, yet is not understood and seldom acknowledged by the profession to which it is attached (Banachowski, 1996). I am a social phenomenon which is gaining attention, although is still considered relatively new by the research world (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). The part-time academic has its roots in the early 70's and is growing at an unprecedented, uncontrolled, and unmanaged speed. The part-timer is the least understood of the academic roles.

Who am I? I believed I was a contributing professional. I have a twelve-year relationship with a college of which the last three have been as a tenured member. During a nine-year consecutive stint of 11.5 months of teaching duties, the literature classifies me as a part-timer and in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) words, an aspiring academic, a special class of part-timers who desire to secure full-time work.

Who am I?—This question now becomes urgent as I and others affiliated with post-secondary institutions must consider what impact my largely part-time academic role has had upon the academic world. What influence has the construction of my academic reality had upon me? In retrospect, has the beginning nine years of my career in which I was labeled 'part-time', but in reality taught equal to and sometimes more than full-time hours, been the demise of it? How do others perceive the influence of their part-time academic roles on their career development? Answering these questions will enhance understanding of a critical aspect of a social phenomenon which has been given scant attention in the literature (Banachowski, 1996; Rajagopal & Farr, 1992), but will play a major role in future post-secondary education (Avakian, 1995; Balch, 1999; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Haegar, 1998; Rajagopal & Farr, 1992; Spinetta, 1990).

Who am I? I am a graduate student in Studies of Policy and Practice at the

University of Victoria, B.C. with the opportunity, desire, and motivation to ask the question that must be researched. The question I posed for my thesis is this: What impact does the experience of long-term, part-time academic roles have on the development of the careers of human service college instructors? I believe that introduction of individuals' experiences into the literature will increase knowledge of this phenomenon and may stimulate further research. There is also hope that my thesis findings enhance policy development for the part-timer in academic institutions.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Emergence of the Part-time Academic

Part-timers emerged in the academic world in the early 1970's. This followed a luxurious time in the academy when full-timers were the norm, enrollments were high, and government funding was sufficient (Bowen & Sosa, 1989 cited in Rajagopal & Farr, 1992; Charfauros & Tierney, 1999; Rhoades, 1996). Projected declining student enrollments, fiscal constraints, and decreased government funding began a trend of hiring part-timers (Franklin, Laurence & Denman, 1988). However, what was to be a temporary fix became a permanent feature of post-secondary educational institutions (Gappa & Leslie, 1993).

The most consistent reason given for hiring part-timers is that it allows institutions to survive in a tightening period of fiscal constraint. Continuous reduction of government funding across North American post-secondary institutions forces administrators to use reduced capital to offer the same, and often more, course offerings (Avakian, 1995; Gappa, 1999; Pollack, 1986; Rajagopal & Farr, 1992; Reichard, 1998; Rhoades, 1996; Samuel, 1989). It is commonly agreed that hiring a part-timer reduces the course cost by about two thirds (Avakian, 1995; Charfauros & Tierney, 1999; Farrell, 1992; Fulton, 2000). This cost-saving is realized if, as is most often the case, the part-timer is only paid for the course (Benjamin, 1993; Fulton, 2000; Pollack, 1986; Samuel, 1989). Benefits such as preparation time, health, sick leave, and vacation pay are virtually non-existent (Mattison, 2000; Rajagopal & Farr, 1992). Although there are some exceptions to the rule (Berver, Kurtz & Orton, 1992), these cost-saving measures are considered by administrators as necessary to be fiscally accountable to the public and the

government (Avakian, 1995; Gappa, 1999).

Flexibility appears to be the second most critical asset of the part-time workforce (Avakian, 1995; Samuel, 1989; Tyree, Grunder & O'Connell, 2000). Institutions will be able to respond to market trends, both in training needs and student numbers if they have available to them a large, expendable workforce. Part-timers are hired and fired sometimes with only days notice (Spinetta, 1990; Tierney & Charfauros, 1999). Institutions are at less risk for budget shortfalls if they can cancel classes, whole programs, or add sections within short-time frames. Administrators justify use of these strategies by claiming that in today's highly competitive, technical world, training programs may only be required for a few years before the market demands change (Fulton, 2000). Haegar (1998) and Sayer (1999) suggest that in a market-driven educational climate, part-timers are also hired for their skill. They claim that when experts in the field exist, hiring them to teach is more economical than training full-time faculty. Although, it is not found stated in the literature, it would also make sense that those institutions which respond quickly to market demands will secure greater student numbers, a reputation for being market-responsive, and acquire more funding dollars.

The numbers of part-timers are escalating both in the university and college sectors across the North American continent (Balch, 1993; Barnetson, 2001; Gappa, 1999; Rajar & Farr, 1992). The statistics demonstrate that the cohort of part-timers across North America is large and almost half are women. This trend is likely to continue well into the 21st century (Avakian, 1995; Charfauros & Tierney, 1999; E. Flynn, 1986; Gappa, 1999; Haegar, 1998; Pollack, 1986; Reichard, 1998; Rhoades, 1996; Roemer & Schnitz, 1992; Spinetta, 1990). Indeed, Balch (1999) states emphatically, "Part-time

faculty are here to stay” (p. 32).

The most compelling finding is that there is a lack of data on part-time academics. Several who have reviewed the literature conclude and caution there are not enough hard data to warrant conclusions about this unique group of academic employees

(Banachowski, 1996; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Rajagopal & Farr, 1992; Wallace, 1984).

There are numerous points of view on this subject but few comprehensive research projects have been implemented. The first study that emerged and is widely quoted is Tuckman’s 1978 study for the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), but it focused on universities and part-timers who had full-time careers outside the academia and who taught part-time for pleasure (Banachowski, 1996; Wallace, 1984).

The most comprehensive American study to date is the United States 1992-93 National Study of Post-Secondary Faculty. It includes statistics on faculty in both universities and colleges. This quantitative study assesses a range of areas and limits reference to the part-time academic to number of courses taught. Canadian statistics are sparse. Rajagopal’s and Farr’s 1992 study of part-time faculty in Canada is quoted in American and Canadian literature; however, it appears to pertain solely to statistics on part-timers in universities. Barnetson (2001) concludes there is little information about Canadian part-timers other than, “Statistics Canada 2000b numbers for 97-98 that indicates 52.1% of instructors in colleges and vocational schools are part-time” (p. 84). Researchers David Leslie and Judith Gappa separately and in a combined effort since the early 1980’s contributed much to the research and are cited often. In 1993 they identify part-timers as a false economy, invisible, having limited career options other than full-time, and lacking knowledge or support of how to increase research productivity. In their

book, "The invisible faculty: Improving the status of part-timers in higher education" myths of this work force being inferior, less educated, and less connected are refuted. Gappa and Leslie (1993) declare it is time to stop using the part-timer as a scapegoat for post-secondary education failures and to re-think this fragmentation of the academic workforce to prevent an erosion of quality training programs.

The concerns, queries, and suggestions about part-time academics seem to remain largely unheard. It has been nearly three decades since literature on the part-timer began to appear, yet a sense of urgency is only now evident with the realization that part-timers' numbers have escalated to the extent where there are more part-timers in North American post-secondary institutes than there are tenured or tenure track instructors (Barnetson, 2001; Newman, 1999). Balch (1999) comments that this cohort of workers is nearing critical mass and it is only now just now gaining more attention from scholars.

The literature is mostly opinion articles, while few are researched studies. Facts are not always included, or not obvious at the first reading. It is sometimes difficult to decipher if it was a college or university study. Writers' bylines included some information, but often lacked details such as where the study took place, numbers of part-timers, and gender of part-timers. If written from an instructor's point of view, whether or not the professor is tenured is not always addressed. Interestingly, researchers' or writers' conclusions are stated as if all encompassing.

In the following section the research that has been conducted to date is discussed. Wherever possible the facts are revealed; if lacking, it is because they were absent from the source.

Controversies in the Literature

Some evidence indicates that part-time instructors perform good work and are a valued work force. Others contradict this. Gappa and Leslie (1993) note that most assumptions about the part-timer are negative and lack research support. Clark (1988) claims that large numbers of part-timers will be “disastrous to the professoriate” (cited in Banachowski, 1996, p. 55). Full-timers fear that a disproportionate amount of part-timers will deprofessionalize the academic institution due to having less knowledge and ability than tenured faculty. A policy adopted by some institutions limiting part-time instructors’ contracts to two to five years could confirm Clark’s prediction. This strategy of limiting contracts “institutionalizes inexperience and discontinuity” (Berver, Kurtz & Orion, 1992, p. 27). Wallace (1984) counters this notion. This older study of American part-timers in the humanities reveals they are hard working, self-disciplined, and love teaching. She claims they are at risk of being exploited by a system that hires them cheaply in order to support the senior professors’ specialized workloads and research projects. Additionally, she argues that part-timers are the ones who are “helping to preserve the dignity and status of the profession during these hard times” (Wallace, 1984 p. 585).

Berver, Kurtz and Orton (1992) discovered that the non-tenure track teachers are some of the top ranked instructors at New Mexico State University due to their focus on teaching and commitment to the students. Others argue that they are under trained, have lower levels of degrees, and are less prepared for teaching (Charfauros & Tierney, 1999; Kelley, 1991). On the other hand in a 1993 study, Gappa and Leslie found that most part-timers held higher-level degrees. However, Banachowski (1996) points out that studies

have not clearly identified what constitutes quality teaching and therefore, she feels that any comments about the comparisons of abilities are not supported by data.

Reichard (1998) considers there is an important link between research and teaching effectiveness. He claims that although teachers are probably quite good without conducting research, research will enhance teaching ability. The dilemma he presents is that because most part-timers are not rewarded for research, few will engage in it and they are unable to improve the institution's research profile. Others suggest that freeing up individuals from research allows them to concentrate on their teaching skill. Part-timers who focus solely on teaching would likely become expert teachers and are often noted for their excellence in the classroom (Berver, Kortz & Orton, 1992).

Part-timers are argued to have weak ties to their institutions. California community colleges that provided fewer professionalization opportunities for part-timers have instructors with diminished job satisfaction (Spinetta, 1990). However, at Baltimore Townson University, Haegar (1998) states that many part-timers have been there fifteen years and feel strongly attached to the institution. He also reports that most departments lack policies to ensure that part-timers become attached to institutions and that most full-timers do not understand the problems created by employing part-timers who are not integrated into the college culture. Others state integration is difficult for part-timers who work at several institutions to secure enough income and are often teaching when professional activities are offered (Tyree, Grunder & O'Connell, 2000).

Testimonials of individuals from the humanities department at Michigan Technological University gives insight into the range of thinking about the part-timer. Lockhart (1986), an assistant professor, insisted that, "[It is the] essential matter of

getting clear what the problem of part-time faculty really is—before attempting to solve it” (p. 17). He felt it was not known that some instructors prefer working part-time to full-time; however, many of the concerns for these individuals were similar to those part-timers desiring full-time employment: low pay, no job security, and little recognition by colleagues. E.A. Flynn (1986), a full-time professor who had worked as a part-timer, chaired a department that hired part-timers, and has a spouse who is a part-timer, spoke of how in addition to the other factors mentioned, connection was significant. For her, lack of connection was demoralizing while the connection as a full-timer energized her. J. F. Flynn (1986), a part-timer by circumstance, later embraced the role; however, he points out the negative aspect: “The relationship with the institution is, for the most part, alienating. There is an almost constant assault on the nature of one’s being and conception of oneself and a frequent undervaluing of one’s contribution to the life of the institution” (p. 16).

A dean at Bellingham Washington Community College writes that, “Both faculty and administrators must realize that part-time positions are not now, nor were they ever, meant to be pieces of full-time positions, and only a deluded few expect to earn a living by scraping together a number of part-time positions” (Fulton, 2000, p. 43). He felt that hiring part-timers at low wages without job security was appropriate as long as everyone understood that this is and will remain the reality. Wallace (1984), who spent 2 years researching for the book, “Part-time Academic in the Humanities”, summarizes that, “Part-timers must be treated as professional colleagues, hired in a more regular fashion, allowed opportunities for research and growth, supported by access to office space, secretarial help, campus facilities and compensated more fairly” (p. 586). She comments

though, that no one had determined how institutions with funding shortfalls were to achieve this.

In her review of the literature on the part-timer in the college setting, Banachowski (1996) reminds us that the numbers of part-timers can be misleading. Full-timers teach full course loads, an average of three courses per term, whereas part-timers may teach one, two, or more than three courses per term, depending upon the contract specifications. Part-timers, therefore, are in fact head counts and do not equal the status of full-timers who often disproportionately teach more courses. This must be considered when presenting research conclusions.

Evidence is still limited when comparing conclusions drawn by early research with more recent studies. In 1984 Judith Gappa stated that

Part-time faculty are as invisible in literature as they are in the faculty club and attitudinal barriers work to rob the part-timer of professional visibility...The pretence that they are a fringe group of stateless academics, marginal in capacity and thus exploitable without qualm is grounded in what may fairly well be called calculated ignorance. (pp. 8-9)

Eleven years later in their book "Strangers in their own land: Part-time faculty in American community colleges" Roueche, Roueche, and Milliron (1995) write that the part-time academic is still a mystery. Bethke's (1995) experience of being an invisible performer in the eyes of the full-time cast of tenured professors who surround her is a poignant reminder that the situation has changed little since Gappa's 1984 admonitions (cited in Roueche, Roueche & Milliron, 1995).

Focus of Existing Research

Although the characteristics of part-timers and work conditions have been documented and pushed into the limelight by recent articles, conferences, and unionizing

efforts, many writers insist not enough hard data have yet been collected to warrant research based conclusions. Rajagopal and Farr (1992) claim that most institutions have only recently begun tracking statistics on the part-time academic. However, queries about teaching effectiveness, overall impact on the profession, concerns about training levels, and loyalty to the places of employment, dominate what information and speculation exist. Predominantly presented as a negative facet, recommendations for increasing the status and conditions affecting part-timers are tied to a belief that these changes will benefit the educational environment, improve student training, increase rapport between full-timers and part-timers, and maintain standards of teaching. The question that has emerged is: "What will be the effect of the continued trend of hiring part-timers upon the academic institutions?"

Intriguing is the fact that the focus remains on the collective body. That is, the concern is what impact the part-timer will have upon the institution. The outcome for the instructor is studied but then analyzed only for its outward effect upon the post-secondary institution. The inward effect of this relationship is not analyzed. Researchers have been remiss in not asking long-term part-timers how their careers are being shaped; what their experience of continuing part-time contracts is teaching them about developing career paths; what choices and sacrifices they are making; how this relates to work perspectives; and in what ways, if at all, is it shaping their career planning. To fully understand the development of the part-timer and their presence in academic institutions, the long-term impact upon individual part-timers must also be examined.

Defining the Part-time Academic

To date there is no agreed upon definition of the part-timer as those associated

with the academia have been unable to reach a consensus. Tuckman and Biles (1986) define the part-timer as “someone who works less than full-time, as specified by the institution” (1986, p. 1). Others dispute this as it incorrectly states that part-timers do not work full-time. In my own work as a nine-year part-timer, in a given year, I often taught more classes, taught in more semesters, and had fewer holidays than full-timers. Scholars document this experience as well (J.F. Flynn, 1986; Fulton, 2000; Tyree, Gunder & O’Connell, 2000). Rajagopal and Farr (1992), in a study of part-timers, in Canadian Universities, discuss the difficulty of determining what part-time actually means. They state that

Part-timers may be defined by total load, by length of contract, by reference to a union bargaining unit, by load relative to full-timers, by declaration that they are not full-timers and must therefore be part-timers. The variety is astounding and astoundingly imprecise. (p. 321)

The following job titles often used to define the part-timer indicate the variation that exists: sessional, continuing, adjunct, lecturer, regular, and limited term.

An important differentiation between the part-timer and full-timer is tenure.

Instructors who are tenured have a guaranteed permanent position. Therefore, some claim the differences are those who are tenured or on tenure track positions are full-time and those who are not are part-time (Rhoemer & Schnitz, 1992). Gappa and Leslie (1993) label this a “bifurcated system” (p. 20). However some institutions do offer full-time regular work that includes most of the features of tenure or tenure track faculty, such as job security, benefits, and professional development opportunities. The difference is that the contract has a termination date with no guarantee of renewal. Schuster (1998) and Barnetson (2001) claim this indicates a trifurcated system: part-timers with no benefits; full-timers with benefits that will not be tenured; and the tenure track or tenured faculty,

with full benefits and privileges. Barnetson (2001) also notes that some institutions have constructed permanent part-time positions where instructors are tenured with full benefits, including professional development opportunities, and the only difference is that they have a reduced workload. In an attempt to have at least a basic definition of the part-timer, some researchers suggest that the part-timer is “most simply, one who is not full-time” (Rajagopal & Farr, 1992, p. 52).

Tuckman (1978) outlined the first research-supported classifications of the part-timer. Gappa and Leslie (1993) modified these and conclude that there are four loosely defined categories:

- Career enders; the semi-retired and retirees
- Specialists, experts and professionals who teach for love rather than for income [work full-time in their respective fields and teach part-time]
- Aspiring academics; those that are looking for full-time academic careers
- Freelancers; part-time by choice (pp. 44-49)

Future research needs to identify the type of part-timer studied. Richardson (1992) claims that unnoted differences risk the part-timer being “painted with the same stroke” (p. 29). Wallace (1984) believes that part-timers are diverse claiming that

[As long as] part-time teaching was [her] primary source of income and career satisfaction, [she] was saddened and discouraged by [her] exclusion from faculty governance, from opportunities for professional growth, from possibilities for recognition and reward. Suddenly, now that part-time teaching is a refreshing challenge, a break from [her] full-time job, a chance to stay in touch with the classroom, an opportunity for important professional connections, and a supplementary source of income and career satisfaction, [she] enjoys it with few reservations. (p. 583)

Thus, Wallace’s experiences show the contrasting perspectives of what it is like to be a part-timer. Reichard (1998) points out that generalizations that all part-timers are the

same puts policy development in jeopardy of being based upon a weak understanding of part-timers' impact on institutions. A similar caution about the effect upon part-timers is necessary, as policy development that is uninformed about its effect upon different types of individual part-timers will not adequately consider all aspects of the phenomenon.

The literature highlights the use of part-time instructors in academic institutions as an area that lacks a solid body of research from which appropriate policy can be generated.

The Changing Government Role: Business of Academia

Critical to understanding how long-term part-timer status impacts academic careers is to review the government's role in managing the public sector. In the 1980's the Canadian federal government adopted a new paradigm of public administration, which resulted in lessening the government's control over services to emphasize a "streamlined, client-focused, service delivery" (Bakvis & Julliet, 2004, p. 2, ¶ 3). A principle of this New Public Administration Model [NPM] is to promote efficiency by relying on external partners for service delivery (Gow, 2004). Prince (2004) refers to this as a governmental move from "health and welfare to stealth and farewell" (cited in Gow, 2004, p. 12, ¶ 4). Cohn (2004) supports this notion of a less visible government as he claims, "An attraction of the new public management model is blame avoidance" (cited in Gow, 2004, p. 9, ¶1). This results in social organizations being responsible for achieving some of the goals of the state and to be liable when these goals are not attained.

Under this new model, central agencies have been created and are given authority to manage much of the government's initiatives. Program managers are held accountable to the government and are expected to meet policy initiatives by being efficient, effective,

flexible, and innovative (Gow, 2004). Maslove and Fooks (2004) studied the impact of the construction of this role on nurse managers. They report “nurse managers are stretched and that growing administrative duties are resulting in a reduction of time for clinical duties to a level that is seen as inadequate and problematic” (p. 11, ¶ 2). Problems identified at the managerial level become the manager’s responsibility to devise solutions to solve issues with little support from the government.

How does this governmental shift in public administration affect post-secondary institutions? Examples from Britain and Canada, whose governments have adopted the NPM, will highlight its effect. Dominelli and Hoogvelt (1996), in a review of the relational shift between British university intellectuals and the State, note that in the late 1960’s the government moved from a “promoter of intellectual activity to a controller of it” (p. 73). The number of tenured positions was reduced. University intellectuals either became contracted workers or remained in positions in which workloads increased, post-secondary funding declined, and social status diminished. Dominelli and Hoogvelt (1996) report that management now shapes educational philosophy and critical thinking. Education is no longer marketed for its quality, but for its cost. Government decides what courses to offer and how to structure teaching so that it is affordable and cost-effective. Education becomes a marketable tool in which the locus of control moves from intellectuals to managers. Assessments become based on the outcomes of numbers of trained students rather than the quality of the education. Business principles have begun to influence services provided by higher educational institutions.

