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Immigration, the University, and the Tolerant Second-tier City

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The ongoing geographical shift in immigrant settlement patterns and the related settlement experiences of immigrants outside of the largest national cities continues to be of interest to policy makers, practitioners, and researchers alike. This paper explores recent immigration to Kitchener-Waterloo (K-W), a second-tier city (STC) in Ontario, through the conceptual lens of the creative community and the role of the university.

Purpose

Qualitative research on immigrant settlement in Kitchener-Waterloo (K-W), Ontario has revealed the important role played by the region's universities in attracting immigrants, but also in creating the feeling of a safe and welcoming space. This paper explores these findings in light of recent scholarship on the links between social diversity, the creative city, and economic development, and applies it specifically to the context of immigration to STCs.

Methods

Between 2004 and 2006 semi-structured interviews were conducted with visible-minority and European non-English-mother-tongue immigrants. Questions were asked of participants concerning their reasons for settling in the area, their experiences with regard to service delivery and other municipal functions, and their general perspectives on the nature of the community. In all, 21 immigrant couples were interviewed, with the majority being of South Asian origin (N =42). Two focus groups were held with European and non-European women (13 respondents). In addition, seven service providers and municipal and regional government officials were interviewed, In total, 62 respondents were included in 30 interviews/focus group sessions.

Key Findings and Discussion

The paper argues that greater qualitative assessment of the specific nature of STC communities, their community qualities, and the resources present can complement more abstract quantitative indices. Such attributes can, in fact, be used to highlight the specific roles played by key actors in the community, in this case universities. In the case of Kitchener-Waterloo, its universities

attract immigrants to the region, and assist in their subsequent integration by creating spaces that are perceived as being safe and free from discrimination. The findings hint at some interesting strategies that are being used by skilled international workers, such as applying simultaneously for student and permanent immigration visas. This strategy should be seen as a method being employed by some immigrants in order to overcome international credential devaluation.

Recommendations

Policy implications are offered in relation to how universities, and, by extension, international students, factor into how Canada's immigration policy is evolving in response to the demand for skilled immigrants. The recommendations are:

1. Expand the reach of universities and colleges in second tier cities;
2. Develop further means to integrate international students into the immigrant regionalization model; and
3. Critically examine the use of international students as a talent pool while simultaneously advancing a neoliberal education funding regime that under invests in higher education.

KEY WORDS: Second-tier cities, universities, tolerance, creative communities, immigrant attraction

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INTRODUCTION

Immigration continues to be a first-tier urban affair in Canada, and this is certainly clear in Ontario. In 2006, over 39 per cent of Canada's immigrants landed in the Greater Toronto Area alone. Nevertheless, the percent of Toronto-bound immigrants has been declining over the past 5 years while the percent settling in other cities in Ontario has increased (CIC 2006). This ongoing geographical shift in immigrant settlement patterns and the related settlement experiences of immigration outside of the largest national cities continues to be of interest to policy makers, practitioners, and researchers alike. This paper explores recent immigration to Kitchener–Waterloo (K-W), a mid-sized Ontario urban region, through the conceptual lens of the creative community and the role of its universities. The intersection of these themes under the rubric of regional immigration provides a useful scholarly and policy research framework, and raises practical and theoretical questions that can be replicated in a number of places, but are especially relevant to mid-sized or second-tier cities.

Markusen et al.'s (1999) work on second-tier cities (STCs) explored the growth, position, and function of rapidly growing, newly emerging medium-sized industrial cities that challenge established urban hierarchies. Markensen et al. (1999, 3) have termed STCs as "spatially distinct areas of economic activity where a specialized set of trade–oriented activities takes root and flourishes, establishing employment and population growth trajectories that are the envy of many other places." In this regard, it is not the population size, *per se*, of a city that makes it an STC, but rather its relative position in the national urban hierarchy, together with its economic structure. For the purpose of this paper, K-W can be considered to be an STC, especially given the paper's focus on two of the cities at the heart of the larger Waterloo Region which meet the criteria for an STC as proposed by Markensen et al. (1999). Kitchener-Waterloo forms the heart of *Canada's Technology Triangle*; an economically successful region possessing a diversified economic base, including manufacturing and hi-tech employment, and the home of a number of respected colleges and universities. Indeed, the region was placed 5th in *Foreign Direct Investment* Magazine's Top Rankings for North American Cities of the Future in the "small cities of the future" category in 2007.[1]

The Kitchener CMA includes the cities of Cambridge, Waterloo, and Kitchener, and the townships of North Dumfries and Woolwich. Research for this project, however, was focused on K-W, of which Kitchener is the larger with 204,668 total population compared to Waterloo's 97,475 (Census 2006). Immigrants make up over 23 per cent of the K-W population (24.8 per cent in Kitchener, 21.7 per cent in Waterloo), which is over the national average of 19.8 per cent, but less than the Ontario figure of 28.2 per cent (Statistics Canada 2006). In 2006, the Kitchener CMA was home to 1.7 per cent of all immigrants to Canada, making it the ninth largest with regard to the national share (Census 2006). With respect to immigrant retention, the Waterloo Region also

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[1] http://www.uwresearchpark.ca/media/documents/2007-05-07_Waterloo_Region_makes_FDI_rankings_top_five.pdf Accessed June 25th 2008

appears to do well, attracting approximately 6,000 additional secondary migrants in the first half of the 2000s based on correspondence between various data sets.[2]

Immigration is increasingly a factor of consideration in economic planning for STCs across Canada and other western economies that are facing labour-market restructuring and the demographic implications of both an aging population and declining fertility. In this regard, taking an inventory of community resources and understanding how they might relate to immigrant settlement is a valuable exercise in which to engage. Universities are central institutions to consider in such planning, and this paper identifies some of the more specific ways universities and other educational institutions inform immigration attraction, retention, and settlement experiences both directly and indirectly.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, THE CREATIVE COMMUNITY, AND THE UNIVERSITY

Inspired most recently by the popular work of Richard Florida (2005), interest in the urban creative class has had a long tradition that stretches from the work of the late Jane Jacobs (1984) to other urban scholars such as Zukin (1995) and Ley, (1996). While much of this interest was initiated in large metropolitan, often global cities, Markusen et al. (1999,17) also tapped into this line of thought by suggesting that STCs "might succeed where primate cities have, by devoting some of their resources to enhancing their own uniqueness and attracting footloose skilled individuals simply on the basis of quality of life." Despite the lineage of this debate, Florida's research has attracted tremendous attention from various sectors, including municipal governments, many of which are rushing to rethink urban regional development from within Florida's framework of the three T's: technology, talent, and tolerance. Florida interprets technology and talent as flows that need to be attracted to a place, and so, for Florida, *place* matters in ways that go beyond issues of local tax rates and physical infrastructure. One of the factors that makes some places better than others in Florida's model is tolerance, as demonstrated by diversity or 'low barriers to entry' (2002b); "the places most likely to mobilize the creative talents of their people are those that don't just tolerate differences but are *proactively inclusive*" (Florida 2005b, 39, emphasis in original). So, while talent, technology, and tolerance may offer an appealing alliteration, Florida really means talent, technology, and proactively inclusive communities.

Florida's tolerance factor is represented through three indices: 1) the presence of gays and lesbians (the gay index), 2) bohemians/artists (the bohemian index), and 3) immigrants and racial diversity (the mosaic index). The correlation of these indices to regional economic success has been the subject of much speculation and analysis (Peck 2005). In this paper, the primary focus is on the mosaic, or diversity index. This dimension of Florida's work has attracted critical attention and its relationship to immigration policy is clearly evident. For example, Rausch and Negrey's ranking of

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[2] LIDS data for 2000-2005 indicates 10,783 immigrants landed in Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, while census data records 16,875 immigrant arrivals in the Kitchener CMA between 2001 and 2006.

US Metropolitan Statistical Areas found that "tolerance and the relative concentration of the foreign-born population are the only positive and strongly significant predictors of GMP [gross metropolitan product] growth."(2006, 481). Moreover, Ottaviano and Peri (2006) found a net positive effect of cultural diversity in the productivity of natives in their quantitative analysis of the correlation between wages and rents and the rate of foreign born. On the other hand, Manning, Thomas and Darnton's (2006) review of the creative cities thesis and diversity suggested that Florida's work was based on circular reasoning, and his diversity indices do not always correlate with economic growth. In particular, they highlighted discrimination as a factor that could limit economic development in cities with high proportions of African-Americans. For their part, Alesina and La Ferrara (2005) attempted to prove that a positive correlation exists between productivity and diversity, but concluded that while there are ample examples to suggest this *could* be the case the reality, not unsurprisingly, was, in fact, highly complex.

Regardless of the fairly inconclusive literature, what is obscured in the current era of sloganeering around the positive relationship between diversity and increased economic productivity is the necessary work to which all levels of government and civil society must commit in order to create and maintain socially, politically, and economically inclusive communities without further marginalizing the most disadvantaged sectors of society (Uitermark et al. 2005; Putnam 2007). The intersection of social difference, class, race and ethnicity, racialization, and the economic and social costs of discrimination as they relate to urban economic development demands much more attention from creative city boosters. To assess the diversity/economy connection with regard to immigrant settlement, structural processes at the global, national, and local scales must be more fully examined (Ellis 2006: Abu Laban and Garber 2005; McEwan et al. 2005). As Boyle (2006) has argued, analytically the links between the Floridian creativity thesis and political economy must be more fully identified in order to understand how the cultural practices of the creative class inform regional economic development and vice versa. Specifically highlighting the role of universities as agents in the process of immigrant settlement and retention illuminates some of these linkages between political economy and the creativity thesis more fully.

Beyond the need for greater critical examination of the role of discrimination, Florida's research has elicited a wide range of reaction from both left and right. On the left, the major criticism has been that the creative-class thesis supports ongoing neoliberal urban agendas. For example, Florida's mantra is seen as having inspired a neoliberalization of creativity in Australia (Gibson and Klocker 2005). Moreover, Jamie Peck has argued that Richard Florida's work simply has served to extend already circulating consumption and property development-led urban strategies and, thus, explains the ease with which his ideas have been taken up, because they do not challenge the status quo (2005 761). Links between this form of urban creativity and increased poverty have also been highlighted in various places, including Houston (McCann 2007) and Wollongong, Australia (Barnes et al. 2006).

Despite the criticisms, Florida's work is valuable because it has contributed to a greater awareness of regional development models that incorporate cultural and social dimensions of the economy. One outcome of this increased attention to innovation and creative communities has been a more detailed consideration of how universities contribute to the three Ts. While technology and talent have been most thoroughly examined (see Wolfe 2005; Florida 1999; Bramwell et al. 2006),

the place of tolerance in regard to the university has been less explored. With the increase in skilled global migration, however, the experiences of foreign students and scholars is fast becoming a focus of attention (Foote et al. 2008), as has diversity in the university system generally (Lynch 2005; Allen et al. 2006). Few studies have explored what this might mean in STCs, but Lusis (2007) has underscored the value of universities for the educational services and supports they offer to Filipino immigrants in mid-sized cities. How universities might contribute to building diverse and tolerant communities in the areas surrounding their campuses has not been widely explored, but the general consensus, in North America at least, is that universities positively contribute to the building of social cohesion (but see Ratcliffe (2005) for a different perspective from the UK). As Gertler and Vinodrai (2006, 21)) have argued universities:

> contribute to the creation of open and tolerant places, which in turn helps to create the necessary conditions for attracting and retaining talent, thereby making the entire process mutually reinforcing. In other words the university has a much *wider role* to play in the community that reaches well beyond industry collaboration, technology transfer, and commercialization.

In this paper, there is an explicit focus on the role of the university with respect to the building of tolerant and inclusive communities.

KITCHENER-WATERLOO: A CREATIVE CITY CANDIDATE?

A Vignette

On an unseasonably warm September evening in 2007, downtown Kitchener was hosting a series of artistic events. Walking from the robotic chair exhibit in the Waterloo Regional Children's Museum to the CAFKA (Contemporary Art Forum Kitchener and Surrounding Area) international art installations at the Kitchener City Hall, the vibe of a creative, hi-tech, artistic community at the cusp of self actualization was in the air. Despite the common view of Kitchener as the industrial blue-collar cousin to Waterloo's internationally reputed intelligent community, the feeling of change and dynamism in the air that evening was palpable. The German artist Jens Meyer's massive white fabric structures stretched across the front of Kitchener's City Hall, while an army of wooden feet, designed by Jems Roberts Koko Bi from the Ivory Coast, seemed to levitate above the large pool in front of City Hall. The Berlin tower, a nod to Kitchener's earlier moniker, was draped with light from the Haptic (sense of Touch) CAFKA 07 Video projection. It seemed this was the kind of place the much-in-demand *creative class* would dig (DeGroot 2007). Indeed, the synergies behind this exhibit reflected a specific nexus of creative and hi-tech talent. The Haptic projection was powered by Christie digital projections, a manufacturing company with deep roots in the Waterloo region, and the lead corporate sponsor of the event (DeGroot 2007; Pitts 2006). CAFKA's ambitions to become Canada's pre-eminent biennial visual arts forum were developed in response to a challenge from Jim Balsillie (co-CEO of the Blackberry-maker Research in Motion), to elevate the community's "creative context and innovative capacity" (DeGroot 2007). On first blush then, an

argument can be made that Kitchener's artistic sense, combined with Waterloo's hi-tech innovation, place the region fairly high on the creative cities matrix. Indeed this assertion can be verified in other ways.