A look at Alberta will give an indication of how business principles have influenced some Canadian academic institutions. Alberta Ministry of Advanced

Education and Career Development in conjunction with colleges and universities developed a document called Key Performance Indicators used to allocate performance funds based on how well institutions measure on specific criteria. One college's business plan indicated that it needed to increase the use of technology in the form of more distance education courses in order to remain competitive in the market of post-secondary education that has seen its boundaries expand. As an instructor in an Albertan college, I was asked to refer to students as consumers, to make cold calls to prospective students, and to work with colleagues to devise marketing strategies. Language and principles associated with business have infiltrated higher learning institutions and are shaping the business of academia. Additionally, the concepts of organization of work and professional marginalization have also begun to shape academic operations.

Organization of Academic Work

Roemer and Schnitz (1992) consider the separation of the faculty into tenured and non-tenured lines as operating according to the principle of the dual market labor theory. Within this theory employment opportunities are divided into two clearly distinct sectors, each with "very separate and different working conditions, policies for promotion and wage structures" (p. 515). Herein, tenured faculty would be identified as the primary labor market and non-tenured faculty as the secondary labor market. This principle emerges in the academic world in the 1970's when an imbalance in supply and demand creates more trained people than there are jobs available.

Roemer and Schnitz (1992) further explain that some economists theorize that particular social groups are unable to move beyond their current economic status because of the lack of jobs in the primary work market. Therefore, regardless of individuals'

education and training, the lack of available jobs will keep them in the secondary labor sector. This counters the belief by some anti-poverty groups that education will solve poverty issues. To summarize the features of each labor market Roemer and Schnitz (1992) draw on the work of Gordon (1971, p. 91):

The primary labor market is characterized by high wages, good working conditions, employment stability and job security, due process in the administration of rules and opportunities for advancement. This contrasts with the secondary market that features low wages, poor working conditions, considerable variability in employment, harsh and often arbitrary discipline, and little opportunity for advancement. (cited in Roemer & Schnitz, 1992, p. 522)

Most critical for academia is that this theory also proposes that one of the outcomes of a dual market labor theory is that the secondary labor market will eventually organize to promote its needs at the expense of the primary market.

Mattson (2000) supports this notion as he discusses the history of social movements. He suggests that social movements, such as the civil rights and women's movements, are the result of pressing questions that people ask about the society in which they live. He similarly sees the academic labor movement as one beginning to ask questions about the future of higher education. One of the realizations he thinks is happening is that those who have been hired to do the same job as full-timers for low wages, with minimal job security and benefits, see their work as labor and not academic privilege. Action for many has become unionizing (Canadian Association of University teachers [CAUT] Bulletin, 2000; Kartus, 2000), exactly what Roemer and Schnitz (1992) suggest would be a consequence of a dual labor market.

Barnetson's (2001) research on 17 Alberta colleges indicates that dual market labor theory applies to five large urban centers that hold the highest percentage of part-

time positions. He proposes that this could threaten the privileges of the full-time faculty in part because college decision-making processes differ from those of universities. Colleges operate by a government appointed board of governors who negotiate a collective agreement with academic associations, considering the recommendations of council to the board. Dennison and Gallager (1986) note, "The advisory role of academic councils means that faculty have less control over academic matters than at universities—a Canada-wide characteristic in public colleges" (cited in Barnetson, 2001, p. 81). Alberta colleges, unlike the province wide bargaining in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario, must also bargain individually.

Utilizing Gappa's and Leslie's (1993) suggestion that the existence of a secondary labor market may actually erode the position and the size of the primary labor market, Barnetson (2001) proposes this potential exists in three of the five Alberta colleges where a higher number of faculty hold non-regular instructional (NRIAS) appointments than there are full-time permanent faculty. Barnetson (2001) also points out that some part-timers have limited term appointments that often include partial benefits and voting privileges. He suggests that NRIAS who see collective agreements as discriminatory could organize themselves into a cohort to seek a court ruling. However Prindle (1998), in her research of part-timers in three Alberta colleges, discovered that the current voting trend is for sessionals and full-timers to vote together to better the full-time situation (cited in Barnetson, 2001). It is important to note that although part-timers with voting rights tend to support the full-timers' positions, the opportunity remains for part-timers to band together to diminish some of the full-timers' privileges. In the other two of the five institutions, part-timer numbers are lower than the full-time contingent but high enough

that these instructors could follow a similar tactic. Additionally, governing boards of the remaining twelve Alberta colleges where current full-time faculty still greatly outnumber part-timers continue to face reduced educational funding. They may see an advantage to hiring more part-timers and a weakening of the full-timer's position.

The Canadian Association of University of Teachers (CAUT) supports a concentrated effort: "By organizing and bargaining collectively, contract academic staff can win" (CAUT, 2002, ¶ 4). Although reports were not found of part-timers banding together for legal action in Alberta institutes, in the United States a higher level of action is occurring. Contracted academics in three colleges in Washington State mobilized to file court action. The claims included unpaid wages for work done outside of the classroom, denied retirement, and summer benefits (Lords, 1999). The court decision was not yet finalized; however, it does suggest that part-timers in any institution could band together to fight for more rights at the expense of full-timers.

As colleges have been forced to look at current policies governing part-time contract conditions, they are also examining scholarly work and its relationship to institutional growth. Although much of the current research makes direct reference to universities, it would seem fair to conclude that the issues would remain similar in college settings, particularly because of the current trend of colleges becoming University-Colleges or degree accredited institutions. The following statement captures the importance of connecting scholarly work and teaching according to The Canadian Association of University of Teachers:

When teaching is separated from curriculum development, it can become the mere delivery of a standardized material; all academic appointments should recognize that academic work includes teaching, scholarly and professional activity and participation in service activities; research and scholarly work requires periods of study and experimentation. (<http://caut.ca.>, 2002)

This university association's mandate is to promote professional practice and to offer advice to its affiliated members. It is evident they endorse the premise that academic instructors should conduct research to improve practice.

It is also believed that motivation for creative efforts is directly related to interaction with families, groups, and members of institutions (E. Flynn, 1986). There is concern that such motivation will not occur for part-timers unless they are integrated into institutions. In other words, part-time academics will not reach or even realize their professional potentials, unless they are interacting with and learning from peers, and participating in scholarly work and professional activity. Even more complicated is the case of the part-timer who works for a number of institutions—where and with whom do they attach? Those with greater attachment are shown to have a greater commitment to the institution and better work performance. E. Flynn (1986) speaks of her move into a full-time position: “My tenure track position, when it came, energized me” (p. 13). Some suggest that those who feel little or no attachment are most likely to terminate their employment (Monroe & Denman, 1991).

Work itself is being re-conceptualized. Emerging, yet not fully understood in the literature, are themes of definitions of work, perceptions of work and how these factors affect the development of academics. Matteson (2000) suggests that the meaning of work in our new economy and within academia is being challenged: the lines between white-

collar and blue collar are blurring. Gappa (1999) speaks of the changing work world where the dual parent working family is interested in achieving work-life balance. She claims this generation understands that long-term employment in one place will become less and less the norm. Gappa (1999) also proposes that until a redefinition of work categories is accepted as a positive reflection of changing family and work needs, rather than reluctant responses to institutional pressures, the part-time academic will continue to be considered a less important role than the full-time instructor position.

This raises a couple of key issues. First, if the large and growing contingent of part-timers are devalued and not adequately compensated, as the dual market theory states, what motivation is there for the worker to invest in a particular institution's long-term goals? Dual market labor theory, in the case of the part-timer, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Long-term members of the secondary work force would eventually become socialized into that labor market, and this prevents entry into employment that demands a different type of socialization. Roemer and Schnitz (1992) state that

A permanent stigma can be attached to those who find employment in non-tenure track positions, an ascribed characteristic of sorts that would mark such individuals with an enduring inferiority based on their inability upon entering the job market to qualify for a tenure track position. (p. 527)

Thus, Roemer and Schnitz (1992) suggest lengthy part-time careers will prevent instructors from obtaining full-time tenure positions. Wyles (1998) supports this notion as she claims that part-time teaching is "a red flag on a resume that signals a suspicious pattern of temporary job" (p. 89).

Second, as great a concern is financial security. Part-timers who rely on short-term, teaching contracts as their sole income source experience difficulties in achieving

financial security (Charfauros & Tierney, 1999; Kartus, 2000). Monthly income is unpredictable and long-term planning for old age is a challenge. Although most articles and studies report that part-timers' earning potential is far below that of full-timers (e.g. Fulton, 2000; Haegar, 1998), none discussed the issue of old age security. Scholars have not considered the following questions: Do people who are unable to gain full-time positions have a secure financial plan? How does one gain financial security when the number of contracts and their dollar value varies from term to term, particularly when contracts themselves can be cancelled with little lead-time? Furthermore, how does one plan for old age when they work mostly in contracted positions and are therefore, ineligible for employee pension funds? What academic services exist to assist those to make long-range financial plans for the future who find themselves seemingly unable to or prevented from advancing to full-time tenured positions? Do part-timers seriously consider the need to plan for the future, or do they continue believing that the tenured position will one day be available?

Professional Marginalization

Historically, women, children, the disabled, various cultural groups, and those of low economic status, have all been at some point in time referred to as marginalized, or outside the norm. Barnetson (2001), Charfauros and Tierney (1999), Huberman-Arnold (2001), and Rajagopal and Farr (1992) argue that the part-time academic contingent has developed and moved forward partially due to an inaccurate belief that women, who constitute the majority of part-time positions, mostly desire part-time work in order to fulfill other life responsibilities. They conclude that marginalization, invisibility, expendability, and low wages have been long-term consequences of this belief. It

appears that instructors may experience professional marginalization when they work part-time. Conditions are such that they do not receive the full benefits of a tenured or tenure track position.

Booth (2001) notes that, "As a consequence of heavy teaching loads, contract academic staff members are subject to professional marginalization and pressures on time, evolution of course content and scholarly activity" (§ 8). Ottawa University has two unions, one for part-time faculty and one for full-timers. Diane Huberman-Arnold, a part-timer of this institute, (1999) states that

The division of union protection means that part-timers are marginalized within the university administrative structure. We are not on the 'in'; we are not in the loop...students have more say on departmental, faculty and university policy than part-time people do. Part-timers are not regarded as career academics, even those part-time professors with PhDs and good research publication records. (§ 3)

Demanding workloads and isolation from active participation in policy decisions impedes part-timers' abilities to be recognized as full contributing academic members.

Full-timers admit that they perceive the part-timer as less important to the institution. Farrell (1992) writes that, "Despite my admiration for his [part-time co-worker's] work, I know that I did not take him as seriously as I take the tenure-line faculty" (p. 31). Part-timers have spoken about their sense of being devalued. Kartus (2000) writes in her report from an interview of a part-timer that, "Although she knew the university was using her, relying on her good nature and credentials to solve a problem, the pull of the classroom was irresistible" (p. 22). Kelly's (1991) American study indicated the consensus of 314 college part-timers surveyed was they felt treated as second-class citizens (cited in Banachowski, 1996, p. 54). A part-timer, who was considering joining her colleagues' unionizing efforts, commented that:

If the administrators had given us the minutest part of recognition—a certificate of appreciation, a service pin, or some other minor gesture that said ‘you make a difference in the education of our students’—we would have taken our tokens and gone home happy. (Kurtus, 2000 p. 17)

Brenda McLean (2001), a sessional from the University of Alberta who attended the San Jose conference “Exploitation of Contract Staff”, claims that sessionals “don’t often receive the respect [they] are due” (p. 2). Scholars suggest that role ambiguity is a serious problem faced by part-timers. They are often cut off and isolated from the full-time staff and the general academic community (Monroe & Denman, 1991; Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1995).

Worthy of note is that students’ perspectives are absent in the literature; however, as the department in which I worked decreased the number of full-timers while expanding the program, department members made a conscious effort to hire part-timers for some on-campus teaching to expose students and full-timers to a variety of instructors. As the trend of hiring part-time academics continues, parents and students may either protest or support the use of part-timers, depending upon whether their experience is positive or negative.

Finally, part-timers themselves claim there are positive aspects. For instance, some value liberation from pressures of publishing and participation in activities beyond direct classroom teaching. This creates opportunities to free up longer stretches of time to meet personal and family needs (Flynn, J. 1986; Schneider, 1999). The academic work, regardless of amount of workload, is enjoyed for its intellectual challenge (Kartus, 2000). Those with full-time careers outside of the academy or part-timers who combine teaching and fieldwork, bring special skills of hands-on practical experience and real world

expertise (Avakian, 1995). Semi-retired academics view part-time teaching as a privilege and a refreshing change from full-time work (Wallace, 1984). The positives keep aspiring academics pursuing what some administrators claim is an impossible belief: to have a financially viable career in a part-time academic role (Fulton, 2000).

Clearly, there are many negatives (Fulton, 2000; Huberman-Arnold, 1999; Kartus 2000). Administrators view part-timers as a cheap, flexible, and expendable workforce (Samuel, 1989; Tyree, Gunder & O'Connell, 2000). Part-timers' lack of control over workloads in terms of amount, course choice, and the often short-time lines of workload allocation are stressful and frustrating (Carroll, 2000; Pollack, 1986). Part-time positions are often part-time because of circumstance, not choice. Courses are sometimes chosen for money rather than preference. Administrators determine financial compensation and what benefits, if any, are allocated (Grimm, 1986; Kartus, 2000; Spinetta, 1990; Tierney, 1999). Even the choice of work itself may not exist if contracts are suddenly cancelled due to lack of student numbers, or if there are not enough contracts to sustain a year's worth of work (Spinetta, 1990; Tierney, 1999). Lack of recognition is a serious outcome of part-time work and noted by administrators, full-timers, and part-timers. Roles that are unclear and unambiguous are producing a large academic contingent who lack tangible rewards and emotional support.

Recommendations in the literature suggest that policy development address the need for improved security for part-timers by increasing benefits, wages, and attachment to one institution. Interestingly, some administrators question why money should be invested into training part-timers if they are transient and about to move on to another institution (Richardson, 1992). A lack of foresight prevents the consideration that training

part-timers at one institution will benefit the next institution and raises more questions: Is it better for part-timers to secure minimal benefits and security at one institution or is there a more global approach? Could the part-timer be supported in attachment to the greater body of academia rather than this being institution specific? Is there the possibility of provincial policy that could further support part-timers?

The questions that arose from this review of the literature helped to clarify and refine the research process to the stage of selecting the methodology that would best answer the thesis question: What impact has the experience of long-term part-time academic roles had on the development of the career of human service, college *instructors*?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine career development of long-term, part-time human service, college instructors. Factors that influence and shape part-timers' academic experiences are analyzed to determine how their careers have been supported and constrained. My interest in this area stems from my own lengthy journey as a part-timer which began in the fall of 1990, when I was hired as a sessional instructor in a college Early Childhood Development Department, and finally culminated in a tenured position nine years later. My curiosity about others with similar experiences and my questions about how they perceive their careers led me to focus on one aspect of the part-time academic experience that is unknown and to develop the following thesis question: What is the impact of long-term part-time positions on the careers of human service college instructors?

The following definitions indicate some important parameters of the study. **Career** is defined as employment in a particular academic field that leads to, and is rewarded by continued acquisition of knowledge, skill development, and financial remuneration. **Part-timer** is defined as a college instructor whose primary responsibility is to teach classes to students, and one who lacks guarantee of continuous employment. **Full-timer** is defined as one who has a continuous appointment with full benefits, either tenured or leading to a tenured position. **Human service** is defined, but not limited to the fields of early childhood, child and youth care, social work, nursing, and education. **College** is defined as post secondary institutions that offer certificate and diploma programs, and some degrees brokered through universities.

Narrative Methodology

The study is situated within a qualitative framework. A qualitative inquiry affords the rich examination of part-time academic instructors' experiences in an effort to understand the phenomenon from their perspective. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), "Qualitative research offers the opportunity to focus on finding answers to questions centred on social experience, how it is created, and how it gives meaning to human life" (cited in Strebuert & Carpenter, 1999, p. 2). Using a qualitative structure would allow me as the researcher to gain an in-depth view of part-timers' experiences of their career development. However, the challenge was to select one method from a number of qualitative designs. Grounded theory, phenomenological, case studies, and autobiographical methods are commonly used, although narrative design piqued my interest.

Gappa and Leslie's work proved to be most influential for the design of the study. In their book, "The invisible faculty: Improving the status of part-timers in higher education" Gappa and Leslie (1993) state that, "Most interview sessions prompted far more complex and emotional responses than we had anticipated; part-time faculty often stayed beyond the appointed time to share personal experiences and views" (p. 40). These researchers discovered the data were far richer than they expected and were remorseful that because of the book's focus they were unable to include all of the gathered information. Their experience solidified for me that a narrative inquiry is designed to gather a detailed account of peoples' experiences of life events.

Two additional sources were also helpful. The book, "Ethics and process in the narrative study of lives" (Josselson, 1996), contained a variety of authors' narrative

reports of three to six pages in length on a variety of social phenomena and became useful in conducting a couple of research procedures. One section describes how to interpret stories, while another presents ethical issues of writing about others' lives. Kvaales's (1996) book, "InterViews", influenced the design of the interview process and parts of the analysis. His discussion of how to conduct a qualitative interview helped me to prepare and to implement this part of the research process and his notion that analysis begins with the interview was adopted.

Narrative methodology allows the teller or the interviewee, to reveal their reality in the form that is most salient to humans (Fulford, 1999). The novelist Doris Lessing informs us that, "We value narrative because the pattern is in our brains—our brains are patterned for storytelling" (cited in Fulford, 1999, p. 113). Narrative inquiry has its history in the oral telling and receiving of stories, the only method of passing on wisdom in earlier cultures (Fulford, 1999). This tool is now regaining strength in written form as a viable means of exploring human experiences and learning from its tellers how people make sense of their lives. Not only do listeners and readers gain new insights into the question asked, but narrators themselves also gain increased awareness as they work with researchers to create and understand their own stories (Agronick & Helson, 1996, cited in Josselson, 1996).

Earlier psychological research omits participants' voices and proposes truths devoid of people's perceptions of their lives (Parker, 2005). Parker argues that phenomenological research, although an attempt to restore agency to participants, fails to do so for the reason that researchers push informants aside to draw truths from the underlying meanings in the interview data. In this type of inquiry meanings are believed

to be present within what individuals say. Researchers dissect the information until these meanings are revealed and then conclusions are used to 'fix' people's experiences as an inflexible reality. However, in narrative research, the truth exists as "the intersection of biography, history, and society" (Riessman, 2001, cited in Gubrium & Holstein, 2001, p. 83). Narrative methodology seeks to understand how individuals tell their stories and why they frame them a particular way (Riessman, 1993, p. 2). It is believed that the story could be recounted in many ways, but individuals will create the identity that they wish the audience to see. "Informants do not [reveal] an essential self as much as they perform a preferred self selected from the multiplicity of selves or persona that individuals switch between as they go about their lives" (Riessman, 2001, cited in Gubrium & Holstein, 2001, p. 80). Respondents tell a tale of a life event in a way that makes sense to them and how they wish others to hear. Various truths exist but the researcher is interested in their choice of how it is presented (Josselson, 1996). The stories communicate the individuals' viewpoints and reveal a great deal about the social and political processes at play in their lives. Sclater (2003), lawyer turned researcher, supports Riessman's and Parker's conjectures as she recounts experiences of distraught clients who suffered feelings of non-validation when judges dismissed their desire to elaborate upon the emotional aspects of their situations (cited in Seale, Glampietro, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2003). It is this elaboration of the points outside of the facts that narrative inquiry seeks and considers necessary to more fully understand the human condition.

Narrative methodology also separates itself from other qualitative approaches by its analytical methods and focus on the story (Riessman, 1993, p. 1). Interpretation is used to understand the story and how it was constructed (Josselson, 1995). Parker (2005)

argues that, “Narrative research explores how individual selves in capitalist society are performed, and it can show us ways out of the prison of identity” (¶ 1). Other research methods restrict interpretations of who people are and what they do to narrow interpretations that diminish the human spirit and prevent reflections that could move people to newer levels of self-understanding and change existing societal norms.

To fully understand the human story, Kvale (1996) argues the whole interview is a narrative if the researcher purposefully designs the interview to that end. He believes that later analysis must be shaped in the beginning stages of the research and that the structuring of questions, participant selection, and multi-layered analysis must be framed with that analysis in mind. Others (e.g. Riessman, 1993) suggest that only parts of the interview are stories and researchers can select the stories from the “talk”. Parker (2005) agrees with Kvale that the interview is the first level of analysis; however, he insists that the form of a story is a most important aspect of the analysis. He believes that participants describe their life events in a genre, a literary form that artists, poets, and writers use to convey meanings of culture. It is the genre, he claims, that communicates to audiences how they should interpret people’s descriptions of life events. For example, some of the story genres could be tragic, romantic, or comedic. Parker (2005) believes audiences need to first attend to the genre as it frames the story and reveals how tellers present their experiences of particular phenomena.