Measuring Openness

Gertler et al. (2002) calculated Florida's creative community indices for the 68 metropolitan areas in North America with populations of between 250,000-500,000. Kitchener CMA ranked 46th for talent, 3rd for the Mosaic index, 15th on the Bohemian index, and 15th on the tech pole. While this indexing is highly valuable for comparison purposes, it does not unearth details of a community's profile that might be valuable in determining whether the mosaic index does, in fact, reflect tolerance in the sense that Florida was suggesting. In this case, Kitchener's third-place ranking on the mosaic/melting pot measure is deceptive from the outset, since the foreign-born population is comprised of a larger share of European immigrants than the Canadian average. Of the top-ten sources of immigrants landing directly in K-W during the 1990s, six were from Europe and the USA (Table 1). This European bias is also evident in the refugee population, for example Yugoslavia and Bosnia Herzegovina account for over 35 per cent of convention refugees to K-W but only 13 per cent to Canada (Table 2).[3]

In 2006, the top-ten ethnic origins in the Kitchener CMA, apart from Canadian, were all European, and German was the third most common ethnic ancestry after Canadian and English (reported by 105,670 residents or 23 per cent of the total population as opposed to 10.2 per cent of Canadians and 9.5 per cent of Ontarians). This has served to create a fairly dominant European cultural landscape in the region. While this does not necessarily lead to a hegemonic, coherent sense of community, particularly with reference to former Yugoslavia, it has, nevertheless, created a different type of diversity than that encountered in the gateway cities of Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal. The visible-minority population in the Kitchener CMA, at 13.7 per cent, for example, is below the Ontario and Canadian figures of 22 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively.

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[3] Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)comprised the area of the present-day independent states of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia.

Table 1: Top 10 Immigrant Sources to K-W[4]

Top Ten Immigrant Source Countries for K-W, 1980-89 (N = 13,008)		Top Ten Immigrant Source Countries for K-W, 1990-2000 (N = 20,866)	
Vietnam	1,140	Romania	1,658
UK & Colonies	1,072	Bosnia Herzegovina	1,585
Poland	1,025	China	1,314
United States	853	India	1,273
Guyana	751	Poland	1,132
India	717	Yugoslavia	1,120
El Salvador	658	Vietnam	1,021
Romania	550	El Salvador	904
Germany (Fed. Rep.)	540	United States	705
Laos	500	UK & Colonies	670

Source: CIC Landing Immigrant Data Base System (LIDS).

[4] In the 1980-89 period, the top-ten source countries accounted for 60.0 per cent of all immigrants to K-W. For the 1990-2000 period, the comparable figure was 54.5 per cent.

Table 2: Top-14 Source Countries for Convention Refugees to K-W and Canada 1980-2000

Top-14 Countries of Birth for Convention Refugee Class to K-W, 1980-2000	Number	% of Total	Top-14 Countries of Birth for Convention Refugee Class to Canada, 1980-2000	Number	% of Total
Yugoslavia	1,084	19.0	Sri Lanka	29,663	10.5
Bosnia Herzegovina	930	16.3	Iran	24,242	8.6
El Salvador	547	9.6	Yugoslavia	19,241	6.8
Somalia	461	8.1	Bosnia Herzegovina	17,832	6.3
Iraq	401	7.0	Ethiopia	17,488	6.2
Iran	298	5.2	Somalia	17,465	6.2
Afghanistan	234	4.1	Afghanistan	16,483	5.8
Nicaragua	231	4.1	Iraq	15,660	5.6
Ethiopia	205	3.6	El Salvador	15,253	5.4
Vietnam	171	3.0	Vietnam	6,236	2.2
Sudan	170	3.0	Pakistan	5,799	2.1
Romania	158	2.8	Lebanon	5,502	2.0
Guatemala	121	2.1	Sudan	5,444	1.9
Croatia	112	2.0	Nicaragua	4,946	1.8

Source CIC Landing Immigrant Data Base System (LIDS).

The composition of immigration to K-W is distinctive from the national picture in another way that might suggest more community-based qualities of the type inferred by Florida's notion of tolerance. Between 1980 and 2005, the percentage of refugees (of various classes) landing in K-W was nearly two-and-a-half times the national percentage (see Table 3). Certainly the region's Mennonite history informs a particular philanthropic perspective, which I will discuss below, and the Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) Ontario head office is based in Kitchener. The MCC operates a refugee program that focuses on private refugee sponsorship, and this often is undertaken collectively by church groups. The Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support also is active in the Waterloo Region, and has recently moved out from the umbrella of the MCC to become an independent not-for-profit association. Ironically, though, for a community seen as a cradle of entrepreneurial activity, the percentage of entrepreneur- and independent-class immigrants landing in the region was approximately half the national figure over the 1980-2005 period. This might support the thesis that a tolerant community creates the positive setting for innovation and entrepreneurial success to flourish, as opposed to just being an instrumentalist means to gain talent. Certainly this vision of the Waterloo Region as an innovative community is due, in part, to this philanthropic and collaborative spirit, something that has come to be expressed as 'the Waterloo Way.'

Table 3: Number and Per Cent of Landings by Immigrant Class K-W and Canada, 1980-2005

Immigrant Class	Canada #	Per Cent	K-W #	Per Cent
Family Class	1,660,252	34.0	12,871	35.2
Convention Refugee	390,270	8.0	7,172	19.6
Other Refugee Classes[1]	292,723	6.0	4,951	13.5
Retired Class	52,708	1.1	178	0.5
Assisted Relative Class	437,128	8.9	3,314	9.1
Entrepreneur Class	192,825	3.9	610	1.7
Self-Employed Class	71,434	1.5	319	0.9
Other Independent Class	1,506,209	30.8	6,692	18.3
Investor Class	106,982	2.2	44	0.1
Live-In Caregiver Class	46,610	1.0	46	0.1
Other	132,952	2.7	379	1.0
Total	4,890,093	100.0	36,576	100.0

[1] This includes Designated Class, Asylum Class, and Source Country Class.
Source CIC Landing Immigrant Data Base System (LIDS).

The Waterloo Way

Talk of 'the Waterloo Way' has become shorthand for the entrepreneurial success and community building that has appeared in the Waterloo Region. It has permeated the pages of the Canadian national media, even spawning a website celebrating the region's entrepreneurial spirit (Keenan et al. 2006).[5] The region's economic development organization, Canada's Technology Triangle (CTT), and Communitech, the region's technology association, are active promoters of the area and its culture of industrial collaboration or "co-opitition" (Business Times 2007). This development approach, grounded as it is in collaboration and mutual support, is presented as a deeply ingrained part of the local culture which stems from the history of Mennonite settlement in the region. Indeed, this culture of 'barn raising,' collaboration, philanthropy, and cooperation have been cited as some of the strengths behind the success of the community (Haddrall 2007), and of the hi-tech development in the region (Keenan et al. 2006). This distinctiveness has attracted accolades, such as federal industry minister Jim Prentice's description of the region as a "cradle of innovation' (Robinson 2008), and it also has been used as one factor to explain the emergence and success of the University of Waterloo (Johnston 2007), the archetypal entrepreneurial university (Bramwell et al. 2008).[6]

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[5] http://www.thewaterlooway.com/ accessed June 18th 2008.

[6] "The 2007 annual Maclean's rankings of Canadian universities listed the University of Waterloo as having the best reputation among Canadian universities. The university also ranked first in three of the four categories that determine the national reputation ranking — 'best overall', 'most innovative' and 'leaders of tomorrow'." (In the other category, "highest quality", UW was second behind McGill.) Macleans November 9th 2007.

This collaborative spirit can also be seen in other community-based initiatives that have recently raised the profile of the Waterloo Region as a leading second-tier city adapting to immigrant change through broad-based collaborative approaches and solutions, particularly with regard to labour-market issues and service needs (Janzen et al. 2003, 2005, 2005a). A number of resources have emerged that are specifically focused on attracting and retaining immigrants to the Region, including Newcomers online Waterloo NOW,[7] and the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network or WRIEN. The case of WRIEN's creation serves as an example of the collaborative ethos celebrated in the "Waterloo Way" story. This process of change began with an 'Immigrant Skills Summit' in April 2005 that was organized by several local agencies in the Waterloo Region, and led by the Centre for Research and Education in Human Services (CREHS).[8] The Summit was organized to bring together multiple stakeholders and concerned groups in order to develop a comprehensive set of action plans to attract and retain immigrants to the Waterloo Region. Subsequently the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN), modeled after the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), emerged, and it is hosted by the local Chamber of Commerce.

The skills summit echoed the demands made in other immigrant-dispersal discussion papers that, in order to build long-term, sustainable immigrant attraction and retention programs, immigrants must be envisioned as community builders, and not merely as labour inputs (Prompt 2005). WRIEN currently addresses the immediacy of improving immigrant access to the labour market through its work with local employers, but enhancing the social and political inclusion of immigrant newcomers is arguably more difficult to achieve, depending, as it does, upon widespread changes in local public culture. The summit's report highlighted this issue under immigrant retention, which, among other things, stressed the need to "create a profile of Waterloo Region as being a welcoming environment for immigrants," and to "promote immigrant leadership in the Waterloo Region" (Janzen et al. 2005a). Certainly this work is ongoing, and WRIEN's activism with regard to networking employers and immigrants is working, although there are a number of areas that have been identified as in need of improvement (Wayland 2007; WRIEN year 2 evaluation 2008).[9] Clearly, a number of these community-based initiatives suggest a welcoming community for immigrant settlement, but the focus of this paper is on the role of the university in enhancing immigrant settlement experiences. Universities and colleges are both products and producers of a regional culture and the institutional capacities it develops in order to meet challenges, such as immigrant attraction and retention. Interpreting how immigrant newcomers incorporate the university into their understanding of, and inclusion into, the community offers valuable practical insight with regard to building effective policies for immigrant-dispersal models and economic and community development.

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[7] http://atwork.settlement.org/sys/atwork_offsite_frame.asp?anno_id=2006261 accessed Nov 14th 2007.

[8] The group has since been renamed Centre for Community Based Research http://www.communitybasedresearch.ca/

[9] See http://www.wrien.com/documents/WRIEN_Y2_evaluation_summary_based_on_v22-04-2208.pdf for year 2 evaluation. Accessed June 25th 2008.

METHODOLOGY

This research in K-W focused on immigrant attraction and retention to second-tier cities and followed similar research conducted in British Columbia (Walton-Roberts 2005). Between 2004 and 2006, semi-structured interviews were conducted with visible-minority and European non-English-mother-tongue immigrants. Participants were asked about their reasons for settling in the area, their experiences with regard to service delivery and other municipal functions, and their general perspectives on the nature of the community.[10] In all, 21 immigrant couples were interviewed, with the majority being of South Asian origin (N =42). In addition, two focus groups were held with European and non-European women (13 respondents), and seven service providers and municipal and regional government officials were interviewed, for a total of 62 respondents spread over 30 interview/focus group sessions.[11] The research was undertaken during a dynamic period in the Waterloo Region when a number of community stakeholders were working to develop WRIEN (Janzen et al. 2005a). In the following section, the interview material collected during this time is explored in order to highlight, in more detail, the role of the university in the attraction, retention, and settlement experiences of immigrants, and to investigate how this can be related to Richard Florida's tolerance index as an indicator of creativity.

THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY

The University as Locus of Cultural Change and Increasing Diversity

Over the last decade, the increase in the flow of foreign students to Kitchener has been larger than the national trend, with a more than 98 per cent increase between 1997 and 2006 compared to provincial and national increases of 59 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively (Table 2). At the university level, first-year international student percentages range from 1.8 per cent at Wilfrid Laurier University to 7.9 per cent at the University of Waterloo (Macleans 2007). Moreover, the UW data indicate a significant increase in international student full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers from

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[10] The research involved a number of research assistants who transcribed and coded interviews (Cheryl Robertson, Qaseem Ludin and Jennifer Coles). Farzana Propa also conducted a number of interviews with Bangladeshi and other South Asian and African immigrants. The data from the Bangladeshi immigrants was also used as the basis for her MA thesis on Housing accessibility of Bangladeshi immigrants in KW (Propa, 2007).

[11] Despite efforts to contact German immigrants through German clubs and the German language schools in Kitchener, only two interviews were conducted with German immigrants. European representation was therefore most evident from the focus group with women from Eastern Europe and the Former Yugoslavia.

400 in 1996 to 2,800 in 2007, led by increases in students from China, Bangladesh, Iran, India, and South Korea (University of Waterloo Cognos system).[12]

Table 4: International Student Flow Canada and Ontario Communities

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	%increase 1997-2006
Ottawa-Gatineau	1,336	1,290	1,610	1,871	2,136	1,913	1,724	1,653	1,674	1,717	28.52%
Kingston	393	325	398	465	465	416	347	346	398	355	-9.67%
Peterborough	106	160	203	236	271	222	149	172	195	216	103.77%
Toronto	7,172	6,621	9,183	11,465	13,256	12,667	11,053	10,316	10,659	11,732	63.58%
Hamilton	911	722	961	1,078	1,395	1,315	1,250	1,069	1,090	1,204	32.16%
St. Catharines-Niagara	547	464	532	730	699	657	485	529	654	730	33.46%
Kitchener	377	379	558	605	637	648	594	634	671	749	98.67%
Guelph	261	248	348	336	343	371	290	219	237	293	12.26%
London	462	589	637	746	754	782	676	727	781	1,026	122.08%
Windsor	110	205	362	372	347	353	499	433	607	677	515.45%
Other Ontario	1,512	1,558	1,828	2,071	2,379	2,212	1,992	2,009	2,040	2,386	57.80%
Ontario	13,187	12,561	16,620	19,975	22,682	21,556	19,059	18,107	19,006	21,085	59.89%
Canada	42,160	40462	49834	59590	68394	63808	57583	54654	56674	61703	46.35%

Source CIC *Facts and Figures* 2007[13]