Each story also depicts a central narrative theme and sub-plots that give audiences further clues about interviewees’ perceptions of life events. The sub-plots expand and explain the variations of experiences. Andrews (2003) claims that the stories are not isolated from storylines present in society but are shaped by those constructs (cited in

Seale et al., 2003). Plummer (1995) also states that to achieve legitimacy, stories must be real enough to make sense to some audiences. This is described as being situated in a cultural narrative. For example, Andrews (2003) notes that the end of the Cold War was viewed throughout Western Europe and in United States as a celebration of capitalism winning over socialism (cited in Seale et al., 2003). Media promoted this belief and contributed to the general public's acceptance of this popular opinion. Therefore, cultural narratives are also said to shape public understanding.

However, analyses often depict counter narratives that defy current cultural opinions and popular beliefs. Andrews (2003) refers to this as tension in the stories and claims that she is drawn to it, as it appears to oppose popular notions of experience (cited in Seale et al., 2003). The counter narratives are another truth of a phenomenon that is not currently recognized or acknowledged by society. For example, Andrews (2003) also notes that after the Cold War ended, her research on East German leaders indicated that they opposed the cultural narrative of this being a time to celebrate; instead their belief was that a capitalist monster had been created (cited in Seale et al., 2003).

In summary, narrative inquiry accepts stories at face value and then situates them within the existing cultural narrative. Each story is viewed as a point in time, a reflection of current history and societal beliefs, yet with a consideration those other truths may exist. Parker (2005) indicates that in order for research to inform, stories are analyzed to determine how people construct themselves and to assess any new paths this examination may create. A space opens for individuals and researchers to reflect upon how common narratives have the potential to script people into believing and acting out pre-determined roles. Examining these paths may determine the existence of new ways of being,

revealing opportunities for individual and societal change.

Although there are differing views on how to conduct narrative research, this methodology was selected over other qualitative methods, as I believed that examining and exploring how and why participants tell their stories would best answer the thesis question.

Selection Criteria and Recruitment of Participants

The selection of a purposive, theoretical sample was based on Reichard's (1998) recommendation to define the studied group because much of the previous research lacked this clarity, thus rendering it difficult to draw conclusions for the part-timer. Because it is generally accepted that research and publication expectations between college and university instructors differ, it was important to focus the study on one type of institution. I selected college instructors as the group to study as it represented the type of institution that I was familiar with and I had experiences of working as a part-timer in this setting. Potential participants had to have worked for several consecutive years as a part-time academic. To meet the intent of a qualitative study to seek diversity, I chose the human service field. This provides a range of programs to choose from, but not so numerous that there is no common ground. Research, as well as discussions with part-timers, indicates that department chairs often influence contract specifications. Institutions have guidelines, but most chairs had the opportunity to design, suggest, or argue for better deals for part-time instructors. Therefore, to ensure chair diversity a minimum of two institutions were used.

The selection criteria were further narrowed to reflect the researched categories of Gappa and Leslie (1993). Of the four proposed, I focused on the aspiring academic,

those part-timers who are pursuing a tenure track position. This category appears to be of greater concern in the existing research than those who were at the end of their careers and teaching to make additional income, or those field experts who taught for pleasure and prestige. I also chose to focus on women as Barnetson (2001) discovered that in Alberta colleges 53.4% of women instructors held part-time appointments as compared to 36.4% of men and; therefore, it is more likely that women participants will be recruited. There also seems to be discrepancy in what part-timers are paid; however, most researchers who discuss financial outcomes for part-timers claim that one could not earn an adequate income in part-time positions. This led me to place the final criteria on selecting a minimum of two and a maximum of three interviewees who are the main wage earners in their families. Generalizability to populations is not sought, but generalizing narratives and concepts to help build theory is the intent of this thesis. Hence the selection of divergent individuals provides important depth to the data. A certificate of approval from The University of Victoria's Human Research Ethics committee was obtained before proceeding to the interviews (see Appendix E).

This study was generated because of my own experience as a long-term part-timer at one college. Encouraged by my thesis supervisor to include my story in the data analysis, I was one of the participants. To gain additional participants I started with my comfort zone: asking colleagues. I approached one colleague and asked directly. I gave her a brief overview and then shared the questions that I had developed; she eagerly came on board. Because she was a friend and she was very intrigued by the question of the proposed study, I discussed with her the possibility of her interviewing me. Her eager, 'yes', removed the stress and challenge of figuring out how to do a self-interview. We

agreed that I would interview her first so that she would be familiar with the context of the interview before becoming the interviewer.

To gain the next participants, chairs of the Early Childhood and Community Rehabilitation provincial college organizations were contacted. This was accomplished by sending e-mails to the chairs outlining my request and including a poster to post in the institutions (see Appendix C). Two participants responded. To keep these potential participants engaged, a few days after their initial response I sent a short memo about the study and then a follow up e-mail a few days later to request interview dates. One committed to the process and one did not respond. The final participants were secured after three of the interviews were conducted. I discovered another part-timer at the institution where I worked and made a personal request that was also agreed to. The final one took a bit more searching. I perused college websites to find the chair contact information. A cold call to the chair of an institution resulted in the recruitment of the final participant.

In total, five persons, all women, were interviewed and their narratives are the key data source for analysis. I interviewed four participants and because of my own experience of the question studied, I was also interviewed by one of the participants. Three college institutions were represented with three participants from the same institution. Three individuals were from Early Childhood Development and two were from Rehabilitation. Following is a brief summary of each participant's background:

Participants

Participant one: married; no dependants, minimal part-time for over five years while working full-time in the field; currently, part-time for three years at this same institution; non-main wage earner; mid-thirties
Degree: M.A.

- Participant two: married; dependants; sole wage earner; part-time for over 20 years with the same institution; age: early fifties. Degree: B.A.
- Participant three: married; no dependants at home; non-main wage earner, part-time for five years at the same institution; early fifties Degree: B.A. & working part-time on an M.A.
- Participant four: married; no dependants; non-main wage earner; part-time for 3 years at the same institution; mid-forties Degree: B.A.
- Participant five: married; dependants; main wage earner; part-time for 9 years at the same institution; 2 years as a full-timer at this same institution; 3 years after the research start date tenure position was cut; moved provinces and became a part-timer working part-time for the same institution and hired on part-time by another college in the new province; age-mid-forties. B.A. working part-time on an M.A.

(all degrees are in the participants' respective fields of Early Childhood and Rehabilitation except for one Master's Degree, which is in Policy and Practice)

Ethics

There are a number of ethical considerations addressed in this specific research project. Prospective participants needed to be clearly aware of the scope of the study. To communicate this, each participant was presented with a letter of informed consent that outlined the intent of the study, the participant's role, my role as a researcher, and how the results would be handled (see Appendix D). The informed consent documents are stored in a locked box out of the public domain and kept separate from the data. As the data were transcribed all identifying material was omitted; I devised my own coding system to keep the data anonymous. Additionally, when I forwarded the participants their final story, I requested their feedback on the level of anonymity. All are satisfied.

I felt it also important to discuss with them the possible ramifications to their employment if those that hire them are able to somehow identify them as a research participant or recognize them in the published study. This is critical in an inquiry of this

nature, as numerous quotes and detailed descriptions of their experiences are included in this document. Furthermore, individuals must understand that this thesis will be publicly contained within the University of Victoria's library, both in print and electronic form. The latter is of utmost importance as it is more accessible to a wider audience. I was surprised that no one commented upon this. I thought this might concern some; however, all seemed more eager to have their story told, than being concerned about who might recognize them.

Protecting colleagues' anonymity required careful consideration. I had shared the thesis topic with several college instructors and thus meeting on-site with participants might allow others to recognize them as research interviewees. I discussed this potential for recognition with participants and let them determine the level of physical visibility. One desired a Saturday interview where few college personnel would be present. The other one chose to be interviewed during the workday at the college. I did mention to these colleagues that I would not speak openly about their participation, but they were free to do so. Throughout the project it was difficult not to share the interview information with other colleagues who were also interested in the research. Part of this difficulty arose because hearing the part-timers' stories evoked a growing desire to advocate for change, wanting to make some immediate differences in their part-time experiences. I had discussed the research project with the department chair who hires part-timers each year and she approached me on a few occasions about related issues. I was able to share general knowledge gained from the literature review. This allowed me to successfully increase her knowledge without jeopardizing colleagues' anonymity, although I must admit, I was very nervous about making a slip!

There are some surprising ethical considerations with the use of technology. One is the use of e-mail and the necessary precautions around this. When e-mailing three or more possible participants, I was tempted to send one e-mail to multiple recipients. I managed to prevent this error; nevertheless, it was not without fear of exposing participants to each other. Additionally, faced with requests to fax consent forms, I found myself asking individuals, "Are the areas secure and private? Are you okay with me faxing to this area?" Requests to send information to home e-mail addresses or to leave messages on home answering machines produced more questions: "Are the e-mails received privately? Who will listen to the phone messages?" As extra precaution, messages were worded vaguely so only participants would recognize the nature of the information.

I began to realize how quickly and innocently without intention, you could reveal participants' identities. The weight of this felt pretty heavy as I began to more seriously consider myself a researcher. This weight stayed with me throughout the project and I wonder if it will ever totally resolve itself. Because of my close connection with one participant, I think it will always be present. Having not considered the depth of the responsibility that comes with interviewing known subjects, it is a reluctant recognition, not because of regret in having done so, but for a fear that I will at some point in the future unintentionally dishonor the confidentiality agreement.

Drawing upon my feelings of vulnerability when I participated in a reciprocal interview within pilot work for a graduate research course, I was able to remain sensitive to participants' roles in this research. Aware of the fact that the information shared could cause feelings of exposure and vulnerability, I proceeded with great care and attention.

This process was aided by the preparation of detailed information about the research process. All participants stated that the documents that they read were very clear and none had additional questions. I also discussed any potential outcomes of being a participant before they agreed to be interviewed. All laughed off the idea of being harmed by the research, but did express appreciation that I had the foresight to discuss with them. I believe that the establishment of trust and acknowledgement of their vulnerability assisted me in obtaining good data.

I met face-to-face with individual colleagues to discuss the research process and ended the meeting with the request that they take a few days to think of any unanswered questions before formally committing to the research. Brief visits to each individual solidified their agreements and I collected the signed informed consent forms. No colleague had any other questions about their role; they were however, curious about the research process, as neither had conducted formal research. I talked informally on the phone with the off-campus participants and followed a similar procedure of gaining agreement. These forms were mailed back to me at the college.

Data Collection

Some recommend that the qualitative interview should be entirely open-ended, thus not influencing the responses of the interviewees by the questions asked (Bar-On, 1996, cited in Josselson, 1996). Kvale (1996) recommends that, especially for novice interviewers, a list of prepared questions with probes will assist the interviewer with the actual process and may help participants respond thoroughly. Parker (2005) claims that the interview will be told in story form. Their work helped me to develop four open-ended questions with probes that would entice participants to tell lengthy stories.

Questions asked for information on educational paths, skill development as a part-timer, impact on career, and future predictions of work. The final question was to assess the path: Would they have done it differently? (see Appendix B for questions, probes and the rationale).

The audio taped sessions were approximately two hours long, in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews that were based around the flexible, pre-developed questions. My supervisor reminded me that once one interview was completed, I could adjust the questions or use some of the information gathered to increase clarity in subsequent interviews. This occurred in a couple of incidents. For example, I said to one interviewee, "One participant felt it was like this.... Is this true for you?" She responded with, "*Hmmm, I hadn't thought about that, but now that I am, yes, that is true*" and then expanded her explanation. What I appreciated was that individuals stayed true to their story. For example, one woman responded to my above question with, "*No, not for me. It was....*" Even in disagreement, she was able to use the example to think about the point and further clarify her experience with additional detail. This expanded the richness of the stories told.

Two of the interviews had to take place over the phone. These individuals lived over 400 kilometers away, eliminating the possibility of face-to face sessions. First, I had to learn how to use the telephone apparatus that would tape the interview. Many practice conversations with friends guaranteed I was correctly operating the technology. Then I had to think about how to make this a comfortable experience for both parties to ensure rich data collection. The process I used was to (1) follow up interviewees' pre-consent e-mails with an additional e-mail response; (2) make a 10 minute personal call a few days

prior to the interview to get used to each other's voices; and (3) conduct the interviews.

Josselson (1996) reminds us that during the actual data collection differing needs may arise. He says that it is often difficult to hear one's own stories as one's words sometimes have an unexpected starkness. It is an additional challenge to read our stories with the extra layer of someone's, commonly a stranger's, interpretations. Each participant knew that voluntary withdrawal at any point in the study was a viable and supported option. To reaffirm this understanding, after each interview I reconnected individually with each participant to ask if they were concerned about their role, experiencing any negative reactions, or had questions. All were pleased that I checked in and complimented me on my ability to make them feel comfortable in the interview process. One said, "*You have a real ability to interview,*" and another, "*I loved telling my story to you; it made me realize how ego-centric we are.*" These combined with this response, "*As long as someone wants to listen to us, we will gladly tell our story,*" to energize me as I understood that all were pleased to have a forum in which to tell their story. I was eager to move to the next stage: data collection.

Reliability and Validity

"Narrative research does not discover what the truth is, but rather how someone makes sense of an event that they may have had some difficulty in describing so that it becomes true to them" (Parker, 2005, p. forthcoming). Riessmann (2001) further states there is not one specific approach to validate interpretation in a narrative tradition and thereby, in the final analysis, we must clearly differentiate the subject's view from our own (cited in Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). What becomes most important is to make the levels of interpretations clear, to reveal the audit trail to describe how the final

interpretation is derived. Audiences of course may read events differently than narrators do, resulting in contested meanings. Stories represent different meanings to individuals depending upon their own positions in life; therefore, the stories will continue to inform people, long after they have been first told (Andrews, 2003, cited in Seale et al., 2003).

Considering the above information, rigor and validity have been achieved by a number of procedures. A conscious effort was made to collect good data. To stay true to the question, my thesis committee and participants guided me to complete a study that I believe accurately reflects their journeys of long-term part-time instruction. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) suggest that a good measure of rigor is the adequacy of the data—in other words that the researcher achieves saturation of the data. This required close work with participants to make certain they had provided a complete story, presenting back first the transcript for accuracy and then the story for affirmation that it was indeed their story.

Collecting data through in-depth, semi-structured interviews allowed for gathering a large amount of data. It also gave me, the interviewer, the opportunity to ask additional questions to ensure that saturation was achieved at the individual level. By the fifth interview, many of the story genres were being reflected across the stories and in consultation with the thesis committee it was determined that enough of a variation had been gathered and that the interviewing stage was complete. Saturation was achieved three ways: (1) during the initial interview (2) after all interviews and (3) after the analysis.

Kvale (1996) indicates that a characteristic of validity “is whether an interview study investigates what is intended to be investigated” (p. 88). My own experience with the phenomenon ensured that this was indeed true. The literature, my experience, and a

conceptual framework informed the interview questions. The semi-structured interview allowed other information to be presented that may have been missed by rigid pre-formulated questions. Furthermore, unlike the definition of validity, where numbers and specific truths must be generated, Kvale (1996) claims that validity in qualitative research “comes to depend on the quality of the craftsmanship during the investigation, continually checking, questioning and theoretically interpreting the findings” (p. 242). Utilizing literature that addresses narrative analysis to assist me throughout the analytical stages ensured validity. Runyan (1981) also suggests that multiple interpretations may arise from analysis of an individual’s experiences of a phenomenon and that there is strength in multiple interpretations. He reminds us that if the different views cannot be falsified, then they are valid. It is less important to conclude with a few generalized findings, but rather the goal is to expand and make visible all of the possible interpretations to fully expose the possibilities of the human condition in relation to the studied phenomenon (cited in Kvale, 1996, p. 242).

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) also suggest that the audit trail must be clearly documented so that others are able to follow decisions that are made. This process has been made visible throughout the Methodology and Findings Chapters. Each decision and layer of analysis I conducted is documented and clarified according to the principles of narrative methodology, signaling to the reader how the final conclusions are conceptually derived.

The next step is to present the data analysis, fully described in the following Data Analysis Section.

Data Analysis

The analysis stage was a long three and-a-half-year process. Lacking experience in research analysis, I feel least skilled in this area and those who wrote about how to do narrative analysis all agreed on one thing: there is not one specific method that all narrative researchers will use to interpret data. "There is no binding theory of narrative but instead great conceptual diversity" (Riessman, 1993, pp. 16-17). I initially planned to conduct an interview, transcribe, and then transform the transcript into the story, before moving onto the next interview. However, this became a much different process. I developed writer's block. Even though I was committed to the narrative methodology in its use of stories as one step of data interpretation, writing the stories was an unforeseen challenge. Desire to move forward quickly was blocked by my need to learn to write well and to be true to the data. My very linear, preplanned approach was a complex process where all facets were intertwined: interviewing, transcribing, and attempting to write the first story. The next session describes the various levels of analysis.

Transcriptions

Kvale (1996) claims analysis begins with the literature review and that knowledge of the phenomenon is essential to reliable qualitative research. He believes that it feeds into the formulation of questions and then helps to structure the interview. The transcript is viewed as a living conversation and he reminds us that if the questions are specifically chosen, that is the first level of analysis (Kvale, 1996). Following his recommendations, interviews were audio taped, and transcribed in detail including notes, pauses, and emotional and physical responses. Transcripts were then presented back to the participant for clarification and modification for actual words said in the interview.

This process went smoothly. Only one participant wished changes, but these were more because of the grammar structure; she was horrified at how ‘improper’ her language was. Once reminded that speech was different than the written language, she was reassured and then gave the go ahead. I realized at this point that for the next interview I would prepare the person about how the written transcript would differ from the spoken word. Although to many this may not seem anything other than recording the spoken word into a written form, Kvale (1996) insists that in narrative interview research, taking a living document and changing its form is indeed an interpretation as the transcriber must make choices about how to write, what to write, and what to emphasize. I decided against hiring a transcriber, performing all of the typing myself to remain as close to the data as possible and to complete the first level of analysis by completing these transformations.

Writing the Stories

The next task was reducing the 40-45 pages of each individual transcript into a 6-10 page story. This step was previously viewed in the writings of various authors in the book “Ethics and process in the narrative study of lives” where they used a similar format to interpret accounts of life events (Josselson, 1996). Reshaping the transcripts into stories is used to make visible the journeys of the five women in a form that would communicate to the audience at one level and to inform one level of research analysis (see Appendix A for an example of a story).

Construction of the stories was time-consuming and required an intensive engagement with the transcripts. Fear that I would not capture the essence of the story meant that it took a long time to even commit to beginning this process. Once started, it

was far more time consuming than I had anticipated. The transcript was read from start to finish, twice and in consecutive readings; once to get the whole picture and then the second time to make notes in the margins. Putting individuals' experiences in my own words and setting it within a beginning, middle and end was a struggle. There was a danger of glossing over some events to ignore some and to change events to make a good story. Upon completion of the first draft, it was set aside for several days, and then read again. Editing and rewriting occurred until it seemed to flow in a logical sequence. Satisfied with the story, I went back and again re-read the whole transcript. Here I was looking for any discrepancies between what I wrote and what was revealed within the transcripts. Occasionally I did find one or two points that I needed to expand. When the first story was finally written to satisfaction, the other stories came together more easily.

Stories were then sent to participants with a request to verify that they reflected their experiences. Because the interview, story writing, and story presentation deviated from the linear intent of completing all of the work with one individual before moving onto the next interview, some participants received the story back in the first year of data analysis and others near the end of the third, a year after they were interviewed.

The first and final persons interviewed, confirmed acceptance in e-mail messages indicating pleasure and acceptance of the story script. One commented that she would like to read the whole thesis after it was defended. The two middle interviewees acknowledged all of my e-mails regarding the progress of the research but chose not to respond to the final question of acceptance. This surprised me, as they both engaged in discussion of the initial transcript, one over the phone and one in person. At that time, they seemed eager to follow the results of the progress and had expressed interest in the

final outcome. I sent the story both in e-mail form and mailed directly to their home, but neither contacted me. A phone message to one participant elicited no response. At this point I felt that additional contact would be harassment. I did wonder if the time lag, now four years after the initial contact, was too long and they desired to end their relationship with the project. It could also be interpreted that they were satisfied and felt that their non-contact would indicate that there was nothing amiss.

I interpreted acceptance and non-response as the signal to continue to the next process, interpretation of the story. Ochberg (1996) indicates that although the story is valid as the narrator's reality, further interpretation is required in the research process. "Interpretation reveals what one might say if only one could speak freely, but one can only see this if we are willing to look beyond what our informants tell us in so many words" (cited in Josselson, 1996, p. 98). It is in this interpretative process that the teller, and the reader can make sense of the data as the researcher helps to "transform the story into an argument" (Ochberg, 1996, cited in Josselson, 1996 p. 111). To get to this stage involved further analysis. I began by reformatting each story to include a large margin on the right. I read the stories and coded each one.

Coding of the Stories

Upon completion of the coding of the five part-timers' stories, I experienced a distancing from the data. A thesis meeting and further reading helped me to reconnect with narrative analysis methods. Kvale (1996) says we must stay connected to the whole story in narrative analysis to not lose sight of the plot, which can happen if you dissect the interview into chunks that become too distanced from the story. The coding was set aside to refocus on narrative analysis. The following sections present a further analysis

of the data.