In interviews with over three-quarters of the immigrant participants[14] and all of the government and service providers, the role of the university as an important factor influencing settlement experiences was mentioned. Since both international students and students from larger cities move to the region for educational purposes, the university can become a core for ethnic-minority presence in second-tier cities that might otherwise not see a large number of ethnic-minority immigrants settle there. In the case of Waterloo, the internationalization of the student body at the University of Waterloo, and the attraction of the region's universities and colleges to ethnic minority students from larger, more-diverse cities such Toronto, can be seen as introducing greater ethnic difference into the community. As one study participant noted:

> [I] think the diversity of the economy of this area definitely brought immigrants here, the fact that we have the two universities. Many immigrant families even if they settled in Toronto… if the children needed to go to university they move here…

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[12] Accessed March 27th 2008 at http://iapr2.uwaterloo.ca/cognos74/cgi-bin/ppdscgi.exe?BZ=1AAAA3O9I5RUABEwU6VFChpEieOi2AyOJGzps3xihUmSOCSFRepCBASNmd38bJEiQ7KvZ3fC~udeNWZQsSAx5UsUJFSlZ3z0x_mRIEipJtBRxMgVJEiglYOQwkmTKkCBMb5OlSBCp~5LW8TezN4CavePA2TUDZl_ZmH1iu3Jqg5jaYIZMovHFyUNMLzMu9sQzDQH~

[13] CIC *Facts and Figures* includes levels including secondary and trade education, which is about 40 per cent of the national total.

[14] Sixteen couple interviews and 2 focus groups out of 24 interviews and focus groups in total.

the university, strong community college, so I think those were important factors (Service provider 1, Waterloo)

In the process, universities and colleges have become one of the main routes by which a visible-minority population has come to enter the community. The long-term impact of this process was articulated well by a City of Waterloo official:

I was born and raised in the city of Waterloo, so I think that I can speak to a long view. As a child in Waterloo, the city of Waterloo was mostly about German heritage. Even into early young adulthood, the focus was still German heritage. It is only in the last I would say 25 years that the greater diversity started to be obvious…And that, in my mind, is linked to the universities, because I can remember in the 50's when the University of Waterloo started and how interesting the community got right away. And then, by the time my children … graduated from the University of Waterloo, my son's engineering graduating class was more that 80 per cent Asian. And [it was] very, very interesting to see that in such an obvious way. So just to sum it up, although there is that deeply rooted German background, based on immigration after the war … there is clearly other influences and in my mind they are all centred around the university. (City of Waterloo official, 2005).

The university also can be an active partner in promoting cultural difference to the wider community, not just passively introducing it. In one case, when asked to give examples of community events that made the respondent feel comfortable and included, the university was cited as a platform from which to engage in cultural festivals:

Well, I found the international student organization in the university and the student life centre, they arrange some events like this [cultural events]. Ya, these activities are very encouraging. Canadian people can know about one particular culture by witnessing the programs. And on the other hand, the particular group of immigrants will also feel themselves important members of the community (SA2).[15]

In addition to introducing different cultural groups to the wider community through university-based public events and festivals, the number of international students coming to a community like K-W acts as a useful introduction to local service providers of the needs of diverse communities, especially if that flow transitions into permanent settlement from the same region. One service provider explained how this worked in relation to immigrants from mainland China:

and the few waves of Chinese … asking for services here. Mainly the Chinese people that were coming to K-W or the Waterloo region were students in university. They were coming, studying and leaving … but then suddenly we start seeing another type of people coming … they were coming from mainland China … and then when we start paying attention to that we realize that they were coming to stay. So we were

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[15] Interviews are prefixed with B for Bangladeshi, SA for South Asia, G for German.

experiencing the same thing, there were people, a lot with education, with some English, some money, coming to stay. And we were experiencing the same … problems of access of service. (Service Provider 2, Kitchener).

Talent Attraction

Ten of the interview respondents (roughly 25 per cent of the total sample) chose to settle in K-W specifically because of the access to higher education opportunities. Many of these respondents emigrated directly from South Asia to K-W with admissions to the University of Waterloo or Wilfrid Laurier University or, in some instances, both. Some also moved to K-W soon after landing elsewhere in Canada because of the educational opportunities in the area. The following excerpts illustrate this point:

two major factors; the first one is I wanted to accomplish my career goals, future career goals in Kitchener-Waterloo area by joining at Wilfrid Laurier. And the other one is equally important. It's the funding for me. So, it's both the financial and the career-oriented decisions to settle in Kitchener-Waterloo (SA3).

I moved to Waterloo [from Ottawa] and absolutely, just because of University of Waterloo, just one of the best universities and that's the only attraction here (B4, 2006).

Because of my husband … he is studying in University of Waterloo. That's why we moved here because it's easier…. I'm studying in the University of Toronto.… So, that's why we moved here. Now I go there [Toronto] twice or, thrice in a week, using the Greyhound bus (B3).

In some cases, parents saw the university as an important resource for their children, and in one case this feature was seen to counter-balance what was seen as an otherwise fairly average city. The following observations underscore this notion:

Kitchener-Waterloo seemed everything, economically like it was vibrant, the universities were here for the kids, it was close to Toronto close to Mississauga.… Kitchener is really nothing to be excited about (G1).

I came Kitchener-Waterloo about 4 year back. Because my daughter was planning to go to Laurier. And she, like, we don't want split the family. We want to stay together. So, its easier like, she can stay home and she can study, everything. So, we moved here (SA10).

In some cases, the traditional pull of family, combined with the reputation of the university to attract newcomers to K-W. As one participant observed:

So while I was thinking of applying to some universities in Canada, I tried to select a university which is close to my brother. So that's how I chose UW. So you can say that my brother had a big influence on that. Even if he didn't force us to come here, but I thought I'll be comfortable if I can be somewhere close to him (B12).

Universities also play a significant role in attracting talent directly through employment, but, in Waterloo's case, they also play a role in their commercial linkages and spin-off companies that continue to attract and retain (in the form of skilled and educated labour) talent to the region. These wider economic pulls were evident in many interviewees' responses as illustrated below. In the last case, the skilled job clearly was seen to make up for any perceived deficiencies linked to living in a smaller city, as opposed to Toronto:

F3: he got a job offer from this university [UW], then we considered going to Canada. Then I collected information about Canada and one of my professors he was a junior professor, he said that Canada has a good reputation about, how can I say this, standard of living in terms of education, and in terms of culture, so he valued it highly the Canadian culture, so that attracted me (Non-European Women's Focus Group).

My company is US-based. But they came to Waterloo without going to Ottawa or, Toronto. It's just because there was already a company here in the university's funding. So, my company bought that small company and eventually it grew (SA4).

[M]ost of the Bangladeshis who come to K-W come as students. Very few Bangladeshis come to work here. But this has also been changed lately. There are a few non-student Bangladeshi families in K-W … they came here with jobs. For computer related jobs, RIM is a big provider. Google is coming, as well. So those who work with computer related industries, programming or, software stuffs, they consider K-W as one of the potential employment locations. So people who are more hi-tech job seeker come to K-W (B2).