Genres, Cultural Narratives, Central & Counter Narratives

The individual stories I wrote created an interpretive space. Genres, a cultural narrative, a central theme and a counter narrative are all identified and interpreted. Parker (2005) gives a structure to begin story analysis. He believes that identifying individual story genres gives the first glimpse of tellers' messages. Influenced by Parker (2005), it made sense to first make visible the genre that shaped each story. This is followed with an examination of why each participant's story reflects a particular genre and concludes with exploring the factors that supported the selection of the genres and what purposes they served for participants.

Discussing the story genres evident in these five stories invites readers to begin to understand how these part-timers viewed their journeys. Plummer (1995) also suggests that there is typically an overall genre, or a cultural narrative of all stories presented in a certain time period; thus, I acknowledge and explain the current genre of part-time academics. Furthermore, each individual genre is examined and its relationship to the cultural narrative is also explained. Another level of interpretation discovered that across the five stories there is also a central narrative theme. This central narrative theme is acknowledged along with the sub-plots and counter narrative that explain and present the final reasons why these five women part-timers constructed these specific presentations of their career development.

To determine the central narrative theme, sub-plots and counter narrative, the natural meaning units technique is used (Kvale, 1996, p. 95). Each individual story was first reduced into central themes. Reading each paragraph in the transcripts and

describing the content in one word or a small phrase identified the sub-plots. This was a challenging process, especially to ensure that all-important elements were not reduced out of existence. Satisfaction that these final storylines did reflect the essence of the experience was realized by several readings of the bits and corresponding sub-plots. Naming the sub-plots was a back and forth process as a word or phrase became absorbed into another to create a new name. For example, the sub-plot 'Organization of Work' was produced from a number of different phrases. Listed here are three of over 20 words and phrases that were eventually reduced to one title: questioned why work was no longer abundant; part-timers have limited choice in workload; and contracts shaped rights and benefits. It was in this process of naming the sub-plots that the central narrative theme appeared. Further examination of the central narrative theme across the five stories and the sub-plots made visible a common counter narrative.

Finally, paradoxes and new insights were noted. I had anticipated this could be a part of the process before beginning the interviews, as Kvale (1996) and Josselson (1996) indicate that telling and then reading one's story brings enlightenment. People will sometimes see themselves in new ways and articulate that. Similarly, Parker (2005) proposes that studying identities that individuals present creates space for new paths or new ways of acting. Kvale (1996) also mentions that participants looking at their experiences in new ways could be an original intent of the research and thus when initiating the study, one should have already thought ahead to this and shaped one's research accordingly. This was done somewhat with the four interview questions, but more intentionally with presenting of the story back to the interviewee and followed by further analysis of the narratives by myself as the researcher.

Before moving to the Findings Chapter the limitations of the research are presented followed by a self-reflection about engagement within the research process.

Limitations

Riessman (1993) reminds us that the findings are limited historically as they are representations of an event that occurs in a certain time frame, shaped by current cultural narratives. The truths that are discovered from the interviews of these five women part-timers may effect change in academic institutions' treatment of part-timers, thereby shifting future part-timers' experiences. Narrative methodology also limits the number of participants due to the vastness of the data that are made available when the intent is to record individuals' stories. My experiences beforehand with a couple of pilot projects about this general topic were that participants are willing and eager to talk at great length; thus, I originally had committee approval to limit to six stories. However, it was later agreed by my thesis supervisor to further reduce to five as I was overwhelmed with the amount of data from five participants and it did appear as if no new information was arising. Furthermore, this small sample limited the range of experiences researched, as participants had to meet very specific characteristics.

Pre-research thoughts were that I would be most limited by my novice research status in terms of analyzing the data. I would still agree with this although each step of the journey provided me with a new awareness of how to conduct quality research. Excellent support and feedback were received from the thesis committee. One factor that I reflected much upon was that I could also be limited in my ability to transfer the thoughts of others into a story that reflects their experiences and not mine, particularly as I had a lengthy part-time academic instructor career. Inclusion of my own story creates a

risk that I possibly will be my own limitation. I may become unable to separate my own experience from those of others to ensure accurate reporting and interpretation. In the end, I believe that I was able to decentre. I shared with my thesis supervisor that

I learned to just sit at the computer and write with no thought as to what it should say. The story began to take shape without pre-planning or projecting where it would end; each story began to have a life of its own.

This communicated to me that I did indeed set my story aside to hear each unique story as it was revealed, although a fine invisible thread may exist at some level that I was unconsciously unable to mentally disengage from and may have affected the interpretation.

Completing the thesis took a much longer time frame than expected. Working full-time in an academic setting, moving to another province, and starting new work, some of which involved writing courses, stretched out the completion of the thesis far beyond what seemed practical or ethical. The study has taken five years to complete. It took three years to wrap up the literature review, the interviews, transcriptions, completion, and acceptance of the 6-10 page stories and another year to complete the final thesis document in preparation for defense. The longest a participant waited to receive their story was a year. Although I e-mailed participants each term with a brief update, the replies stopped as I entered the fifth year. I believe time contributed to loss of interest.

I also began to wonder about the relationship of my research to any new developments in this area. I was bothered by the fact that by time this was completed, it may indeed be slightly inaccurate according to current literature.

Self-Reflections

Inevitably, my own experience working part-time has filtered through and impacted aspects of the study. Tired of the journey and the stress of completing a thesis in the midst of a move to a new province where I once again began a part-time academic career, I have reached saturation levels. I have read, studied, cheered, and been depressed as I remember the words of many who criticize these women and me for considering that a worthy career can be developed through long-term part-time work. Perhaps they are correct, perhaps not, but the women of this study and I are fighters who will attempt to achieve gainful employment through part-time positions, while pursuing tenure track paths.

Having lost my tenure track position due to cutbacks, my family and I relocated to a new province. Once again my workload is high as I resume the path of part-timer in a world that still considers full-time the preferred position. New experiences are numerous. I learned to teach new courses in new ways such as via electronic teaching and phone teleconferenced classes where 15 students and I join together once a week for 1 ½ hours. I have become a 'victim' of the entrepreneurial approach that Hess (2004) derides:

The entrepreneurial approach leads to a trivialization of contingent academic labor and a dismissal of any collective approaches to changing its conditions. In fact, the entrepreneurial approach depends on maintaining the conditions of contingent labor. This approach, to my way of thinking, only increases the alienation of contingent labor without explaining much about it... (¶, 4)

Despite Hess's negativity, I will continue to work at securing enough work to enjoy a good life and to continue the development of my career.

Participating in the research by being interviewed posed interesting dilemmas for

me throughout the implementation of this project. Some reflection upon those dilemmas may help the reader and me to gain clarity upon how this shaped and informed this work.

Interviewees and Researcher

Knowing some of the participants in a personal and collegial role caused me anxiety about how to deal with them on a research level. Initially I was relieved, as I was nervous about interviewing people whom I did not know and found comfort in a personal connection. This connection assisted with eliciting a large amount of data as the tellers easily engaged and were receptive to probes that were used to dig deeper. Having some knowledge about their part-time journey also assisted me during the interview in knowing what probes to use to gain in-depth stories.

The drawbacks came later as I worried about inaccurate presentation of the data. Questions emerged that I could not answer: What if they disagreed with what I interpreted? What if they feel that they were too visible in the final document, as they do not have access to its creation to comment on visibility? What if this project somehow comes between us, as friends or colleagues? I think my inexperience as a researcher probably contributes to excessive worry, but some of the above ramifications could be realized. This has become less of an issue now that I have moved away from the institution, although it may plague me in years to come.

To eliminate these risks, in discussions with colleagues and friends I believe that I was open and honest about the nature of the research, its intent and the forthcoming process. I also shared with them that I perceived one limitation would be that this was my first formal research project and that I would continue to learn as the project unfolded. They were very supportive and excited for me to be involved in this professional pursuit;

one envied me and wished she could be at this place in her career and one could not imagine taking on a project of this magnitude.

The whole project became a continual road of self-reflection as I delved into the women's part-time journeys. Each new piece of information from the interviews either clarified my own position or posed questions. At times I had to refrain from judging their choices and quell the temptation to tell them how to do it differently. Some of the interview discussion seemed therapeutic for both of us as we laughed or gained insight together. I did worry that my own immersion in the part-time journey would somehow dull the telling of their stories, or put the interpretation of my journey as more important. Wary of becoming the focal point of the research, I removed myself as much as possible from the document, but entered enough to make myself visible as a participant.

Having shared our stories in a formal way, I feel restricted from discussing our common experience in a collegial way. Being researcher distanced me from on-site colleagues, as I did not know how to set the boundary between being a researcher and being a colleague. I was leery about starting conversations, wondering if they might question if I was looking for more information. It was an uncomfortable feeling and one never completely resolved. Having moved away, even now if I call to talk to a colleague, it still feels as if the project sits there between us. One colleague, a non-participant, and I were able to discuss aspects of the literature review that I found intriguing and felt that I could share without jeopardizing others' participation, but I never knew how much to share, if it were the right time to share, or if it was appropriate information to share. Although I was the researcher, the colleague participants and I are linked beyond the researcher and the interviewee relationship.

The Reward

However, most meaningful for me was the energy that was created in the interviews. I will hold onto that memory as reminding me that regardless of the pitfalls and my ineptness in dealing efficiently with all of the quirks and demands of this particular study, it was a moment of worthiness. Concluding each interview left me feeling that each part-timer was pleased to have someone listen as keenly as I did to their stories. I felt that if one little piece of information gained could somehow create change for themselves or others, then on one level my work was done. And this, I do believe, has been achieved.

In the next chapter, the Findings Chapter, the genres are identified and assessed. The smaller sub-plots are named, described, and then related to the central narrative theme. The counter narrative is revealed and the section includes participants' revelations of changed perspectives. Knowledge gained about why the overall viewpoints were created in these particular forms and what is learned from these is discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The journeys of these five female college instructors are neither completely positive nor negative experiences of long-term, part-time positions. Enjoyment of the work, the people, and growth in skills, entice them to remain in positions that could be eliminated and rarely lead to full-time appointments. Although they desire to be full-timers, the stories told are ones of performing the full-time role without its glory. Characters change, promises are broken and yet they surge ahead tempted by promises of the gold mark: the full-time job.

The Findings Chapter introduces the individual genres found in these stories and highlights their significance. Discussion of the common genre is followed by illumination of the central narrative and sub-plots. Why the stories are told in particular ways and how they relate to the current cultural narrative is followed with the presentation of the opposing or counter narrative. Knowledge gained is the final summation.

The Five Story Genres

Genres frame the telling of life events (Parker, 2005). Clearly evident in each of the women's five stories are literary forms that shape perceptions of their part-time journeys. An examination of words, phrases, and nuances of voice tone and body language produced in the interviews contributes to the assessment of the corresponding genres. Although determining these overall genres reveals information about how these part-timers view their journeys, each story is then interpreted further by asking why each woman chose to reveal this identity.

Story One: Tragedy Befalls

Tragedy is the oldest of literary forms and was developed by the Greeks. This

literary style presents characters that seek understanding of life's often painful and seemingly purposeless events (Genre Studies: Tragedy, 2005, ¶7). Serious misfortunes are brought on by heroes' actions and divine interventions (Classic Technology Center, 2005, ¶ 1). Modern tragedy is similar in that it records accounts of how circumstances both change and prevent people from achieving their full potentials (Genre Studies: Tragedy, 2005, ¶ 3).

This first woman's story is presented as a modern tragedy. Her voice fluctuates in intensity; she is calm when discussing the positives and agitated when discussing the negatives. The story's villains and heroes combine with life choices to 'fix' her in a part-time rather than a full-time role. She speaks of an ending dream and the loss of the promise: the full-time position. Believing a tenure track position would always be a choice, she enjoyed many years of work as a part-time instructor. However, the full-time position was not available when she was ready to work full-time. She claims people and circumstances thwart her goal of obtaining tenure. At times she questioned her own decisions, although she believes the chosen paths were right for her and her family. The overall mood of her story is regretful and somewhat resentful, and the thoughts of being slighted cast a shadow over the positive aspects of her journey of part-time instruction.

Why does she present the story in this way? Having begun work in an era of job abundance, she had assumed there would always be full-time teaching opportunities. She also believed that good work would be rewarded: If one excels in their work as a part-time instructor, then their remuneration will be the privilege of gaining a tenure track position. The dream burst as she moved closer to retirement. Faced with the unsatisfying and painful realization that the time to obtain full-time work was running out, she

recognized and was frightened by the fact that there was limited opportunity to gain financial security for old age.

It seems logical that the tale she constructs is tragic and presented to the audience with what seems to be a desire for them to take up the cause. Her story exemplifies the painful conditions of life experiences that have shaped her part-time journey and greatly reduced the likelihood of her securing a full-time academic career. As well, she may have considered that the researcher, in a recently secured full-time position, now had power to influence positive change for part-timers' experiences within the department and perhaps within the institution.

Story Two: Overcoming the Odds

In the second story the individual presents a detective fiction. She is the intelligent heroine overcoming many obstacles. She ingratiates herself with the enemy and believes she will outsmart those who wish to block her goal. The audience accepts her argument that she will solve the issue of obtaining full-time work. During the interview, her voice is full of warmth and she presents her story in a calm and collected manner. Pauses are used to consider responses to some probes and her word, "No", stops misinterpretations allowing her to restate or clarify a description of her situation. Her story is upbeat and positive and confidence permeates. The tale is suspenseful and ends with the audience cheering her on, assured that she will secure her goal of a permanent, full-time position.

In this story the woman's quest for personal achievement rather than an economic need, stimulates the search for the full-time position. She is making slow progression to fulfilling that goal and she desires that others believe she is in control of her destiny. Her desire to tell the audience of independent success is perhaps to retain the conviction that

she is responsible for personal fulfillment and if she has control, then she will succeed in achieving this career aspiration.

Story Three: Dramatic Adventure

The third story is a dramatic account that hints at tragedy; however, it is predominantly a tale of adventure and circumstance. She sees herself as emotionally distant from the institution, ready to sever ties to pursue other suitable work opportunities. Numerous challenges shape her career and she overcomes many obstacles. Although unable to retain the full-time position once achieved, she is proactive in accessing resources and speaks positively of the next venture: a move to a west coast life style. She seems to keep one step ahead of impending tragedy and has been successful in rising above changes that could crumble a tenuous hold on career development and acquisition of adequate income. Her story communicates to the audience that she is managing the circumstantial and predictable events of her career path.

Her conception that life is circumstantial shapes the presentation of this story. Additionally, she and her spouse's experiences of non-secure jobs mold her story. In the early years of their career development the common occurrences of budget cuts, profit margins, and expendable employees formed her belief that employees are dispensable and workers must fend for themselves. She views her role as the main wage earner as being the one with the 'luckier opportunity.' It seems as if both of their work experiences contribute to a realist view, creating a more positive presentation of her journey. Aware that change is to be part of her career, she desires that the audience accept this interpretation to justify her career path. She is to be neither pitied nor envied, but accepted for where life circumstances have positioned her.

Story Four: Romantic Loyalist

A fourth story unfolds as a romantic tale that reveals the part-timer's close ties to the people and the institution. Although she had worked part-time for the institution for several consecutive years, she was recently courted to leave her place of full-time employment to work solely for the college. Ideally, she had wanted to move directly into a tenure track position and she did wonder if this was the right time to leave her current job. Although, there were some rough moments as the new relationship shifted and roles changed, she views the bond as 'cemented' and that she is a valued employee. She believes that the chair and department members consider her skill level and knowledge important enough that they will fight to keep her employed and will do what is possible to create a full-time position for her. She leads the audience to accept that the fairy tale ending will be achieved; however, she hints that the ending could be tragic if those with more power than the chair determine her position is redundant.

Working full-time is not financially necessary; thus, it seems to give her permission to present the story as a romance. Financial disaster will not occur if she remains part-time, although the situation may become a tragic emotional experience if the full-time position continues to elude her. Ending current full-time employment before a guarantee of full-time work was risky, but she considers the losses of benefits, steady employment, and good salary manageable because of additional income sources. Her experience of this part-time instructor relationship with the institution is short enough to warrant belief that the full-time position is attainable. Desire to have the audience assume a fairy tale ending will assure herself that the risk of quitting full-time employment to pursue a non guaranteed, academic path was worth it.

Story Five: Self-Sufficiency

This fifth story is a dramatic tale of self-sufficiency. Family circumstance created the need to move often and she became skilled at obtaining work at preferred places. Other family income allowed her to choose positions she valued rather than working for just a salary. To gain work that she enjoys, she sometimes chose jobs with fewer hours and lower wages. If unable to immediately secure the desired employment, persistence and determination contributed to successful acquisition of the self-selected work sites. The final move resulted in choosing a college as the next place of employment to become an instructor, a successful venture and a position, albeit part-time, that she retains today.

In this final story the part-timer position is a professional move rather than a decision based on the level of income. Her story seems to reflect her personality and her way of life. The audience is asked to support her version as it justifies her choice of a career that may not develop further and could disappear tomorrow. She reminds the audience several times that she has always worked where she wanted to and is willing to sacrifice some money for happiness to enjoy the work. The length of this women's part-time career is shorter than the others and likely contributes to setting the story in a more positive genre as the path may be too new to view the perils and pitfalls as burdensome characteristics of the part-time instructor position.

Cultural Narrative: Towards a Tragic Genre

Plummer (1995) suggests that a common genre will encompass life experiences or rules of human behavior and represents the thinking of people at various historical times. People's experiences become integrated with common knowledge of particular topics to shift and change the accepted genres. A review of the literature that is discussed in

Chapter Two indicates that an over-arching belief is that exploitation and pitfalls are common features of the part-time position: Part-timers are shunned by full-timers, non-supported financially and emotionally, and have limited opportunities for advancement into full-time positions. Looking closely at these five women's stories, this sense of tragedy is repeated in the three cases where the part-time journey has been the longest. The stories 'Tragedy Befalls', 'Dramatic Adventures', and 'Romantic Loyalist' represent women who have been teaching part-time for more than eight consecutive years. The first tale is most clearly a tragedy, while the other two could become tragic if the women experience a change in current employment conditions. In contrast, the two part-timers who are early in their instructor career paths are not yet reflective of this genre; their situations are presented predominantly as positive career choices. What is not known is how these two individuals' views might change if they continue to hold part-time positions. Despite the differences, what was discovered is that there is a single common experience across the five stories.

Central Narrative Theme: Construction of Self-Identity as if full-time

Understanding how the five women situated their stories and then comparing these to current social viewpoints, leads to the discussion of the central narrative. Regardless of the individual genres and the one common genre, a central narrative theme emerged as a common experience of all five women. These part-timers who desire full-time positions could not be part-timers. They had to engage in full-time-like behavior without the perks of the full-time position. For those beginning part-time journeys, this act was presented optimistically as if they considered it a privilege to walk in the same halls as the full-timers. As the part-time journeys lengthened, the sole and main wage

earners replaced feelings of glory with frustration, resentment, and disillusionment as they felt the fading of their hopes of a full-time position. The realization that they were not achieving financial security caused worry and contemplation of what changes were now necessary to create some semblance of old age security.

These five women part-timers feel scripted as full-timers. To continue working within institutions that traditionally hire full-timers, they feel pressured to work at being like a full-timer. This means being visible, accessible, on-site, skilled instructors, and known throughout the college community. The following interview quotes from the women discloses this perceived reality:

- *“I acted as if I was a full-timer”*
- *“I had to mark my territory”*
- *“So all along I’ve really felt like a full-timer”*
- *“Some were surprised when they found out I was part-time”*
- *“I work just like full-timers”*

Clearly, the instructors believe that if they are to remain eligible for hire, their performance must duplicate that of the full-timer. The ways in which these women acted as if they were on tenure track paths were revealed through analysis of the following narrative sub-plots.

Remaining Visible

Common to all informants was the notion that one had to be visible to remain eligible for future work. What was intriguing about this was its dual meaning. First, the women had to be physically visible: college personnel had to see them on-site and recognize them as instructors. One woman perceived that in order to be hired for

additional work and to be considered for tenured positions instructors had to be seen because, “*If you are not seen and not here, they don’t think of you, that’s why you have to be here.*” Secondly, being visible meant that people knew them by their college volunteer commitments. The women alluded to the belief that one had to do the extra, even though it was free labor. One participant felt that she needed to

Ingrain [herself] or make a conscious effort to ingrain [herself] into the college by doing things that the college recognizes as being beneficial to the college...like sitting on the scholarship selection committee ...otherwise [one is] too distant and therefore when [she does] put [her] name forth for things, it’s like, well what [is one] giving back to the college...

These women also mention that in playing the role of a full-timer, the college community, including students, assumes you are full-time. Not only did one have to be physically present to remain hireable: one had to put in unpaid time.

An interesting twist of gaining visibility was that one part-timer claims other part-timers in her department “*do the part-time work and that’s their only job.*” She partially justifies her worth to the institution by speaking of those part-timers as less productive than she. This situation indicates the possibility of part-timers pitting against each other if vying for the same contracts. Roemer and Schnitz (1992) claim that in the dual market labor theory part-timers are considered secondary laborers and that they might rise up against the primary laborers, the full-timers. In this research, the fact that the part-timers pit against each other for the same contracts could be an additional layer of the dual market labor theory where workers within the same sector compete against each other to obtain enough work to earn adequate income. This could also be the conditions of a divide and conquer approach that keeps the primary labor market intact.

Remaining Invisible.

Intriguing was the discovery of the contradictory sub-plot to being visible: invisibility. The part-timers in this study recognized that they could withdraw from situations in which they were not bound by policy. In fact, it was the one instance where these part-timers felt they had more power than full-timers and they gave the impression of enjoying this attribute. All recognized invisibility as a definite role and one that was uniquely theirs. Considering it advantageous, all executed the act of being unseen in their part-time journey. The most common use was actively withdrawing from internal politics. One woman enjoyed her invisibility because sometimes “...*you know, I could just not care cause I wasn't full-time*” and another was relieved that when cuts were made “... *[she] didn't have to be [t]here to see people cry.*” Avoiding unpleasantness appears to be a welcomed relief.

Another participant claimed that a benefit of part-time was that she did not

...have to be involved in any of the administrative aspects if [she] didn't want to. [She] hate[d] that [of a previous job] if it took [her] away from direct work. [She's] now in a situation where [she] can do as much as [she] wants, but [is] not assigned any extra [committee work]

Although it is known from information previously documented in the discussion of ‘Remaining Visible’ that all five part-timers engaged in the extras to become eligible for work, what seems important here is that the choice to engage in unpaid work remains an element of part-time contracts. However, being visible or invisible can create feelings of ambivalence. These part-timers felt that they could engage in behaviors that were like their full-time counterparts and thus create the illusions that they were tenured instructors or they could choose to be invisible and thus be considered non-essential to the institution. This woman says that it

is sometimes why I'm not more pushy about furthering my career, like I get so nervous about applying for jobs. I think it's partly personality but partly just the way things have gone. It looked as if I was right on the door step, 2-3 times. Now, I don't think I'll ever get in.

Her words summarize the ambivalence of being in a role that is not clearly articulated nor understood by college personnel. Thus, these part-timers have shared that at times they work to be visible and at times they work to be invisible. The notions of being visible and invisible are affected by a variety of organizational conditions that these women have experienced in their part-time roles.

External and Internal Working Conditions

These five part-timers shared how they are constrained and supported in career development. They enjoy teaching part-time and find that when it meets personal and family needs, it is a suitable work role. However, when their needs change due to other job loss; or loss of income from a mate; or less part-time work being available; or a need for benefits; the part-time role no longer suits them. Their change in needs affects the appeal of the position. One who had worked part-time for a long time and believed that when she was ready to move into full-time, the position would be available explains this situation: *"If I still wanted to be part time I would be looking at it more positively than I am right now. Right now I'm ticked that I'm not here full-time."*

All participants mention awareness of the increase of contracting out of instructional work in colleges. One states that, *"I was always very aware, you know that this [contract work] was part of my part-time experience."* All five part-timers were also cognizant that this is a general employment trend. One claims, *"[I was aware of] globalization and the way employment trends are going, not just in education, but in the corporate world as well...Because I'm interested, I would devour books upon them."*

One informant struggled with this shift in her work definition: "*Who was to know that contract work was going to happen?*" but recognizes that "*young college students are now being advised to prepare for five careers.*" Another complication of work specific to colleges is that cities typically have only one or two colleges. If part-timers are unsuccessful in gaining tenure track positions at the one or two institutes, pursuing a full-time position could require relocation to another city.

Student numbers can also influence how much work is available to part-timers. One college in a city with high employment experienced a steady drop in student numbers. For two individuals it meant a decrease in the security of enough year round work to earn an adequate salary. At this college, the shortage of on-campus students meant a decrease in available full-time workload and to prevent departmental loss of tenured positions, full-timers taught the extra spring and summer sessions normally allocated to part-timers. With summer and spring sessions no longer a guarantee, part-timers had less work available and therefore, experienced a decrease in expected salary.

Working conditions governed by internal college policies both frustrated the interviewees and supported them. Although the common story genre pointed towards a tragic outcome for those longest in the part-time position, there are numerous incidents where all women describe opportunities to enhance skill development and professional knowledge. They discuss occasions in which their career development excelled and in some areas they declare feeling more skilled than full-timers.

Hiring Policies

Part-time work was not meant to be full-time. College policies were written to move part-timers into full-time work. For example, a collective agreement of one

institution in this study reads:

Any member who is appointed a full-time sessional basis for an academic session and who is subsequently re-engaged on a full-time basis for the next ensuing academic session shall normally be granted a full-time annual or continuing appointment. (collective agreement, 2003, p. 5.3)

The belief is that if there is enough work to rehire the instructor, the departmental workload must be expanding enough to accommodate another full-time position.

However, it was frequently the case that special soft funding, rather than base budget money, supported new department initiatives, which created part-time work. This funding could not be used to support a tenure track position because the money was a short-term commitment. Thus, soft funded projects conflicted with the college's policy of moving a sessional position into a tenure track path. This created situations where instructors who were able to secure good work for more than one year became vulnerable, as policy did not allow for this situation to remain a long-term, renewable position. One woman had to "*...to sign a paper every year saying that [she] would not come back to the board and grieve the fact that they were not offering a tenure track position.*" In this scenario, the department had work to offer the woman but she could not be rehired for a second consecutive year because the additional work was not base-funded; therefore, the board did not have guaranteed money to offer a tenure track position. Thus, this college's policy that was intended to protect individuals from being blocked in securing tenure track positions, that is, those hired sessionally should be considered for continuing appointments, prevented one part-timer's assurance of being hired for available work beyond one year.

Similarly, another individual at a different institution said she faced work restriction with a new "*ruling [that] became that if you were part-time, then you had to*

be part-time and could only work a 50% workload. This new policy was worrisome to her as *“the [new] contract... may screw [her].”* Therefore, even though she had been able to work year round, including summers, for three consecutive years and earned a decent wage, in the future she and other fellow part-timers would be restricted to working 50% or less of a full-time workload. In her situation, regardless of whether or not full-time workload was available, the policy would prevent this part-timer from working full-time and earning a decent salary. An interesting follow up is that full-timers at this institution deemed this unfair and fought the ruling: *“Now the faculty association is putting grievances for me and these other people ...to say, look you should be bumping them into full-time.”* Support for the part-timer was a positive outcome of this new policy change.

Attempting to discover the specifics of this new policy or contract language about part-time positions in this institution's collective agreement, an e-mail inquiry asking for verification on the effects of this proposed policy was sent to this participant in the fall of 2004, but no response was given to the question. Reading through the current collective agreement for this institution also failed to produce an answer. The document was complicated to read and did not clearly address policies for the casual part-timer. If the policy existed, I did not recognize it. My search was similar to some of the part-timers' experiences with the college policy documents; they are lengthy and detailed and most remain unread by these part-timers. They largely trusted they were treated fairly. One respondent stated in reference to the policies, *“Those books are huge, who reads them”* while another participant responded, *“I just trusted that they [the contracts] were right.”* Only when the policies affected their current status did they become aware of

their existence. One participant commented that, *“Once you reach a certain number of teaching hours, the formula changes.... they hadn't adjusted ...and sent me a letter explaining the retro cheque [the amount of money]...which was kind of sweet.”* An initial mistake in salary placement motivated one individual to inspect contracts more closely and question part-timers' rights, occasionally becoming aware of discrepancies between the policy and her experience of it: *“When I received my first cheque, I noticed that they had me at the wrong level....after that I inspected every contract with a fine-tooth comb.”*

It is intriguing that only one part-timer took the initiative to discover her rights. Who knows if the other part-timers are receiving all of the intended conditions of their contracts? Are part-timers so grateful for work that they do not dare to think they deserve better? Perhaps limited policies shape part-timers' feelings of unworthiness. The fact that policies applying to part-timers were difficult to locate in one collective agreement might impress readers that embedding these policies non-descriptively was a deliberate act to dissuade inspection of the policies. However, the same collective agreement first discussed in this section has since added policies in support of part-timers. For example, one policy now reads:

A member appointed in a full-time sessional basis to replace a member on leave may be appointed to another full-time sessional basis to replace a member on leave (collective agreement 2005, 5.2.6)....The college may establish full and part-time temporary appointments for members in conditional, non-based funded activities. (collective agreement 2005, 5.2.7.1. p.9)

The individual quoted in the hiring policy section who had to sign a paper every year agreeing to not to pursue a grievance would today be allocated the work without special conditions.

Administrative authorities, particularly the chairs of academic departments, have

authority to hire part-timers as long as the contract does not conflict with a collective agreement policy. To bypass policies, chairs consulted with administrators and had limited success at gaining better deals for the part-timers. These five part-timers recognize their vulnerability knowing that they are at the mercy of people rather than policy. One part-timer explains that, *"They could have tossed me at any time and then I'd be out in the cold."* A second woman comments, *"Here it doesn't mean anything, I could be here another 20 years, and really the status is the same and really the college benefits greatly from having the likes of me."* They both note the irrelevance of work history and promises of continuing part-time contracts. The part-timer who had to sign a paper every year acknowledging that she would not grieve her position shared her precarious situation: *"Each time a new V.P. [Vice-president] came on board, which was often, the chair had to go and fight for my position."* Two part-timers were unsure of support, one with a new a chair and one with a new program head. The first uttered that, *"I don't know where I'm at with her [the new chair] yet"* and the second stated that, *"We're not sure of the [administrative] support for this [an initiative which would create more permanency for her]."*

The above discussion illustrates that there are key players who can create continuing employment opportunities for these part-timers. Once hired, the amount of work allocated to them depended upon a strong relationship with chairs and administrators. One woman felt the chair support was very strong: *"We actually have a fabulous department chair; she came to me after [a few years] and offered me [other work]. She worries about me not having a full-time job."* The relationships become key to long-term survival at the institutions. Upon satisfaction that these women are capable

instructors, chairs invited them to continue applying for positions and most chairs also searched for additional work for the part-timers. “*Look we will find work for you somewhere, hang in there, we want you full-time*”, were reported by one interviewee as words of one chair person, indicating that chairs did engage in supportive actions towards part-timers.

Eventually all respondents in the study were given work without being interviewed; work was simply offered to them. One woman commented, “*I’m glad that they don’t open it up to competition...it is an advantage to me, but I find that really bizarre...should try to find the best person for the job.*” On the other hand, the fact that the part-timers are re-hired without further interviews could be interpreted to mean that they are inconsequential and thereby, not worthy of an interview. One part-timer contradicted this notion. She believed that if she was good enough to do the job year after year, then it was redundant to be interviewed for every contract. Initially interviewed in consecutive years she fought to change this and now, rather than a formal hiring process, she is offered work. One woman revealed that even how the chair communicated to her was important:

She was so good at saying, you know I can’t promise you anything next year, I don’t know what is happening...she always understood that it was my decision...she would say, I want you to hang in here, but I want to let you know that this college may be hiring...I always appreciated her honesty, she never tried to pull the wool over my eyes or pretend that it was something that it was not.

How those that hire part-timers communicate and deal with the part-timers are seen as factors that could support or block their career goals.

Salary & Benefits

Another important factor in determining the conditions of the position is the pay. Salary is varied, unpredictable, and dependent on contract specifications. This amount was never known; the wage could change instantly making it difficult for the part-timers to develop a budget. Classes could be cancelled at the last moment if enrollments were low. In one college a monthly pay amount was calculated on a previously submitted workload. If a course was cancelled this meant that a portion of a couple of month's salary had to be paid back to the institution. One individual also mentions how there are situations where you complete work that is not paid for. She explains that she was "*asked to do things for upcoming contracts before contracts were ever signed.*" If the contract was signed and the class was cancelled, there might be a small reimbursement for preparing class lessons. She described one such situation: "*I think I got paid for 3 hours or something like that...that's why I learned not to do too much preparation ahead...yet that sucked too cause then when the class did go I had little done.*" Uncertain income is especially challenging and stressful for the sole and main wage earners. It is difficult to make regular monthly bill payments and it is nearly impossible to match other work to compensate for the income loss or gaps of unpaid time. One participant states that she "*[kept] hitting brick walls when [she was] trying to get more work to add to this [her existing workload]...the scheduling [made it impossible].*"

Three of the participants experienced a decreased earning potential as funding shortages and cutbacks caused the development of new rules. Two of them experienced a reduction in salary to teach certain courses. Some of the courses that were originally calculated according to a grid, which considered experience and training levels, were

reduced to a set wage. This reduction resulted in payment that was less than half of the previous earning originally allocated for these courses. A second change they experienced was removal of preparation time allocated for teaching off-campus. Much of the contract work they acquired was teaching classes in regional centers, some so far away that they traveled there by plane. The old ruling was that one would receive additional hours because of the extra preparation and time needed for gathering and transporting materials. The policy changed to include only payment for direct classroom hours. Additionally, car travel, which takes longer, has replaced the commute by plane increasing the amount of time that they had to invest in off-campus teaching. The off-campus teaching now took longer to complete and they received a great deal less pay. One informant declares that, "*Back then you could actually teach a little bit less and make a fairly good income; now you work longer and get less money.*" The third woman's experience has already been mentioned in the discussion of the new ruling that would limit her to working only 50% of a full-time workload.

On the other hand, the salary paid for some courses could be quite reasonable for part-timers who are placed on a grid that considers training and experience levels to determine the corresponding wage. One claimed that she "*think[s] it works out to \$70.00 per hour which seems like a lot, but not when you figure out what that actually pays for, it's not much [preparation time, meeting with students]*" and another said, "*I think I'm at \$96.00 per hour.*" The problem was in finding enough hours to earn an adequate, steady income.

Benefits are another factor that shaped these part-timers' experiences. They are part of some part-time contracts and not included in others. The participants discussed the

fact that conferences were seen as important opportunities for professional development [PD]. This was most often not an option due to lack of available funds. As well, those who work yearly, including spring and summer sessions, often miss PD opportunities, as they are either working when these are offered at the college or cannot afford to travel to attend conferences at other locations. Most of these women experienced contracts with benefits and some with no extra privileges. Benefits were allocated on a prorated level if they were hired for a number of consecutive months such as sessionals, or adjuncts. Although able to participate in limited PD activities, all five women desire more benefits than those for which they are eligible according to their contracts.

Chairs often attempt to find additional monies to support part-timers in pursuing professional development activities. One individual, referring to an upcoming conference, shared that, "*[The chair] is trying to find funds so that I can go.*" Another individual who received minimal prorated benefits claims it was a "*nice surprise for me when I figured out how much I could actually use and so that worked out to going to a conference.*" Another woman indicated that her chair was defeated in a fight with administration in an attempt to secure benefits when she was hired to do a number of courses in a term. She explained that, "*The chair tried to get me the benefits and she was not successful....and she's a person that works hard to get things like that.*" The mixed feelings that begging for PD funding can cause are uttered by this woman who expressed that, "*Its kind of a weird feeling as an adult to get the dregs of something.*" Benefits are valued by these five part-timers and they envy full-timers' substantial perks.

Although all respondents had the educational requirements to secure a full-time position, the lack of benefits and security seriously affected their pursuit of further

education. The five women consider the lack of support to pursue higher education a critical pitfall of long-term part-time employment. One believes that even though “[she is] part-time...some sort of support [like the faculty body] or somebody has to allot some sort of monies ...[for professional development activities] ...for what [one] worked the year before.” Another part-timer reports that, “I wanted to do a master’s much earlier but I couldn’t afford it...I couldn’t figure out how to squeeze it in. There was barely enough time left for me and my family.” Concern that if she left the institution to pursue the next degree someone else would replace her prevented one individual from continuing her education.

Critical to understanding the limited options for pursuing a Master’s degree is that Canadian Internet Master’s programs have only recently been made available and the expense of most on-line American programs is beyond most of these women’s resources. Only one of the five interviewed has been able to begin work on the next degree while in a solely part-time career path. It is also important to note that a fear of one individual is that she might educate herself out of positions in the field where she often was able to find additional work. She notes that applicants with Masters’ degrees are perceived as being over-qualified by some potential employees. Interesting, though, is the fact that another common desire of the women is to pursue professional development to increase eligibility for locating work in other institutions.

Likewise, ineligibility for pension funds concerns the sole and main wage earners. They worry about long-term financial security. One had always thought that the full-time job would exist and is just now recognizing that a major issue is old age security. The other individual knew that it was an issue but did not really see a way to plan for such

security with unpredictable wages. One participant wished that “*someone here [at the college] would have sat me down and explained this.*” Both of these part-timers believe college personnel should provide assistance in long-term planning for those in part-time appointments. On the other hand, the non-main wage earners relied on family income for financial security. Although one had been able to begin a retirement fund, she doubts if she will contribute regularly while working part-time.

Because of a half-time steady job with prorated benefits one of the individuals was able to retain consistency in that position and admits that because she, “*had benefits to fall back on, it didn't matter what the other contracts were paid.*” However, to earn full-time wages she was constantly searching for additional part-time contracts. Those secured varied in agency, duration, and pay.

Work Practices

Work choices are perceived as two things: what one teaches and how much work one will have each term, each year and year-to-year. Participants feel that they are unable to decline offers of work. One declares, “*You don't have the luxury of saying no.*” The notion is that if one says no then they did not really need the work. The women also believe that if they did not accept work someone else would; therefore, not accepting work places them at risk of being passed over for future work. One woman worried that “*there might be someone waiting in the wings*” and another imagined the competition as “*someone who was better than me with a bigger degree.*”

Workload choice is a common desire amongst the five. Some requested but were not given their choices; the first say went to full-timers. One respondent believes that if “*... you've [full-timers] been teaching a course for 10 years it's your course.*” All

comment that they would like the opportunity to choose courses, especially ones they have previously taught, as it would allow them to implement necessary changes in course content. One was discouraged that she “*never [got] to fix things.*” Another woman’s confession that, “*I think it was the first session I taught so; now some time has gone by and now as I’m getting to the end some of the changes didn’t get done*”, indicates the frustration caused by not being able to teach in consecutive terms.

Choice of what to teach and when to teach was sometimes an option, particularly for those with some security or longevity in an institution. Those who worked in consecutive positions that were often a term or 8 months found that after being at the same college for a long time they were able to submit a workload request. One woman who had a guaranteed half-time position and secured a variety of part-time contracts to bring in adequate salary refused some work. She declined another guaranteed part-time position as she felt it was beyond her area of expertise. In a lengthy part-time career, one informant was able to “*let [her]self off the hook and say no if [she] really didn’t want to.*” When asked what led her to this ability, she replies, “*confidence that the department needed me as much as I needed them.*” The constraint on how much to work or what to teach has a few implications for the part-timers. One, part-timers should gladly accept all contracts and be grateful for any work offered to them. Two, part-timers may accept work that they are not committed to, or teach courses for which they lack sufficient knowledge and skills. Finally, they must choose teaching over research, professional development, or vacation time.

These fluctuating workloads also affect the amount of interactions part-timers have with department members and the general college population. A designated office

increases opportunities for part-timers to work alongside and associate with colleagues; whereas, teaching evening and weekend classes or off-campus isolates them. Part-timers often do not get paid to attend staff meetings, unless hired for a whole term. Additionally, when teaching off campus they are not always privy to the information, correspondence, and discussions that lead to changes in policy. One participant recalls an incidence where full-timers assumed she should know about a changed work rule: *"They sort of alluded in the conversation that I should know about it, but I didn't have a clue."* This points to another issue. Who is responsible for keeping part-timers informed about change: part-timers, full-timers, or chairs? One woman felt it so important to be in the know that she *"...argued [her] way into staff meetings."* Another who chose to abstain from staff meetings for one year, laughingly utters, *"...it was a nightmare, cause I didn't know anything"* and chose to attend future meetings.

The varying degrees of interactions within the department impeded the development of a separate role identity. Reflections about their roles within the field and within the departments indicate how these part-timers are vulnerable in formulating clear perceptions of work roles. One explains, *"I never felt I could speak my voice, because I didn't feel that I had the same authority as the full-timer"* and another declares that

I always felt that I was the outsider, you know as a part-timer, even though I was always invited to the meeting [staff meetings] and I did make a point of going. I didn't feel that I had a say. I was worried that if I rocked the boat I could lose my job.

While some believe themselves to be on the perimeter, others feel as if an insider. One was *"very vocal in regard to long-term planning for the department"* and another would *"say whatever I think...and then if I had a say in it, then maybe I could find a job, because the field is going where I want it to go."* Two other participants in the early

stages of part-time teaching echo this last sentiment. They see themselves as having the power to influence the direction of the field and value this because of its potential to influence philosophy in their career fields.