If smaller cities have good universities and community colleges then immigrants will be automatically attracted. I can say for myself, I came here with a job. If I didn't get this job here, I would have stayed in Toronto and looked for some Tim Horton jobs, maybe. But now that I got a job here, so I was interested to move here. And also I'm thinking of doing some advance studies in UW. That's how I'll be able to develop myself (SA2).

There are numerous attractions for immigrant to the K-W region that are directly and indirectly linked to the universities and colleges in the area, but deriving some kind of meaningful quantitative indicator of this fact from the interviews was problematic due to the non-random sample used in this research project, especially in regard to the Bangladeshi sample. What can clearly be stated though is that institutions of higher education do play an important role in immigrant attraction to second-tier cities, both directly, in terms of employment and study, and indirectly with regard to family decisions related to children's education and the employment linked to university-

industry spin offs. Clearly, then, the impact of the university in local economic development and cultural change is much wider than the 'university-as-knowledge factory' and economic innovation literature has suggested.

International Students and Strategies for Immigrant Application

One of the interesting findings that emerged from the interview data was evidence that some immigrants had begun to develop strategies that involved simultaneous applications for immigration and graduate studies. This intersection strategy appeared to have emerged as a response to the 'qualifications conundrum' that many immigrants face. As one participant noted:

> We heard that immigrants don't get good jobs unless they have Canadian degrees. Therefore, we were trying for admission to Canadian universities while processing the permanent residency applications. Both of us were looking for admissions, and, at the same time, we wanted to live in the same area. So he (husband) applied to UW and me at WLU. We were very lucky that we got the admissions as well as the permanent residency. But we landed in Canada after 1 year of our permanent residency, because we wanted to ensure the [university] admissions. And we came to K-W because of our admissions and because of the universities (B11).

On the same theme, another participant suggested:

> [B]oth the immigration and university admission process was going on simultaneously. But I got immigration before getting any admission. So when we landed in Canada for the first time, I came to visit Waterloo. And then I went back to my work place in Saudi Arabia. At that time, I was permitted to stay outside of Canada for maximum 6 months. And within this 6 months, I got an admission offer from the University of Waterloo. So, after getting that offer, we came to Waterloo directly (B5).

In the last case, this skilled immigrant's strategy was aimed at maximizing opportunities while avoiding any potential deskilling involved in entering the Canadian labour market, and this required both detailed planning and timing. Clearly, this situation offers some insight into the agency highly skilled immigrants activate as they exploit the global skilled migration circuit, and suggests that we must come to understand international education as one part of the larger immigration-related international circuit (Hiebert and Kwok 2004). But further education is not seen by all immigrants as an integral part of their immigration strategy. The agency exercised by the Bangladeshi respondent above contrasts with one European woman's experiences; she felt that any plan to attend university in Canada post-migration would be interpreted negatively in her immigration application:

> when we were accepted it was different criteria than now … our criteria was you have to be educated at least from … you have to know some English, you have to be

able to succeed in Canada, your profession is what is in need in Canada, so I don't know. If I set it up when I wanted to go to university of Waterloo to continue my education, I planned years ago, I probably won't be accepted, because you are going there to work, make money and pay taxes (European Women's Focus Group).

There is a sad irony to this woman's comments. While skilled immigrants are selected because they are expected to contribute to the economy, the reality is that Canadian retraining might be one of the most efficient ways immigrants can overcome the structural impediments they face with the "qualifications conundrum." In this sense, the strategy of combining immigration with Canadian higher education options can be seen as a tactic that addresses this conundrum directly.

The University as Safe Space

Other comments about the university that emerged in addition to the direct and indirect employment opportunities it offered included sentiments about how the presence of the university informed immigrant experiences of the socio-spatial landscape. In eight interviews (26 per cent of the interviews), the university locale was characterized as being a safe space, and it was often raised in response to questions about experiences of discrimination or marginalization. The following comments indicate some of the most explicit comments offered in this regard:

I think the mosque and the halal food stores are very important. But most of all the university makes us feel comfortable. Because of the two universities, people of this city are educated so they're very nice, well behaved (B2).

I think the people are way too friendly in K-W because of the two universities. Whenever we asked for any help or, whenever we needed any help, people willingly helped us as much as they could. I think it's a very special quality of K-W (B2a).

Oh, one thing, you were asking about discrimination. When we first came here as international student we found everyone very welcoming. So, I don't think the discrimination exist, at all. You can mention it in your research. This is what we like most about Canada; everyone is treated in same way. I really appreciate. Also after getting immigration when we informed in the university about our status change, they congratulated us. They said, 'oh, you have now become Canadians.' [They] seemed to be very happy (B1).

Ya, sometimes, like you know, if they are walking through a street, some boys they pass on comments. Some racial comments, like, 'go back to your country. You don't belong here or,' something like that. But, ya, for myself, I've never seen anything like that because I'm always staying close to the university (B3).

All the incidents we heard is from Toronto. Not here. We don't face. Actually this area is very nice, I find so far. People are very, people other than my country, other

people. And ya, and mostly for the students we went to school that consists of lots of people from China, India, Pakistan, and also Canada, USA. So we, feel to be like, you know multicultural. So we have lots of friends from Iran, Chinese. So we don't feel, ya, may be that's the reason (B3).

Interestingly, a comparison of experiences with Toronto university life revealed that different housing and settlement patterns for students made a difference with regard to how comfortable, in this case a Bangladeshi couple, international students felt:

Also, I like the environment, you can say, the community here. Because there are lots of Bangladeshi here and most of them are related with the university, most of them are students. So, I feel more comfortable in terms of Toronto. Because the area in Toronto where we stayed is in the university area, but not so many Bangladeshi people were living in that area. Most of them were living in Danforth or Victoria Park area. So, but here we got a very big community in terms of, you know, Bangladeshi. So I feel a little more comfortable in here in comparison to Toronto (B3).

In this case, what is hinted at is that it is not the university space *per se*, but the location of housing vis-à-vis the location of the university that was appealing. Certainly the advantages of more compact campuses in second-tier cities might give them an advantage over the larger metropolises, and echoes more general sentiments immigrants offered about preferring smaller cities for the proximity and manageability they offer, as well as the perception of safety. The university was also cited as a place where social events could be arranged that could serve as opportunities to reach out into the wider community, thereby acting as builders of social cohesion more widely:

I think people are here very nice. so, I don't feel uncomfortable as an immigrant…. Last week, I was in Seattle. And the people there, how they communicate, for example, in restaurant or, other places like, grocery shopping, they are not as nice as these people. I think it's reasonable. In [a] low population community, people are much nicer. And here people are nicer than Toronto. People in Canada are nicer in average (S1).