Acting on the choice to be an active participant in departmental decision making processes, or being unable to because of teaching off campus, has various implications for these women. It could mean that these part-timers are not doing their job unless acting as if full-time. It may also indicate a belief by full-timers that the part-timers are not important or capable enough to input into this 'important academic function.' On the other hand, it could also be recognition that part-timers should not have to commit to unpaid work. For some of these women it became an ever-changing role of being seen and not seen within the college community. As well, for one participant the longer the relationship was with the college an interesting phenomenon occurred. She explains that, "*I'm part of the department when it suits the department and I'm not when it doesn't.*" Her words hint that full-timers and administrators decide day to day how part-timers should perform in their part-time roles and that part-timers are seen as both valuable and are de-valued.

This ambiguous role is also noted in discussions of the evaluative methods. Yearly evaluations are mentioned by part-timers as shaping their performances. The part-timers were evaluated every year; whereas, their full-timer counterparts were typically evaluated every 3-5 years. Even part-timers who acknowledge that they are well supported in their departments feel that they had to really shine in the evaluations. One woman claims, "*you gotta dance faster*" because of the yearly evaluations and yet another felt she "*was actually putting in all that [she] could do and taking on all the work*

that they [gave her] to be able to show them that [she] could be an asset.” Upset by the amount of evaluations conducted, one participant also declared that because of full-timers’ infrequent evaluations they “*can get way with murder.*” Although all appreciated that frequent evaluations kept them motivated, they became worn down by the demand to constantly function at peak performance. For one woman, “*The thing that got kind of tiresome is that every course I teach is evaluated; every single one and you know sometimes that whole process is tiring*”. Another individual also resented the fact that they are evaluated with the same form used to assess full-timers: “*I tried to argue the case that I didn’t have the same opportunity to do [the same work as the full-timers]; they [evaluation committee] agreed but never changed anything.*” She feels it is unfair that even though as a part-timer she did not have the same opportunity to commit to all of the expectations of a full-time position, this was never accounted for in the assessment.

A final constraint upon their part-time journeys is that all these women feel the pressure of time. Time is thought of in three ways: (1) time in years, (2) not enough time in the day and (3) not enough time for desires and real lives. Early into their part-time career there was more joy and less stress and a belief in achieving a full-time position. One part-timer was “*confident that [obtaining tenure] [could] work.*” However, as their journeys continued, there was less satisfaction, less loyalty, and more resentment about the ‘non-rights.’ One person’s remarks explain this changed emotion: “*It became a mental battle of reminding myself that I had a good job...I started to resent what the full-timers were allowed to do.*” Two women were beginning to be concerned about age. One in particular mentions that if she has to leave the college, then she feels her age [over 50] will be a deterrent to obtaining other full-time positions. Another simply feels her

options are becoming less all around, less at the institution and less in the outer work world.

These part-timers have a time frame of completing higher education, but as the part-time years continue they see a diminished opportunity of beginning work on the next degree or in applying recently acquired training to career paths. One wonders, "*what it would have been like if I could have started my Master's earlier*" and another questions "*where [she] would be now*" if she had gained tenure early in her career. The greatest regret for another was not yet having attained a Master's degree. Her words are significant. "*It was the plan.*" The women who are the main and sole wage earners and who have been teaching part-time the longest see time as a huge factor in their financial security.

The women are also frustrated at the lack of time to research, particularly as this often means the same courses continue to be taught with few changes to methods or content. Moreover, two of the longest serving part-timers mention that because most of the college community assumes you work full-time, you are expected to fulfill all extra duties. One woman believes that full-timers think that she will "*do anything for free because I'm part-time.*" To earn adequate yearly salary time for family and self was often impeded as the individuals either worked at teaching throughout most of the year or picked up other jobs through the spring and summer terms. One part-timer followed this pattern as she taught "*courses every semester [spring and summer included]*" giving her little time for vacation. One woman saw this as "*hugely stressful as [she] wouldn't get much of a break; maybe 2 weeks [vacation] every year.*" Most importantly, some part-timers forgo down time and the necessary mental breaks to prepare for teaching,

access professional development opportunities, or search for more work.

However, time is also perceived as a positive. These women believe that time has enhanced their teaching skills. They consider that they excel as instructors because of the brief preparation times, the number of courses taught in a short time span, and the huge variation in workload. Time is also less structured for part-timers than for full-timers and could be freed up to create time needed for family and self. One says, "*Probably the biggest advantage was that I could sometimes arrange around my family commitments*" and another appreciates that she could "... *choose to teach outside of the normal day because it gave me more time with my kids and so I tried to do that as much as possible when they were little.*" Time has both positively and negatively impacted these individuals' experiences of these part-time journeys.

This lengthy discussion of the women's experiences points to the complexities of the conditions of part-time academic positions. The variety of factors that have been identified as influencing the directions of the informants' career paths leads to final reflections on the implications of being in a long-term part-time instructor position.

Impacts and Perceptions of Being Part-time

All five women contemplated moves. In considering a move one part-timer reports, "*It's kinda of scary though cause there is a certain comfort level to be here, you know like there are people in the department who have love for me, and care about [my family].*" Another's husband's work was established and did not support a move to another location. A third one felt that maybe a Ph D and a move in the next few years might land her the full-time job. Moving was unlikely for the fourth person as she felt that the only move would be to the southern part of the province to a larger city. She

believed that to be hired in the colleges located in the larger urban centers required a higher degree than she possessed and would disqualify her from full-time positions. The fifth one had been at one institution for a lengthy time and stated that the connection and the ties to the community were strong enough to keep her hopeful that she would acquire a full-time position.

In search of other work outside of the college, four of the five individuals discussed the need to learn to market themselves, a skill not typically learned in academic positions. They felt this is necessary to secure other contract work and that it might involve creating positions for themselves. One felt the skills of self-marketing were a necessary evil: *“I mean it would be nice if you could tell people what you can do, I’m not that good at that, I’m terrible.”* Another woman asks, *“[How] do you make that work, how do I come across to the business world? I mean look at me, I’m not a business woman.”* One woman discovered that she was a successful marketer and enjoyed it. Networking was a key strategy enabling her to secure enough enjoyable work choices. She is connected to people world wide through the Internet and finds this a useful tool in discovering work and PD activities. She has worked less than six years as a part-timer and is confident that she will always have enough work to make a decent wage.

Perceptions of work varied depending upon the work environment when part-timers began their journey. One very long-term part-timer began the position feeling confident that she would later be hired into a full-time tenure track position:

It’s only been recent years that the college has been on such sloppy ground, cause when I first started working for the department, there was money galore, absolutely money galore. My plan was to be working full-time by now. I had done everything right.

One understood that the chances of full-time were slim. She, who had been a part-timer

for over eight years states, “*It seems that we’re both [her and her husband] in an era of time where jobs are not going to be always guaranteed...this has always been part of our dialogue.*” Another wondered, “*How long can you keep your foot in the door, before you have to commit to something else?*” However, three of the non-main wage earners consider part-time an option because of spousal income and lack of dependents. One remarks, “*If we had children, it wouldn’t be an option... it’s too risky*” and the other notes, “*...we won’t be destitute [speaking of her husband’s earnings].*” The job era into which all of these women entered in and their roles as wage earners contribute to individual perceptions of their part-time journeys.

These findings about pressure to move, to market oneself, and to deal with change hints at forces and choices that limit career opportunities for part-time instructors. It could be interpreted that the nature of part-time work is restrictive, both in number of places to apply and in a reduction of available work. Yet, it could also be that the participants limit forward movement of their careers. Staying too long in one place valued for its human attachment could be dysfunctional as it circumvents the consideration of other options.

In summary, the common genre of tragic drama has been presented as the cultural norm of long-term, part-time instructors who seek tenure. These five women feel conscripted into full-time roles with conflicting needs to be visible and invisible in the institutions. The final construct that requires attention is the counter narrative. This opposing view to the popular ‘tragic’ notions of the part-time condition exists across the five stories and assists in ensuring a complete analysis of the five women’s part-time journeys.

Counter Narrative: Highly Skilled Instructors

Andrews (2003) reminds us that counter narratives are the tensions in the story that appear to oppose popular notions (cited in Seale et al., 2003). The common genre or cultural narrative found in the literature review presented in Chapter Two is the negative plight of part-timers. Although many aspects of that proved true, these five women are enthusiastic about the skill level they have achieved in their part-time journeys. No one can take away what these part-timers have earned: the right to call themselves highly skilled instructors, flexible, knowledgeable about the field, and capable of multi-tasking beyond imagination.

I do not accept, nor do I believe that any of these women would accept the cultural narrative of 'tragic' as reflecting the level of career development they have achieved. In fact, two wonder if they are more qualified individuals than some full-timers. The five participants' careers show incredible growth and expansion. The sacrifices and roadblocks became the over-riding challenges of developing academic careers in part-time positions. All of these five women approach their work with a commitment to excel in all contract requirements and often go beyond the designated duties. They cannot afford to do anything less than a near perfect job; after all, their performances are frequently judged and how they measure up will influence how long they are employed in academic work.

This area was fascinating. A critical question that arose from the literature review was: Are part-timers as skilled as the full-timers? There was much concern that part-time instructors would deprofessionalize the institute (Berver, Kurtz & Orion, 1992). These five individuals all believe that they are as highly skilled if not more so than full-timers.

“I think I’m more versatile”, says one instructor and another states, *“I have taught more of the courses than they [full-timers] have.”* For some, teaching skills were learned quickly as they often had little or no preparation time. One woman shares how demanding this was: *“The new course was still being printed as I was to be teaching. I had some quick instruction on video-conferencing and then, I was doing it.”* Another participant remarks, *“I had to produce more in terms of just the workload. I mean people [full-timers] would freak at taking on three new courses”*, discloses the heavy workloads. For one woman, extensive program knowledge combined with short preparation times, forced her to *“get rid of the fluff.”* Numerous courses taught contribute to honing the preparation and classroom skills necessary to teach the assigned classes. These part-timers developed the art of teaching quickly and they learned to prepare for classes with limited lead-time.

Highly developed instructional skills are also believed to result from teaching a large number of courses in a short period of time. One informant believes that her extensive knowledge of the program is a result of the fact that, *“In two years, I have taught almost all of the courses in the 2 year program [over 14 courses]; I really know the program.”* Another individual states that teaching most of the program’s courses *“is an advantage as I can certainly assist with the student issues that they are having around course progression.”* Full-time peers sometimes recognized the strength of part-timers’ field knowledge. One interviewee noted that, *“There is one theory in general that I have way more experience with so she has me come in and teach for that and they pay me out of their personal cheque.”* These women saw many advantages to teaching most of the total program’s courses in short time frames.

It was also common to work across several departments or combine college teaching with other contract work. All of the women claim this practice enhances diversity and is a positive attribute of the part-time condition. Teaching in multiple departments increased exposure to a variety of teaching philosophies and methods and work in the field allowed them to draw upon relevant fieldwork to enhance instruction in the classroom. Two approaches emerged as a way to manage the heavy and diverse workloads. One woman *“felt well organized, but [knew if she] wasn’t that [it] would have created all kinds of trouble.”* A second part-timer learned *“to think on [her] feet.”* Not only were these part-timers required to quickly develop teaching abilities, they were forced to acquire skills to manage the special conditions of the part-time positions.

All five women increased their professional growth by participation in professional development activities. Many of these are free and; therefore, affordable ways to enhance skill development: reading, volunteering, attending community related events, internet searches, and taking advantage of any internal initiatives within respective institutions. No matter how much they did, all desired more opportunities for paid professional development.

A final positive counters the search for full-time academic positions. One participant spoke of how the academic work *“looks good on a resume.”* She felt her college employment had prepared her for other potential employment as she discovered that hiring committees viewed college teaching as an asset. Another individual thought it funny and was relieved that when applying for their mortgage the bank personnel assumed she worked full-time and based the approval of the mortgage on that assumption.

Finally, communicating these five women's perceptions of the impacts that the part-time positions have had on their academic careers and making visible the counter narrative encourages audiences to look more closely at the work conditions of part-time instructors. It is in the opening up of this space that Parker (2005) claims both the women and the audience will be able to more fully understand how their careers have been shaped. Presenting this opposition to popular notions is an additional exercise that can clear the path for new ways of thinking and perhaps changes in part-timers' experiences within academic institutions.

Concluding Comments

It was anticipated that the women's telling of their journeys of part-time instruction in a college institution might be either a painful or an enlightening experience. Part-timers could either become more depressed about recognizing their limited probability of obtaining a full-time position or aware of new ways of viewing their circumstances. Kvale (1996) and Parker (2005) both claim that the telling of stories often leads tellers to new insights. Although both the participants and I were prepared to potentially gain new insights, I was unnerved by this possibility because I could not predict whether new realizations would occur or if they would be positive or negative.

To my surprise and pleasure, when this did occur it was a positive experience for the participant and for myself as researcher. It was fascinating to witness and engage in this discovery process and of course, because it was positive, I embraced it. What was most rewarding was the fact that participating in the research seemed to assist these participants in gaining clarity about their career paths. For some, the revelation occurred much later after the interview was complete, while for others it evolved within the

interview. One individual made it known that being interviewed in the research project was a helpful experience and one in which she had gained new insights about her career path. After she read and confirmed the 7 page story was true to her journey, she thanked me in an e-mail message, *“I said before [informally over the phone] this process helped me reassess where I’m at in my career.”* Two other participants gained insight within the interview as they reflected upon their journeys. In the early stage of the interview one woman said, *“Well maybe this can work, my husband and I will have to talk about this [she looked both surprised and pleased to have made this statement].”* Initially, she had said that she probably would not work for the institution next year because of limited work prospects. This changed view evolved from her reflection about her journey and choices that she had made, rather than a response to a prepared question. A second person reports, *“Oh I’m glad that I did that”*, as she reflected upon how she had managed part-time work at the college. Recognizing that her actions were positive and believing that it showed her commitment to the college she was hoping that the full-timers would see her as eligible for the next available full-time position.

For me, having been in a part-time position for several years, tenured for three years and then moved to part-time again as my position was cut, it has been difficult to stop thinking about the effect and self-construction of the part-time experience. The biggest ah ha moment occurred near the end of my interview; this was where I shared that I wondered if I was solely committed to this career or would I be as equally successful pursuing another career path. I had not entered the interview with this sub-plot; thus, I was caught off guard when it surfaced and I felt a bit guilty when it was out in the open. I was hesitant to delve into this reflection too deeply especially as the interviewer was a

colleague and good friend and I did not want to be considered a traitor to the profession. Typing up the transcript, I wondered if my friend and colleague, who had interviewed me, would look at me as less worthy of my position. However, there was relief that I had finally addressed this issue. It seemed to give me the freedom to consider alternatives to work as I prepared to deal with the loss of a tenured position.

These five women's journeys of struggle, joy, adventure, and disillusionment has been examined and interpreted to gain more insight into conditions that constrain and support the part-time position. This research concludes with a discussion of the findings and proposes considerations for policy change to increase support to these women and to others in similar academic appointments.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The intent of this research was to examine a number of long-term part-time, college instructors' journeys to determine the impact upon their developing careers. An initial review of the existing literature led to construction of a conceptual framework used to clarify the research question. The focus was on aspiring academics, part-timers who are pursuing full-time tenure track positions. Interviews were conducted with five women part-time college instructors in human services. The lengthy narratives were interpreted to gain understanding of why these women communicated certain identities. This analysis produced a number of insights that will expand the current database on part-time academics.

A key finding is that part-timers aspiring to be full-time tenured instructors are being conscripted into full-time roles to prove their worth to the individuals who have the power to hire and fire them. These instructors are highly skilled, flexible, and knowledgeable about the courses they teach. However, their lives are molded and shaped by changing external and internal policies that sometimes support career development but in other situations create roadblocks. In their attempts to achieve career goals, highly motivated and skilled instructors are at the mercy of current policy and of the people who hire them. The part-time role is blurry and ill-defined; it is both valued and dispensable and depends upon the needs of the institutions. The joy of academic work keeps these part-timers in lengthy searches for full-time positions until, for some, time runs out and they are left facing uncertain futures.

Those instructors who reached the point where they believe that full-time appointment is unlikely to occur reflect the tragic outcome of a long-term, part-time

position. It was previously noted in the analysis section and in the Findings Chapter that the tragic genre framed three of the journeys of these five women. Examination of the literature on part-timers reveals that the common belief of administrators, full-timers, and many part-timers is that part-time academic instructors will have predominantly negative experiences in post-secondary institutions. These five women and others in similar positions have entered academic career paths in a period of history where business principles are shaping post secondary education. Reduced funding and changed training needs have produced a reduction in the number of tenured instructors and a pattern of hiring an increased number of part-time instructors who have no benefits nor guarantee of enough work. These business principles contribute to the tragic experience of part-timers. The following titles of articles and books capture the current societal belief of the part-time academic:

- Flynn, E. A., Flynn, J. F., Grimm, N. & Lockhart, T. (1986, January-February). *The part-time problem: Four voices.*
- Spinetta, K. I. (1990). *Part-time instructors in the California community colleges: A need to revise current policies.*
- Avakian, N. (1995). *Conflicting demands for adjunct faculty.*
- Clayton, C. (1997). *Treat campus sessionals fairly.*
- Lords, E. (1999). *Part-time members sue for better pay and benefits.*
- Fulton, R. D. (2000). *The plight of part-timers in education: Some ruminations and suggestions.*
- CAUT Bulletin. (2001). *Exploitation of contract staff: Topic of San Jose Conference.*
- Bradley, G. (2004). *Contingent faculty & The new academic labor system.*

A final title, discovered on the American Association of University's Professor's website, (2005) created excitement as it seemed that it was the emergence a new genre that could begin to change popular opinion about the part-time position. The article "The Entrepreneurial Adjunct" was initially interpreted to mean that moving forward as a successful business person was a new positive image of the part-timer. However, reading the article clarified that the author ridiculed part-timers and systems that alleged instructors could develop careers in short-term contract positions. Therefore, the titles were all similarly indicating that part-timers are viewed as being in negative situations that do not support a successful career pattern. It is interesting to note that this genre spans twenty years.

Thus, these women and part-timers in similar positions are pursuing tenure track positions in a long period of tenure reduction and reliance on part-timers to perform the necessary academic work. This trend is occurring in other sectors as well. Avakian (1995) reported that in the United States it is "estimated that 90% of all new jobs created in the early 1990's were temporary" (p. 35). Part-time workers are part of the 20th century reality that continues into the 21st century. Employers are not responsible for creating good jobs for individuals; rather, they are attempting to manage profit lines by avoidance of paying long-term workers' benefits. This move to replacing full-time workers with more part-time workers justifies the action that some of these women in this study are adopting: If you are to be treated like a business commodity then you have to become business savvy. Some of these part-timers' stories reveal that they are accepting some of the business principles by beginning to learn the art of self-marketing, to examine contracts more closely, to fight for their rights, and to question their treatment.

Furthermore, a right of workers beginning to emerge in this reorganization of work in the 21st century is the quest for work-life balance (Gappa & MacDermid, 1997, cited in Gappa, 1999). Lives continue to be fragmented as the multiplicity of life roles increases. Some workers today face simultaneously caring for young children and elderly parents while attempting to maintain healthy career development and earn adequate income. They sometimes work at more than one place of employment and it is projected that the work norm for many will no longer include long-term employment at one institution (Avakian, 1995).

Concern for peoples' health has caused a surge of writing about the health of the worker. Several universities have created 'Centres for Families' which promote research on current family issues to support families and their many challenges. For example, at Ontario's Guelph University the *Centre for families, Work & Well-being* is a website that contains numerous reports and studies about the issue of work-life balance (<http://www.guelph>). A consistent finding is that families want greater flexibility and support to work in good part-time positions that allow them to take care of family commitments and to earn decent livings. Additionally, Ellen Gallinsky, the president of *Families and Work Institutes*, a similar research centre, has been involved in many studies that assess the current working conditions and how work supports or constrains families (<http://www.familiesandwork.org/index.html>). In a national study of the changing workforce a key finding is that "a significant number of people indicate higher levels of interference between job and family commitments" (Bond, Thompson, Gallinsky, & Prottas, 2002, p.1).

The women of this narrative study who had dependants at home shared the complications of attempting to manage all the aspects of their lives because of the energy required to secure enough work in turbulent academic positions. Thus, work-life balance research is an important body of literature that will augment the information gained through this narrative analysis of part-timers' stories. The additional perspective will broaden policy makers' and administrators' knowledge of how this position shapes people's careers and lives.

These five part-timers' stories communicate that their personal experiences of lack of support in gaining essential rights of good employment has warranted a drive to be more responsible for managing their careers. However, time is the element that constricts or supports their independent efforts. Those early in part-time journeys saw time being on their sides; they believed there was still time to continue pursuing the uncertain paths to tenure positions and did little to change their circumstances or plan for future financial security. Those later in their journeys began to see time as the enemy because of diminished opportunities for advancement into full-time positions. This sense of time was directly related to their feelings about the conditions of their part-time positions. Those in the longest journeys subtly replaced beginning joy and the thrill of academic work with feelings of powerlessness, resentment, and the notion of being slighted by the academic world.

This feeling of being slighted emerged from being prevented from achieving personal and financial goals. Economic need is the final overarching factor that either allowed these women to perceive their careers as healthy and enjoyable or as burdensome and a raw deal. Once becoming an instructor, the work, the colleagues, the students, and

the ability to become good instructors are perceived as positive attributes of the part-time positions. These part-timers consider they are greatly rewarded for their initial investment in post-secondary training. However, in the end, if unable to attain tenure track positions, they resent the fact that they are not likely to be able to neither afford the next level of education nor secure finances to cover short-term and long-term needs. Some declared that being uneducated about how to prepare for the future while working in part-time positions was an overwhelming discovery and one that arrived too late.

In summary, these five women part-timers agree that their careers are developing in these short-term, non-guaranteed positions. They consider themselves capable, if not more capable than their full-time counterparts, to work in college institutions. The challenges are different for each woman depending upon the factors that influence their telling of the stories; however, there has also been the discovery of common desires and descriptions of events that could be changed to better support these women and other part-timers as they develop academic careers.

Changes are necessary to clarify and validate the role of the aspiring academics. Proposed changes will benefit the individual and the institutions. The need for change is not confined to one area but is recognized as needing to occur in a variety of ways. There are several recommendations for effecting positive change in part-timers' experiences in the institutions. The first is to look at a framework for part-time college instructors. Existing policy in the institutions where these five part-timers are employed put a number of roadblocks in their developing career paths and will continue to do so unless institutions are adequately informed by current and evolving research. Some change by one institution, already noted in this discussion, is a positive step. What has to

continue and be clearly thought through is the impact of the current construction of the part-time role upon individuals. The five stories presented here indicate that there is much to learn from part-timers and their abilities to develop careers in difficult circumstances despite the losses they have faced as they pursue tenure.

It appears as if binary thinking to policy development frames these women's experiences: you are either tenured or in a tenure track position, or you are part-time with no benefits or job security. This binary frame reveals two key beliefs: One, that individuals are only important if they work for one institution. Two, if part-timers teach full-time loads in several consecutive years, they qualify for tenure track positions. Administrators have long since realized that educational funding cuts have limited their ability to offer a consistent path of hiring aspiring academics into tenure track positions. They seem to believe the options are few: Restrict part-timers to fewer hours or let them work full loads but do not re-hire them after a certain number of consecutive years. Neither is beneficial to the part-timer and it is doubtful that it truly benefits the institutions, students or the field.

Framework for Part-time College Instructors.

The Alberta College and Institutes Faculty Association (ACIFA), the provincial body that represents all of the public colleges in which the study respondents worked, met in February of 2002 to discuss the state of the part-timer. Included in notes of the meeting was this statement:

Written policy and practice very often conflict with respect to part-time faculty. They do not receive proper orientation or information. They don't have the information needed to determine if they are being properly treated. By the time they have the chance to know of unfair practice, the time lines to grievance have passed. (ACIFA meeting notes, 2002)

Although the initial discussion by ACIFA (2002) members in Alberta colleges did indicate that the plight of part-timers was beginning to be seriously noted, there was a lack of a clear trail of what measures had been taken after the meeting. I was unable to find any follow-up information on their website monthly newsletters, nor did an e-mail to the individual in charge of the committee receive a response to my query about implementation of recommendations (2005). However, re-reading collective agreements did indicate that one college had included new policies for hiring part-timers for consecutive years (Collective Agreement, 2005) and included a policy on hiring for specially funded projects. Benefits are not yet part of this collective agreement for the casual part-timer; benefits came only with a full-term teaching assignment.

ACIFA's (2002) discussion notes suggest that since the inception of this study, awareness has increased at the administrative level in some institutions. Policy recommendations for the part-time contingent continue to appear on the CAUT website (<http://www.caut.ca>) and the AAUP website (www.aaup.org). Both the Canadian and American University Associations' roles are to make recommendations to their affiliated post-secondary institutions, although they have no power to create or implement policy. A main argument presented by both organizations is to limit the number of part-timers so that the majority of the instructors are tenured with full privileges. AAUP suggests limiting part-timers to 15% of the institutional teaching force and to 25% of departmental teaching load. However, both websites also present discussions about how to better support the part-time contingent with the recognition that many are still experiencing roadblocks to successful careers, similar to what is so movingly described by the five women in this study.

Discussion is an important move towards amending policies. However, recommendations by associations that have no power to implement change are only a first step. Those in power at the institutional level have to take the responsibility to initiate modification to existing policies or add new ones. As presented in the literature review, if full-timers or the appropriate governing body do not promote part-timers' well being, this workforce contingent will be forced to take action to protect themselves at the expense of the full-timers. This was noted to in the literature as already occurring by part-timers who were beginning the process of unionizing (Caut Bulletin, 2000; Kartus, 2000) and in the U.S.A. reaching court action levels (Lords, 1999).

The need to re-write policy that allows colleges to hire part-timers who are able to work full loads without the promise of a tenure track position, but with more job security is now a message that seems to be understood by some associations and institutions. However, this is just a beginning and the issue of benefits is still missing for those part-timers hired on a casual basis. The policy for special initiatives that one college has developed and is noted in this thesis under the topic of 'Hiring Policy' on p. 67 could be also interpreted to be a negative condition for part-timers. On the one hand, the policy allows part-timers access to work for as long as the work exists, but on the other hand it allows the institution to guarantee no benefits for an extended period. Caution in the interpretation of this policy is necessary as the new ruling may in fact relegate the part-timer to disadvantaged work. The dual interpretation of this policy raises these questions: Who decides what are labeled special initiatives? Could courses taught outside of day hours be called a special initiative? Does this create the potential to reduce course fees paid to part-time instructors? Although policy needs to reflect current economics and the

trend of uncertain funding, the need for short-term training needs, an increase in distant students, and contracted workers, careful wording and consideration must be given to each new policy.

Towards New Policies for Part-Timers

New policies for the part-time academic position will enhance conditions for current and future instructors who are hired to work in college institutions. The women's stories in this study have conveyed important information about how their realities have been hindered and shaped by limited attention to the following areas:

Role Clarity

The part-time role did not really exist. Those that desired full-time work had to be like a full-timer to secure work and those that hired them mostly treated them as if a full-timer in all aspects except pay and benefits. As noted in the data analysis, all five of the participants spoke vehemently about their need to take on the role of the full-timer to continue securing work. Whether this is a false theory (Kvale, 1996) or not is difficult to prove, as none were ready to take the risk of not engaging in these behaviors. Part-timers are in ambiguous roles that fluctuate according to changing scripts. At times they are the key supporting stars and at times they are the castaways, doing work that is desirable, but also hugely stressful and much of it unpaid work. A definitive part-time role must emerge from discussions at department level, within the academic governing body and at the administration level. These people need to determine what the part-timers' job descriptions should be and then develop policy that establishes the part-timers as key performers in the college institutions.

Currently, lack of policy protection for these five women and instructors in

similar appointments places part-timers at the mercy of those who are in power positions and this can be favorable or unfavorable circumstances. Unable to establish boundaries for their time commitment to one institution, part-timers become drawn into what may be another false theory (Kvale, 1996): The more they work and extend themselves for the college community, the more likely they will be rewarded with the full-time job. This can cause part-timers to forgo pursuing other options or they are prevented from seeking other work because of scheduling challenges. It also places them in positions where they are encouraged to work for free for the good of the colleges. This unpaid work does enhance the part-timers' professional development, but comes with costs. They overextend themselves beyond their part-time duties and this affects their ability to secure other employment. It also means that they lack adequate preparation and research time. The actual work does not suffer, but the burden of time upon part-timers creates individuals who are teaching when they may need time to research, or are researching when they need time for mental renewal and vacation time. Both in the literature review and in these five participants' experiences, department members would gladly move their part-time colleague into full-time positions or at least offer them improved contracts; however, they lack the authority or resources to initiate changes (Berver, Kurtz & Orton, 1992).

Policy that communicates its expectations of part-timers to all facets of the institution should then also lead to the development of evaluations that are explicit to the part-time role. Specific evaluation forms will diminish role confusion and unfair evaluative practices. Department chairs will know what duties to allocate to part-timers and part-timers will be able to safely apply appropriate boundaries.

A final consideration under the umbrella of role clarity is commitment. For some of these part-timers, the lack of guaranteed work from the colleges, created the potential for undermining their commitments to the institutions. This did not play out in levels of performance as this was noted, in the Findings Chapter, to be exceptional in all cases. However, when offered contracts with short time frames, especially if it was assumed that instructors would do the work before signing the contracts, two individuals spoke of a fleeting thought to “*get back at the institution.*” This meant that they wondered what it would be like to treat the institution like they were treated and to cancel their commitment to teach within a day of the class starting. Neither participant followed through with this, but the longer the part-time career continued, the more this appealed.

The danger of this ambivalence, whether it begins in the start of the career or emerges later, is that it could become an even bigger issue. Reported earlier in the literature review was the fact that in some institutions, part-timers are beginning to form their own unions to fight for their rights. In situations like this, part-timers may be pitted against the full-timers. Applying the principles of the dual market labor theory, Roemer and Schnitz (1992) claim that instructors with insecure jobs or inadequate wages may work to change their conditions at the expense of the full-time contingent.

Permanence and Benefits

Permanence is not the reality for four of the part-timers of this study. Their positions could dissolve at any moment, severing personnel relationships and the joy of a great job. Within new policy construction there is the need to consider how to support the career development of instructors who may work part-time for one institution but in actuality work a full work load or more, or work full-time by combining work for more

than one college. Internet on-line teaching has recently created opportunities for part-timers to reside in one community but work for distant institutions. I now live in a city where I do not work; however, I teach part-time for two colleges located in different provinces. The amount of combined work is almost equal to that of a full-timer's load.

Noteworthy about the five women's stories is the lack of professional development [PD] funds and the inability to be eligible for paid leaves. This lack of professional support hinders part-timers' ability to be fully accepted as a highly important academic role. Administrators who recognize that part-timers' work sphere often include more than one institution and field work may begin to understand that an important administrative role has two components: to support individuals in institutional specific work and to enhance part-timers' global connections to academia and to their respective fields. Institutional administrators and full-timers need to recognize that the previous training and support provided to part-timers by other institutions will benefit their own facility. Part-timers are privy to a variety of policies, procedures, and knowledge from more than one work setting and will bring this expertise and experience to the next place of employ. Clark (1988) earlier proposed that instructors who worked short-term contracts would always bring inexperience to institutions (cited in Banachowski, 1996). He failed to consider that individuals may have also worked for other institutions and be highly trained, knowledgeable, and skilled instructors.

Greater variety in how the part-time contracts are constructed could lead to the development of permanent positions that may have fewer hours and fewer benefits than the full-timers, but develop a more supportive structure for part-timers. Perhaps PD funding amounts could be considered in prorated terms. Individuals receiving prorated

PD funds at each institution of employment may eventually be able to pursue the next level of education or attend out of city conferences. If the colleges have more than one department in which individuals could teach classes, it might be worthy creating a permanent part-time position that is not relegated to one department. Additionally, provinces where the colleges bargain collectively, such as British Columbia, could design an all encompassing policy that would allow individuals to accrue hours in part-time positions and when a certain level is reached, the part-timer would be eligible for prorated benefits, cost-shared by the colleges. The consideration of these new policies or contract designs may lead to more permanence and therefore, more financial security for part-time instructors.

One part-timer worried that few people, other than the part-time contingent, understand the position enough to be able to advocate for change. She felt *"its going to be people like you and me ...let's say if I'm in a position of power, which means full-time, then I would become the advocate for ...those working part-time."* Her fear was also that once in power, she might forget about the plight of the part-timer and relish the full-time privileges, rather than fight for more for part-timers who have few benefits and no security. She believed that there was real danger in this occurring, not only with her, but also with anyone called up from role of understudy to that of the full-time cast.

Financial Planning

Part-timers who are sole and major wage earners believe that college human resource personnel could support them in increasing their own understanding of what it means to work as a contracted instructor. Assisted, long-term financial planning was discussed as being a minimal cost to colleges and one that college personnel had the

expertise to provide. Financial planning assistance would be a much appreciated benefit as neither of these two women felt at all prepared to have to rely on contracted work to develop long term security for the family and to promote career development. Putting some key strategies in place may reduce the stress for those in similar positions and may actually encourage college staff to determine other creative ways in which to support the part-timers.

Berger and Denton (2004) who studied the life course patterns of women in relation to old age financial security note, "More attention needs to be focused on the financial consequences of varying work trajectories" (p. 111). Their research indicates that women who do not have continuous full-time work and are unable to rely on other sources of income when they retire are at risk of poverty in their post-work years. The women they interviewed discussed how it would have been important for them to have a clearer understanding of how to begin preparing for their retirement when they first started to work, be it full-time or part-time. This supports the evidence raised in this narrative study of part-time instructors, as it indicates that part-timers would benefit from an early and in-depth understanding of long-term financial planning.

Research Implications

If part-time faculty numbers continue to surge ahead of the full-timers as Newman (1999) noted, then this critical mass of instructors will continue to play a major role in defining future post-secondary educational systems. It is essential that research continues to focus on this phenomenon so that college administrators, full-time instructors, part-time instructors, and students can influence policy development that will best meet the needs of all the key players. If not, then the unknown will remain and will put at risk, not

only the part-timers' career paths, but also college institutions. Barnetson (2001) raises the issue that in Alberta, the number of part-timers exceeds the numbers of full-timers in 3 of the 17 institutions studied. Two questions emerge: Will the part-time body have the power to out vote the full-timers at faculty governing bodies? Will they fight for voting rights and win? Part-timers banding together at the expense of full-timers' privileges is a possibility that all players need to address in order to be prepared for this eventuality.

A second area that has yet to be researched is a cost analysis of the expenditures in hiring a continual turn over of part-timers versus creating long-term, secure, part-time positions that would have some prorated benefits. There are many hidden costs in a part-time contingent of workers that are not included in the budgeting process. Advertising, interviewing, training new individuals, and paper work are some of the costs that are incurred to hire people. Paper work alone can be a huge expense as this involves not only the initial contracts that are drawn, but also the numerous print documents that new members require may leave with the individual when they leave the institution. If hiring occurs frequently because of rules that limit part-timers from working more hours or limit the length of time that they can work at institutions, then continually re-hiring part-timers will cost money. If all areas that incur costs combined with their actual dollar value could be revealed, policy makers would have more substantial information that could assist in new policy development.

A final area of research that needs to be conducted is to increase the data sources. I did not come across extensive studies that gathered data from the department heads nor from the full-time instructors. It would seem that they would offer insights into the construction of part-time positions that have not yet been fully considered. Policy makers

need to be informed by as many varied sources as possible in order to develop policy that best respects and supports the part-timer. My own experience as a long-term part-timer suggests that fellow colleagues and department heads are not always aware of the challenges or successes that the part-timers face in their roles. This did not seem to be because of a desire to block out these discussions, but often it was simply that they had not really had a frame to look through that differed from the one that they apply to full-time work. It was only when someone would address the issue as being different for the part-timer there was an 'aha' moment for the full-timers.

Research may not occur as quickly as the increase of part-timers in college institutions, but each piece of research that is read by someone and then acted upon has the potential to create forward movement in the construction of the part-time instructor position. Part-time instructors are here to stay; no one is arguing this fact. The question is: How do we treat part-timers? For a long time institutions have been able to cast them aside as second-class citizens, with nary a ripple in the water; but as more part-timers learn to speak up and others begin to advocate more strongly, the ripples may become large waves, creating visibility for the part-timer so that institutions finally acknowledge the contributions which part-timers make to academia, and as one research participant stated, recognize that a part-timer is "*a real person, that I'm not disposable.*"

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Appendix A
(Story Sample)

In or Out?

Change and uncertainty has been her experience of college teaching and although her husband's work was not in post-secondary education, change and uncertainty have actually shaped both of their work for the past 12 years. Now as she exits the college as a casualty of downsizing, a part-timer for 9 years and a tenured staff member for three, she notes it has become a time of self-evaluation and reflection. Is this the career she will continue in, or is a time for change? Before tenure, which seemed to be less a reality each year, she sometimes felt like a fence sitter; a distant observer, outside looking in.

Wishing, dreaming of that full-time tenured position and yet asking, is it worth all of the effort? Will I ever get it? And now she finds herself on the fence again; do I re-engage in this career? Do I have the energy if I have to start at the bottom or is it time for change? Perhaps the fact that upon knowledge of the probable downsizing, combined with other life circumstances, this couple uprooted and moved to a location of choice (out of province) to assume a positive lifestyle change before either secured work, may indicate that future work will be chosen to reflect personal need.

Although her career at the college began without a promise of full-time work, she worked 9 consecutive years teaching a full course load, and sometimes more, but classified as a part-timer. Her last three years at the college were tenured and she believes this only came about because her chairperson fought long and hard for the full-time position to remain upon someone's early retirement, as the norm for the college over the

past 4-5 years of a deficit budget was to not replace any vacant positions. The chair believed that only because the V.P. supported their program did the position remain.

The years leading up to the tenured position were varied; each contract differed depending upon departmental need. Most were 8.5 months, sessional positions, which after the first probationary year included full benefits at a prorated level. During the spring and summer months, the ECD department taught in the region, thus she was able pick up enough work to earn an adequate salary for these terms, but lacked benefits. After the second consecutive sessional position, she was in danger of losing the opportunity to continue at the college. The 'rule' for the part-timer was that if they were to work a second consecutive sessional year, they had to be hired into a tenure track position. Because there was not a position open, yet a lot of part-time work available, she and the chair were extremely upset and frustrated by the rule. As the chair claimed, "Why would I hire anyone else when she is an outstanding instructor and department member?" Finally a verbal agreement between the chair and the V.P. was reached that she would remain if she signed a paper every year, stating she would not bring up the fact that she was not being granted a tenure track position as a grievance against the college.

Her position was successfully defended for nine years, even through the numerous V.P. changes where the chair would have to go and re-present the case of hiring her into continued sessional position. Yet, to this day, she still felt that the part-timers were taken advantage of when wages were frozen for a 2-year period. She argued the case, with the support of the chair, to human resources that because part-timers' contracts were terminated each year, to hire them back, you would have to hire them at the next year of experience, but the college refused to re-consider. The decision was not based on a

written college policy, but based on a person in a power position interpretation of how it should be applied to the part-timer.

Verbal agreements proved to be both a support and a block to her career. Her right to remain as a part-timer allowed her to continue to develop skills as an ECD college instructor. The contracts became a very important determination of remuneration and professional opportunities. She was placed on the college grid according to education and years of experience. This was used to calculate a monthly salary. The few years that she taught course by course, she had no benefits and the grid was used to figure out an hourly wage and then timed by the number of course hours. She did receive a substantial amount of prorated P.D. each year that she had a sessional position and made sure to take advantage of attending provincial, Canadian and American conferences. Benefits were maximized; with two young children the dental and medical benefits were well utilized, as well with all four family members as glasses wearers, the glasses stipend was welcomed. She did regret was that she was unable to receive pension monies during the 9 part-time years; this only began during the tenured years.

Over the years, the part-timer's salary decreased because of new department rules that affected work in the region. Initially, courses in the region were given a higher number of hours than if taught on-campus, plus if it was a new course you received additional hours for the prep. Practicum was originally calculated at the grid level; however, this was reduced to a set hourly wage that was substantially lower than a grid level wage [sometimes as high as \$40.00/hour less]. The department changed the rules, but this was driven by the deficit that the college continued to face and the department

members were trying to save full-time positions by reducing the overall department expenses.

Although this seemed to work against the part-timers, the two chairs that she worked under worked extremely hard to keep her at the college. Both chairs exercised power, but one in particular, used her power to advocate and support this part-timer's position in the department. In fact, if it were not for this chair's support, she believes that she would not have had such a long-term and ultimately, successful career. She always felt encouraged to move forward to take on the new challenges and to believe that she was a highly skilled and important department member. This chair fought to get her every benefit that she could, even if it was sometimes a half a term that had benefits.

Lack of one critical benefit frustrated her ability to achieve a long-term desire: to complete a master's degree. She felt stalemated in her part-time position. She did not qualify for the sabbaticals that full-timers did and could not afford to pursue the degree without financial support. At that time, distance training was not as common and she preferred face-to-face education. As soon as she became tenured, she applied for a sabbatical, achieved it and is in the process of completing the thesis. She was always quick to take advantage of any opportunity to update her skills, either in technology or in field research.