Experiences of Discrimination and the Construction of Spatial Binaries

Interview respondents were asked questions regarding their level of comfort living in the community, and if they had experienced isolation in the community. This approach was adopted in order to allow us to probe further with regards to issues of discrimination. Eighteen out of the 23 interview/focus group encounters with immigrants reported that they had not experienced any discrimination. In three cases, participants shared their own direct experiences of discrimination and the different contexts within which they had occurred, and 3 other participants reported on indirect experiences about which they had heard. Overall, the majority of interviewees reported that they felt very comfortable in the community and had not suffered any discrimination. Table 5 indicates the

range of contexts within which the direct and indirect cases of discrimination occurred. The leading contexts within which both direct and indirect experiences had occurred were in reference to employment (6 cases), in public spaces (5), in accessing services (3 cases), and related to a perceived increase in Islamaphobia (3 cases).

Table 5: Experiences of Discrimination Reported in the Interview Sample

Experiences of Discrimination?	N/A	Public/social	School	Services	Job	Housing	Islamiaphobia
B1	√						
B2	√						
B3	√						
B4		√			√		
B5	√						
B6		√			√	√	
B7	√						
B8	√				√		
B9	√						√
B10	√						
S1	√						
S2	√						
S3	√						
S4	√						
S5	√			√	√		
S6	√						
S7		√					
S8	√						
S9	√				√		
S10	√						
S11	√						√
G			√				
Euro FG ♀		√		√			
Non E FG ♀		√	√	√	√v		√
Total cases	18	5	2	3	6	1	3

While the safe space of the university appeared as a motif in eight of the interviews, an additional theme also emerged in the transcripts that set up a seemingly binary situation between the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, and this was most apparent when issues of discrimination were discussed. Waterloo was envisioned as welcoming because of the presence of the universities and the assumption of an educated population, but Kitchener was sometimes presented in opposition to this based on the lack of these qualities. The following two examples captured this sentiment very well:

One day me and my wife went to a shopping mall and some teenager passed a comment to us, 'why don't you go home.' But you know, that boy even doesn't know where his origin is. But I would say the level of discrimination is very low in Canada. And it's almost nil in the city of Waterloo. Because Waterloo is a university-oriented city. It has two reputed universities. Most of the people are educated people. So these things don't exist here in Waterloo. But it is in Kitchener; the cities that have blue-collar people still discriminate (B6).

F3: I used to walk a lot, but now I stopped because I am scared. You see some of the people from in their car with their head out, 'Hey, you black Muslim, go back to where you came from, you don't belong here.'"… I don't think it's a Canada-wide thing, because I went to Toronto and it's more multicultural than here.… It's not acceptable. Kitchener is bad. (Non-European women's focus group).

This last comment points to a particularly disturbing public display of racist behaviour, and, within the context of the non-European women's focus group, it led to a lengthy discussion. One other woman in the group, who was Asian and lived in Waterloo, was stunned by this case:

F2: May I just say something about this. Actually, about the Muslim discrimination. I think I am a third party, as I am Asian. But frankly, before this meeting, I didn't know that there is such discrimination actually here. Because usually I know the people struggle from the newspaper, because my world is so limited … and now I am so shocked because I didn't know this (Non-European women's focus group).

One other participant in the focus group, who had been a long-time resident of Kitchener, commented on wider perspectives regarding the image of the city, while simultaneously dismissing it:

F1: It's more of a German town. I always hear the excuse, it's a German town, so it's almost expected that people are prejudice against you. But me, personally, I don't go looking for that (Non-European women's focus group).

Another respondent in a different interview session, this time a recent German immigrant, also reflected on the presence of discriminatory attitudes in the region, but rather than seeing it as a local practice rooted in the German culture of the region, she read it as a national form of polite Canadianness:

I always think that Canadians are racist in their basements. The moment they come out of the door they behave. And then if you're black, I think you don't care what people think in their basement as long as they treat you with respect the moment they are out of the door. Which still means you won't get certain jobs, but they will not tell you openly in the face (G1).

Rather than suggestive of definitive qualities of Kitchener versus Waterloo, the point of sharing these narratives is to probe how everyday experiences become woven into folk lore about

particular places, and how their circulation can reinforce perceptions of place, something that needs to be acknowledged by communities that might want to enhance their image generally, not just in order to attract diverse newcomers. Instances of discrimination that are recounted in these interview excerpts can be usefully understood as outcomes of intersections between race, gender, and class. A more fine-grained analysis of immigrant experiences in second-tier cities does allow us to *deconstruct* the common perceptions that emerge, but it does not mean that we have to *dismiss* them. Instead, further analysis might offer opportunities to target community capacity-building initiatives around particular neighborhoods where problems have been identified, and unearth and scrutinize the local narratives that might relate to the preconceptions in circulation.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Waterloo Region offers a number of features that would suggest it qualifies as an up-and-coming creative city offering the qualities of place borne of tolerance and openness. Certainly, the region has attracted an increasing number of immigrants, but the skew towards European origin has been more dominant in K-W than can be seen in the comparative national and provincial rates. Nevertheless, greater ethnic diversity is evident in Waterloo, and part of this could be explained by the role being played by its universities, especially in the increasing rate of international students. The vision of Kitchener-Waterloo as a creative community (based on Florida's mosaic index), however, obscures a number of key differences between the two cities. Waterloo is often differentiated from Kitchener, but key to explaining how this is relevant to the issue of immigrant settlement experiences is to explore how it informs perceptions and is reproduced and re-circulated by immigrants and non-immigrant residents alike. Greater geographical analysis of the region related to the presence of low-income neighbourhoods, the presence of social services, and how the structural legacies of the post-Fordist industrial decline have registered across the region are needed in order to build a clearer image of how this STC is dealing with ongoing immigration and demographic diversity. The internal complexity evident within the region needs to be recognized in any economic development plans. The geography of talent embedded in Waterloo's high-tech sector and Kitchener's blue-collar pain because of ongoing industrial restructuring sit in very close proximity. This needs to be remembered as the community continues to build and project the "Waterloo Way" as a model for economic development to other Canadian communities.

There continues to be a great deal of analysis needed regarding immigrant settlement in STCs and how regional resources, such as universities drive, shape, and benefit from skilled labour migration. The wider intersections with regional development, community capacity-building and the creation of healthy, cohesive communities are currently being explored in both policy and research circles. Important examples include *A Tool Box of Ideas for Smaller Centres* by the National Working Group on Small Centre Strategies (2007), the PROMPT paper on immigrant regionalization (2005), CIC's Welcoming Communities Initiative,[16] and the recent call for proposals

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[16] For some of the projects funded under the initiative, please visit: <http://integration-net.ca/english/ini/wci-idca/index.htm>.

for Local Immigration Partnerships in Ontario.[17] In all of these cases, the focus has been directed away from *immigrant* characteristics and, instead, towards understanding and enhancing the capacities of *communities* that want to attract and retain immigrants. In this regard, more detailed assessments of the cultural, political, and economic nature of community development demands moving beyond basic numerical indices. Certainly, such universal tools of comparison offer a valuable bench-marking of the strengths and weaknesses evident in second-tier cities. Beyond this, however, on-the-ground assessments of immigrant experiences need to be undertaken, and the place-based qualities that attract and retain new immigrants to STCs (and, in some cases, may repel from) need to be examined. Some of the most powerful community actors in STCs are universities and colleges, and their role in this issue needs to be more carefully explored and orchestrated. The following policy section discusses these issues in more detail.