She enjoyed all of the opportunities that her work presented her with and in the early years, part-time teaching was an exciting adventure. She flew on small planes or drove into remote communities; she taught 2-3 week intensive courses, weekend courses that were completed in 3-5 weekends, evening courses and the on-campus groups. Her knowledge of the program was expansive as she taught almost every course in the first

two years. A great benefit of working off campus was that she could meet many of her family's needs as she often brought her young children to the northern practicum visits, commonly in aboriginal communities. Especially loved was the summer college program in Grouard, Alberta (small college in a native settlement). Here she was provided with a teacherage and her children and sometimes husband joined her for the 6 week teaching stint. Classes ended at 2:00, so the afternoons were spent at the lake. When teaching on-campus, she did not always spend full days on-site and was able to do some of the work at home in the evening so that she could take care of her children as well.

She enjoyed the diversity and challenge; however, as the years passed and she found herself working 12 months of the year, with maybe 2 weeks off, she began to feel frustrated, tired and wishful that she could spend more time not teaching to research and update courses. It became more difficult when she could not take the children as it meant arranging child care; part-time care was not easy to find and it was harder to be away from home. After about 5 years, and many hopes that a full-time position would be available, but which continued to elude her, the glamour began to wear off. Although, initially the part-time contracts helped meet some of her family's needs as her children reached school age, she would have preferred the full-time position. It then became a mental battle of reminding herself that in this era of downsizing, she was earning a decent wage, lucky to have a good job and that she was doing a job that she enjoyed and that allowed her to continue to grow and develop new skills. This battle was not always easy and there were times when she resented the full-timers' benefits, especially that they were being paid through the spring/summer, so you could actually research, update courses and have a paid holiday.

She noticed some distinct differences in her ability to be a fully contributing member to the department and greater college. She was not always obligated to attend the staff meetings, and although she felt it important to keep her presence visible, she never felt that she was in a position to challenge policies. She did not want to be perceived as one who rocks the boat as she felt it might jeopardize her chance at securing a full-time position. One of the years that she was hired course by course, she did not attend staff meetings, but found this a huge drawback in that she never knew what was going on. Policies could change and this was not always communicated to the part-timer. Participating on college committees was difficult as committee members were selected before she knew if she was returning the following year. Intriguing and frustrating was the fact that during the yearly department evaluations, the same form to evaluate full-time members was used to evaluate part-timers. One of the suggestions that surfaced every year was to be more involved in college wide committees. She did attempt to present a case to the evaluation members that she was often not in a position to do this, as committee members were selected before she knew if she was returning in the fall, but it continued to be noted. To compensate, each year that she returned, she requested that the chair let her know if any committees were calling for additional members. She was successful in joining some and yet each year was always encouraged to join more. It wasn't until tenured and then able to sit on more college committees that she really did feel that she began to more fully understand how the college worked; it somehow made her feel more loyal to the whole institution rather than just to the department.

She did realize that if she were to remain working at the college with as much work as she could obtain, she would have to be visible. Not having the luxury of saying

no, she had to take on all teaching assignments that were available and to excel at what she did. She took on assignments that she did not always wish to do, worried that if she declined, she would be looked upon as someone who does not want to work. She also undertook extensive community commitments by sitting on boards and by conducting workshops, this latter being essential to a good peer review at the end of the year. As well, once her children were in school full-time, when not teaching in the region, she was on-campus daily, before and after many full-timers. She took advantage of any in-service training that she was on-campus for. Because of her extreme visibility and presence, most who got to know her at the college were often surprised when they discovered that she was a part-timer. The chair and department administrative people often relied upon her to deal with student issues or requests, as she was sometimes the only one on-site, whereas many of the full-timers chose to work at home when not directly teaching. This was both a compliment and also irritating as she felt that other full-timers should be around more to pick up the slack.

As a part-timer, she felt that she had to do more than full-timers and this meant several things: take on more of the extras, excel in each thing she did, and not slack off as she was being evaluated each year. She was jealous of the tenured instructors who were evaluated the third year after tenure and then every fifth year after that. Evaluation was a laborious task that she would not welcome doing every year. She did feel that her heavy course load and its variety resulted in an intensive skill development as she often prepped courses with a only a few weeks notice, taught a large variety of students in as many as five different communities each year, taught new courses each term, and taught in all modes that the department endorsed: guided study, audio-conferencing, video-

conferencing, week-end, evening and on-campus face-to face. The diverse experience led to her flexibility and adaptability in meeting students needs, thorough knowledge of the program, a in-depth understanding of the regional needs, and the ability to determine the necessary basics of each course, rather than over developing it, a danger of those that teach a course too often. Most full-timers only taught the on-campus students. The flip side was that she felt she did not always find as many new materials to teach from as she lacked large blocks of time to conduct the research.

There were a couple of times throughout the 12 years when other positions opened up at different colleges (the chair always updated her about various work possibilities). However, it would involve uprooting from the country living and leaving a large family support group, which did not seem to be right at the time. In hindsight, the couple wonders if it would have been a better choice; however, it was not pursued. Now, as they face the uncertainty of creating jobs in a new province, they are not surprised by the upcoming challenge as it seemed present consistently for the husband and something they are familiar with. They are excited about the move to a warmer climate where they can pursue more year round recreational opportunities and a bigger city experience for their now teenagers. Will they secure work in career track positions or will it be work to meet financial goals? Time will tell.

Appendix B

Interview Questions and Guide

1. **Would you please describe your journey as a part-time academic.**

To begin with it will be important for participants to give a brief background of educational levels obtained. Some of the research suggested that part-timers were less educated than full-timers. Then it will be critical to begin the interview with, **why part-time?** The literature indicates a number of factors that may construct an academic's career into part-time. A lack of tenured positions available, institutes hiring for short-term training needs, a desire to work part-time because of family needs or deeming personal time more important than full-time work, and/or the desire to be free from the pressures of publishing and commitment to activities beyond teaching in the classroom. The literature also discusses choice and how this can be constructed positively or negatively; therefore, I want to establish when employment began-was there a delay and if so, reasons for. Related to this is the question of did they choose part-time work and have they continued to choose part-time work. Some research and individuals that I have spoken to further specify that part-timers often work for more than one institution, thus it will be important in this overview to find out all of the academic places of employment (even if the participant feels that some contracts were minimal). I will ask for more detail in later questions, this will be a more general overview of beginning to present day.

Probes: -briefly describe your post-secondary education
 -after what level of education and how soon after graduating did you become employed as a college instructor?
 -if a delay-explain why
 -was the first part-time position a choice? Explain
 -briefly describe the institutes that you worked for, what were you hired to do and how long was your contract? What ended the contract? Began the next?

2. **What skills did you need to develop as a part-timer?**

Current literature discussed some of the unique demands of the part-time position, i.e. juggling and organizing complicated work schedules and short course preparation time. Part-timers themselves have disclosed that they needed to become flexible in their abilities as they often were hired to teach a large range of courses or perform a wide range of tasks. Some individuals also said that they needed to learn to market themselves and to demand more money and more perks and were surprised that they often received more when they demanded more.

Probes -how did you learn these skills?
 -who or what supported your skill acquisition?

- what, if anything, blocked your learning of necessary skills? Or developing further skills?
- do you think your skill requirements are the same as full-timers? Explain

3. How has long-term part-time work shaped your work? How has it shaped you?

This question begins to move to a deeper level to more closely examine the research question. Scarce research exists about the part-timer and none has yet focused on the research question I have developed. Here it is essential to gain a detailed description of the participant's career and how it has developed. Controversy in the literature exists about whether or not the part-timer is an asset or deficit to academics.

Current research also presents conflicting views on educational level and skill level, some claim that part-timers are neither as highly educated nor competent as full-time, tenured staff, whereas others believe them to be equally competent. Some of the research discusses that there is little choice over workload, so part-timers may teach courses or take on tasks that they are not interested in. I am curious about how the above controversies and issues in the research are revealed in the experiences of the research participants. Other research suggests that it is difficult to make a living as a part-timer, although I personally know some who have and continue to do so; therefore, I will be interested in discovering the reality of this for these participants. I am also curious about the long-term financial strategies of part-timers as the literature did not discuss this in any great detail.

- Probes:
- what professional growth opportunities have been realized because of the part-time position?
 - has your educational level increased during part-time work? What contributed or did not contribute to this?
 - what has been the advantage of working as a part-timer in terms of career growth?
 - what, if any, has been the disadvantage?
 - what do you like about your career growth opportunities?
 - what have you disliked about your career growth opportunities?
 - are you depending on part-time work to make a "decent living"? Explain
 - what about financial security in old age-is this an issue for you, or has it become? Explain

4. Where do you see yourself in five years? In retrospect, would you do things differently?

This question frames the end of the interview by projecting into the future and reflecting upon the past. Responses to the first part of the question will address the research that applies dual market theory to the case of the part-time academic. This theory proposes that part-timers will become socialized into a secondary labour market of low wages, poor working conditions and few opportunities for advancement. They will not see themselves as having the skill to pursue work in the primary market, which in this case is the tenured position. The second part of the question emerges from the methodological approach of narrative. Hearing, reflecting upon or re-reading one's

words has the possibility to change one's level of understanding of experience of a phenomenon. This may occur at the end of this interview, but may also occur during either of the two voluntary feedback sessions.

Probes- will part-time work continue?

- if a full-time tenure track position that you are eligible to apply for became available, what do you think your chances would be of securing? Explain
- how long will you continue to pursue a tenure track position? Would there be any pivotal points that would make it no longer a desired choice? Explain

Appendix C

To Alice Wainwright-Stewart, chair of the provincial ECD coordinators (chairs of 2 year college Early Childhood Development Programmes meet monthly)

Script for E-mail contact

Hi Alice, my name is Sharon Stradin and I am a graduate student in the Studies of Policy and Practice in Health and Social Services, Master's Program at the University of Victoria, B.C. I am also an early childhood instructor at _____ and have been for 12 years. I am currently in the process of beginning research for my thesis. The project is titled: **Part-time in a full-time profession: The impact of long-term part-time positions on the careers of human service college instructors.** The area of human service includes but is not limited to, Early Childhood Development, Social Work, Child and Youth Care, Nursing or Education.

I would like to be able to use the forum of the ECD coordinator's meeting as one avenue to recruit possible participants by developing a brief synopsis of the project that as chair you would include as an agenda item for an upcoming meeting. Once presented, if the chairs supported the project I would then ask that they could take the information back to their staff and present in a similar manner, or contact me to discuss further.

If you have further questions or require more detail, please feel free to e-mail or phone me. I did discuss this briefly with _____, the _____ chair of _____ and she supported contacting you with this request.

Thanks Alice,

Sincerely,

Sharon Strasdin, Instructor

ECD, GPRC

(Contact numbers go here)

Script for ECD coordinator's chair to present at coordinator's meeting

Sharon Strasdin is an early childhood instructor at _____. She has worked nine years as a contracted sessional instructor, and has been tenured for the last three years. While studying in the master's programme, Studies in Policy and Practice in Health and Social Services, at the University of Victoria, she became interested in the part-time academic. A literature review determined that the rise in part-timers across North America is escalating, while research of this phenomenon has lagged. Some of the issues have been researched, i.e. working conditions and salaries, but little has been found that critically examines the affect on the career paths of instructors who work long-term in part-time roles. Her own nine year stint as a part-timer has been an added motivator in the desire to research this topic further.

Sharon will conduct a qualitative study for her master's thesis, utilizing a narrative methodology. This involves interviewing participants in a one to three hour interview. From the responses to the questions, Sharon will write a story of each participant's experience. An analysis and interpretation of participants' experiences will be included in the thesis titled: **Part-time in a full-time profession: The impact of long-term part-time positions on the careers of human service college instructors.** The area of human service includes but is not limited to, Early Childhood Development, Social Work, Child and Youth Care, Nursing or Education.

Sharon will make confidential arrangements to interview the participant in their location. Further information about the ethical procedures that governs the study is included in the attached consent letter and/or through further contact with Sharon.

Sharon wishes to thank Alice for the opportunity to present this study at this forum and for your support. She looks forward to further feedback or to discussing this project further.

Sincerely,

Sharon Strasdin,

Instructor, ECD

Name of institution goes here

sstradin@gprc.ab.ca; office # (780) 539-2786

Example of Poster used to display throughout institutions

WANTED

Long-term part-time college instructors

Discipline: *(includes but not limited to: Early Childhood, Child and Youth Care, Social Work, Rehabilitation, Nursing and Education)*

Task: Research participant

Study: Part-time in a full-time profession: The impact of long-part-time position on the careers of human service college instructors.

Location: Phone interviews

Commit: A one to three hour interview to tell your story of how your career developed in a long-term part-time academic role

Researcher: *If interested of for more information contact:*
Sharon Strasdin, a nine year part-timer, three year tenured
(College name and address goes here)
Master Level graduate student:
Studies in Policy and Practice, University of Victoria, B.C.
sstrasdin@gprc.ab.ca; (780) 539-2786

Supervisor: Dr. Marge Reitsma-Street, Professor
Studies in Policy and Practice, University of Victoria, B.C.
mreitsma@uvic.ca; (250) 721-6468

Appendix D

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH
HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Participant Consent Form

Part-time in a full-time profession: The impact of long-term part-time positions on the careers of human service, college instructors.

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled, *Part-time in a full-time profession: The impact of long-term part-time positions on the careers of human service college instructors*, which is being conducted by Sharon Strasdin. Sharon Strasdin is a graduate student in the department of Human and Social Development at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions: sstrasdin@gprc.ab.ca (780) 539-2786 (w); (250) 390-7504 (h.).

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in Studies in Policy & Practice in Health and Social Services in the Faculty of Human and Social Development. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Marge Reitsma-Street. You may contact my supervisor at (250) 721-6468 and mreitsma@uvic.ca.

The purpose of the research is to explore the nature of part-time, long-term career experiences. The research objectives are to use a narrative methodology to construct participant's experiences (stories) and then interpret the conditions that affect career experiences and its impact upon individuals.

Business trends and principles are influencing academic institutions; a very obvious cost-saving strategy is hiring part-time instructors. The literature has recently reflected this trend and some of the concerns raised have been researched, i.e. poor wages and working conditions. The question of the affect that a long-term part-time position has on the careers of college human service instructors has not been researched. This research may assist a variety of audiences, particularly part-timers, full-timers and administrators, to gain clarity on career development for part-timers. Knowledge gained may be used to support or enhance the career paths of part-timers.

You have been selected as a participant in this study because you volunteered to share your story of long-term, part-time academic work. How your career has been shaped and influenced is best told by you. Your contribution will add important information to the existing research, which is at best limited. You also meet the characteristics of a clearly defined participant group. You are a human service college instructor (including, but not limited to: Early Childhood Development, Social Work, Child and Youth Care, Nursing or Education); have worked for three or more consecutive years as a part-time instructor; are pursuing a full-time, tenured position; and work at a Northern Alberta College.

A minimum of two participants who are the main wage earner will be sought. In the recruitment process, you will be asked the question: Were you at any time the main wage earner during your part-time contract? You may freely decline response to this question.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your individual participation will include an initial audio-taped interview, which will be structured around a set of questions designed to discover how your part-time academic role has influenced the development of your career.

You will have control over the tape-recorder. The audio-tape will be transcribed by the researcher and later written into a story of your experience. You will be offered a two week opportunity to examine a copy of the interview transcription for accuracy and asked to indicate with your initials when you have done so. You will be given the same opportunity to add comments or veto specific quotes in the story script. In discussion with Sharon you may suggest changes in either the transcript or the story.

The part-time academic often has a complicated work schedule that is fragmented and involves a lot of attention to scheduling events. Involvement in this project will add one more dimension to that and most likely necessitate the giving up of valuable personal time. I will make every effort to accommodate your schedule.

Participation in this research has the potential to expose you to some minimal risks. You may Experience discomfort at critically examining your career path, particularly as you speak of choices and decisions. Issues could arise that may cause you to re-evaluate your career progression, either positively or negatively. Increased awareness of your path and its influences, may cause you to experience some regret at choices and the resulting outcomes, thus perhaps questioning your role in the development of your career path. You may also experience vulnerability as you share your personal journey with a researcher.

To minimize the potential risks, at the conclusion of each session I will debrief with each participant and follow-up with a phone call 2 days later. Further discussion or support will be provided if necessary.

There are a number of potential benefits from participation in this project. You will be given the opportunity to have an in-depth conversation with a person committed to "hearing" your story. You may gain a deeper understanding and perhaps changed perception of how your career has been shaped (self-reflection and the reading of one's own word may contribute to a different or expanded view of the topic studied). Your story will contribute to the knowledge base about this particular topic.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. **You may choose to pass on any interview question that you do not wish to answer.**

If you withdraw from the study the data you provided, or part thereof, will be used after discussion with you and if you provide consent in writing. If you decline the use of your data in the study the information will be immediately excluded from the project. Paper copies of the interview transcripts and developing story will be shredded, the audio-tapes destroyed and the diskettes will be erased.

After the initial written consent form is signed, I will continue to check in with you after each session to gain continued verbal consent. At anytime if you deem it necessary to withdraw from the project, you will be supported in this action without a requirement of explanation.

Every effort will be made to protect the participant's identity; however, because the thesis is

published and filed both electronically and in hard copy in the library at the University of Victoria, it will not be 100% guaranteed that someone in the field might not read the thesis and recognize a participant's story. You will be given the opportunity to review the interview transcripts and the written story to ensure that personal or identifying information is removed. College settings will be identified by the phrase, "a Western Canadian College". In the transcripts, thesis and reports a pseudonym will be used.

Your confidentiality will be ensured by storing the data in a locked filing cabinet, accessible only by the researcher. Electronic files will exist in disk format only, which will be stored in a locked filing cabinet when not in use. The informed letter of consent will be securely locked in a separate filing cabinet in the home office. Depending on where she is working, the researcher will use filing cabinets in her home or work office. A locked briefcase will be used to transport data.

No other use of the transcripts is authorized herein. Upon completion and defense of the thesis, it is anticipated that the results of the study would be presented at a workshop. It would also be a goal to write an article for an appropriate professional journal. If other opportunities arise, I will seek additional written informed consent before making other use of the data.

Data from this study will be handled in the following manner. The interview tape will be destroyed upon defense of the thesis. All transcripts and other research materials (hard copies, diskettes) will be retained in the researcher's office or home securely locked in a filing cabinet. The data (interview transcripts, hard copies, and diskettes) will be preserved for seven years. Destruction of the data will occur no later than November, 2009.

By signing this form you are acknowledging that you understand the purpose and activities involved in this study. You are giving consent to participate in the study. The data collected will be presented in a thesis. After the successful defense of the thesis, you will receive an executive summary of the results of the study. The results may also be presented at conferences and in papers. If opportunities arise for further use of the data, you will have the choice to decline or to support by giving further written consent.

In addition to being able to contact the researcher and the supervisor at the above phone numbers, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (250-472-4632).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Appendix E

From: Leah Potter
To: 'Sharon Stradin'
Sent: Wednesday, January 28, 2004 9:07 AM
Subject: Request for Continuing Review

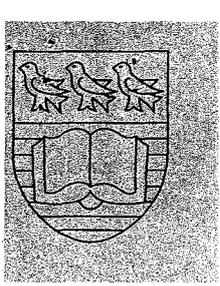
Hi Sharon -

Thanks for submitting your Continuing Review.
As your data collection is complete, you can go ahead and write your thesis without this form. A Continuation is for researchers who were not able to complete their data collection within the approved time period; something not entirely clear on this form at this time. A new form is in draft process.

Thank you for taking the time to ensure Ethics Approval.

Good luck with your thesis -
Leah

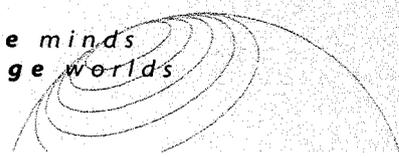
Leah M. Potter | Human Research Ethics Assistant |
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 Vice-President,
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 change worlds*



University of Victoria - Human Research Ethics Committee

Certificate of Approval

<u>Principal Investigator</u> Sharon Strasdin Graduate Student <u>Co-Investigator(s):</u>	<u>Department/School</u> HUMA	<u>Supervisor</u> Dr. Marge Reitsma-Street
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Title: Part-time in a full-time profession: The impact of long-term part-time positions on the careers of human service, college instructors

<u>Project No.</u> 399-02	<u>Approval Date</u> 21-Nov-02	<u>Start Date</u> 21-Nov-02	<u>End Date</u> 20-Nov-03
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Certification

This is to certify that the University of Victoria Ethics Review Committee on Research and other Activities Involving Human Subjects has examined the research proposal and concludes that, in all respects, the proposed research meets appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Subjects.

J. Howard Brunt
 Associate Vice-President, Research

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the procedures. Extensions/minor amendments may be granted upon receipt of "Request for Continuing Review or Amendment of an Approved Project" form.

399-02 Strasdin, Sharon

Office of Vice-President, Research - UVic
 Room 424, BEC - P.O. Box 1700
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