Extending the Spatial Reach of the University in STCs

The impact of minority and international student presence in small- and medium-sized communities can be an important indicator of how greater diversity linked to immigrant settlement will be received. In culturally homogeneous communities, the 'differences' international students introduce into the landscape can be received with cosmo-multicultural interest, but also with xenophobic reactions. Charting the experiences of international students can provide a useful benchmark in those communities where immigration is being seen as one potential demographic and labour market solution to potential population declines and skilled-worker shortages.

Universities are social, economic, and cultural actors in their communities, and, as such, need to work hard to extend their influence beyond the main campus. The recent creation of the Balsillie School of International Affairs in downtown Waterloo benefitted from a gift of city land that spawned debate in the local media about precisely what benefits educational institutes bring to the community. Not surprisingly, responses to various negative arguments focused heavily on financial, rather than cultural, benefits (Thaker and Heine 2007). Recent satellite campus extensions in the Kitchener downtown, a more economically depressed part of the region, include a Pharmacy College (UW) and a School of Social Work (WLU). Both are being used as tools of downtown economic redevelopment for Kitchener, but one risk associated with such educational gentrification is it may act to further divide communities along the lines of class ('town and gown'), even if such institutes act as conduits to enhance ethnic diversity. In this regard, community outreach and local educational opportunities associated with such satellite developments need to be seen not just as good PR, but as a means to support and extend the development of the learning region (Wolfe 2005).

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[17] <http://atwork.settlement.org/downloads/atwork/CIC_MCI_CFP_LIP.pdf>.

Integrate Students into the Immigrant Regionalization Model

Currently, Canada is not attracting its share of the international student market, and compared to the UK and Australia, Canada's approach to international student recruitment must be viewed as piecemeal and unorganized, probably because in Canada education is provincially controlled. This is something to consider in more detail, especially in light of the USA's recent experience with a decline in the number of foreign student's post- 9/11, and concern over its future competitiveness (Florida 2006; Kirkegaard 2008). Once students are in the country, the restrictions placed on those who then want to gain work experience, particularly those in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, has led to very poor uptake of the post-graduation work-visa options that are currently available to international students. Although 30,000 international students graduate annually, only 14,000 were issued a work permit under the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program between May 2005 and January 2007, a 20 month period (Bond et al. 2007). In the USA, universities take on a great deal of the visa processing work for Homeland Security for international students, yet they are not reimbursed for this. In Canada, universities are unprepared for this demand. They do not have adequate resources for their international offices as it is, so to expect universities to do more to capture "the canaries of the talent mine" (Florida 1999) within this unfunded model sets any initiative up for failure (Bond et al. 2007). The connections international students establish during their university years are vital for building business links, not just potential permanent immigrant pools, and the multiple benefits students and universities gain by building international linkages and exchanges have clearly been demonstrated (Hipel et al. 2003; Saxenian 2006).

The Federal Government of Canada recently has introduced a new class of entry for temporary foreign workers under the Canada Experience Class that allows skilled workers, in some cases, to convert to permanent resident status from within the country. This new policy is clearly aimed at international students, and to emphasize this point, the immigration minister even announced the program at a press conference held at the University of Waterloo (Keung 2008). Provincial governments have also come to recognize the value of international students as permanent workers. Boudarbat and Boulet's (2007) study of immigrant integration in Quebec suggested that international students in Canada should be viewed as a potential pool of immigrants and argued the Quebec government should begin out reach with these students to encourage them to consider applying for permanent residency. Recently, the Ontario Government expanded the Provincial Nominee Program to include international students trained at all Canadian institutions (Ontario Government press release, 12 February 2008). Such a policy change offers a number of benefits. First, it allows Ontario to poach foreign students from other jurisdictions and benefit from other provincial sources of higher-education funding, since among Canadian provinces Ontario ranks as one of the lowest investors in higher education on a per-student basis (Council on Ontario Universities, 2004). Second, this program allows employees to access skilled foreign-labour more rapidly than if they were going through the skilled-immigration program federally, which currently has a backlog of 800,000 applications. In both cases, the international student is being used to bypass various fiscal and policy frictions created by these same levels of government.

Regardless of the attempts of various governments to capture international students after they have completed their Canadian studies, this channel is seriously unfunded in the university system.

International students do not receive Canadian provincial government funding other than that directed through university-specific grants. In Ontario, international students do not gain universities any basic income units (BIUs). Additionally, under the current student-visa model, CIC insists on seeing international students through the compulsory-return model (Bond et al 2007), so married students can legitimately be separated from their families for the duration of their studies. When we consider these possible privations, and the precarious funding arrangements international students often face in Canada, it is possible to see government interest in tapping into this pool of skilled labour to meet domestic skill-shortages as a form of economic free riding.

Neoliberal Education and the Poached Student

While there are serious pragmatic reasons to amend the system to make it easier for international students to gain work experience in Canada, and possibly become permanent residents, we need to caution against the creeping neo-liberalization this model advocates. The recent changes in policy that facilitate the integration of international students into Canada's labour market are one dimension of the ongoing neo-liberalization of education in that international advantage and distinction are embedded aspects of this market (Waters 2006). Canada gains in two ways: it sells education to the international student and captures the return from the public and private investments made by others (both states and individuals). Such an emerging model advocates that Canada poaches the best-trained graduate students who have gained years of public education at the expense of their governments (brain circulation notwithstanding). At the same time, the funding system curtails how much public support is available to them while they complete their studies, yet, at the end of their studies, provincial governments are creating channels that will facilitate the inclusion of these students into the domestic labour pool. From this perspective, relying on poorly funded international students to fill skilled-labour positions really is a case of Canada wanting someone else's cake and eating it. There are a number of policy options that can be pursued to create a more equitable framework for capturing the talents of international students for domestic labour-market needs. These include greater support for refugee scholarships and bursaries, enhanced matching-grants programs, widespread support for scholars-at-risk programs, and greater government fiscal support for low-income and international students. These are just some of the options that universities should demand if internationalization is desired, and if international students continue to be eyed as a pool of desirable, permanent immigrants by all levels of government.

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The Metropolis Project

Launched in 1996, the Metropolis Project strives to improve policies for managing migration and diversity by focusing scholarly attention on critical issues. All project initiatives involve policymakers, researchers, and members of non-governmental organizations.

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•Enhance academic research capacity;

•Focus academic research on critical policy issues and policy options;

•Develop ways to facilitate the use of research in decision-making.

The Canadian and international components of the Metropolis Project encourage and facilitate communication between interested stakeholders at the annual national and international conferences and at topical workshops, seminars, and roundtables organized by project members.

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