Big Oil U: Canadian Media Coverage of Corporate Obstructionism and Institutional Corruption at the University of Calgary

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Abstract. A 2015 investigation by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) into the involvement of Enbridge Inc. at the University of Calgary drew widespread media attention in Canada on issues of academic integrity and legitimacy as well as renewed attention to the increasing centrality of corporate dollars in public institutions. All of this was further embedded in a public consideration of climate change and the contested legitimacy of carbon corporate interests. A qualitative content media analysis of 70 published stories from Canadian news sources reveals a stark contrast between corporate and non-corporate media frames. Our analysis shows the parallel efforts of the University of Calgary, Enbridge, and corporate media to frame out the central issues of corporate obstructionism in public institutions and, equally, institutional corruption around the mandate, purpose, and intention of those public institutions.

Keywords: Corporate Obstruction, Institutional Corruption, Academic Freedom, Public-Private Partnerships, Media Propaganda Model, Carbon Capitalism

Résumé. Une enquête menée en 2015 par la société Radio-Canada (CBC) sur l'implication d'Endbridge Inc. à l'Université de Calgary a attiré l'attention des médias canadiens à l'intégrité et la légitimité académique ainsi que l'attention renouvelée sur le rôle central et croissant des contributions financières des entreprises aux institutions publiques. De plus, ce sujet était incorporé dans les opinions publiques envers les changements climatiques et la légitimité disputée des intérêts d'entreprise du carbone. Une analyse médiatique qualitative du contenu de 70 articles publiés par les médias canadiens a révélé un contraste saisissant entre les structures de médias « entreprise » et « non-entreprise. » Notre analyse démontre les efforts parallèles de l'Université de Calgary, d'Endbridge et les médias d'entreprise d'omettre les enjeux centraux d'obstructionnisme des entre-

prises dans les institutions publiques et, également, la corruption institutionnelle autour du mandat, du but et des intentions de ces institutions publiques.

Mots cles: Obstructionnisme par l'Entreprise, Corruption Institutionnelle, Liberté Universitaire, Partenariats Public-Privé, Modèle de Propagande, Capitalisme du Carbone

Introduction

Since the neoliberal turn of the 1980s, corporate sponsorship inside universities has become both common and normalized in Canada with governments continually reducing the proportion of funding they provide cultural institutions and universities (Gray and Bishop-Kendzia 2009; Tudiver 1999). These reductions have forced, or in neoliberalism terms 'responsibilized', universities to pursue elevated levels of private and corporate sponsorship (Gray 2009; Rose and Miller 1992; Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Toepler 2001). However, during these shifts in the funding environment, businesses also started to subtly shift their funding approach from a pure philanthropy model (with no strings attached) to a funding partnership model which involves greater involvement in the day-to-day decision making processes inside universities (Gray 2013a; Krimsky 2003; Croissant and Restivo 2001; Iley 2000). Though rarely free from local and politicized controversy, the solicitation of corporate funding in Canadian universities generally does not gain national media attention (cf. Olivieri 2003). However, a recent Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) investigation into a $2.25 million endowment to be paid over 10 years by Enbridge Inc. (Enbridge) to the University of Calgary (UofC) has sparked a national conversation about the appropriateness of corporate sponsorship, highlighting the uneasy relationship between academic freedom and return on funding partnership investments.

In this article, we explore how the initial focus on academic freedom in the CBC investigation of the university-industry relationship between Enbridge and the UofC turned into a larger debate about the nature of corruption and obstruction. We also examine the differences in how the public non-corporate media and corporate media treated accusations of ethical misconduct by the Enbridge and UofC partnership. While the CBC and other non-corporate media pursued a frame of individual ethical misconduct resulting in constrained academic freedom, corporate media by contrast sought to defend the integrity of the relationship between the university and Enbridge during the investigative process. Corporate media sources also attempted to downgrade the seriousness of

conflict of interest charges against Dr. Elizabeth Cannon who was serving as both the President of the university and as a Corporate Director for Enbridge Income Fund Holdings Inc.

Both non-corporate and corporate media sources largely avoided the question of whether UofC's other research endowments and sponsorships, which totalled $360.5 million in 2015-16 (University of Calgary Community Report 2016), involved other conflicts of interest and similar patterns of corporate involvement. In this article, we examine the Canadian media coverage of the Enbridge endowment at the UofC within the dual contexts of institutional corruption (Gray 2013b, 2015) and corporate obstructionism (Carroll and Sapinksi 2016: 32-33; Carroll et al. 2018). That is, we place this academic scandal within the context of global carbon capitalists making strident efforts to shape and manage social change efforts around energy, and equally, the deeply Canadian tension between the recognition of a climate crisis and the centrality of carbon extraction and transportation to the Canadian economy. Such tension is the foundation of institutional corruption. Institutional corruption has been defined by Gray (2013b) as those violations of public trust "embedded within the structures, norms, practices and scripts of professional environments" rather than acts of novel, willful, and unlawful harm. Institutional corruption therefore requires a shift in focus towards examining "*influences* that implicitly or purposively serve to distort the *independence* of a professional in a position of public trust" (533). Our study examines one such moment of distorted independence and the role of those internal to the University of Calgary in making it both possible and normal.

Within Canadian media coverage of this event, we also see a parallel tension between the notion of a corporate university living up to its competitive mandate and the presence of institutional corruption exploited by corporate obstructionists to purchase a type of legitimated expertise in defence of a polluting industry. This echoes previous analyses of how Canadian media discusses climate change. For instance, Stoddart and Smith (2016) examined Canadian media coverage of the radically and rapidly changing arctic between the years 2006-2010 and found that climatic and geographic changes were largely considered through the lens of Canadian national interests. Canadian media downplayed the social and environmental impacts to indigenous peoples and other sub- and trans-national political and tender geographies to consider the nationalist economic opportunities of shipping and resource extraction. Similarly, Young and Dugas (2011) found that Canada's print media participated in decontextualizing climate change, slowly moving from a nuanced and political discussion of causation and consequences to a superficial frame

of how climate change might affect business interests and daily life. This occurred as the number of articles discussing climate issues increased substantially, leading to what the authors called the banalization of climate change.

The influences discussed in the remainder of this article are corporate in nature, stemming from an endowment for the Enbridge Centre for Corporate Sustainability at the Haskayne School of Business at the University of Calgary in 2012. The particularities of Enbridge Inc. as the world's largest transporter of crude oil is critical to understanding their corporate behaviour within the incident, but also critical to understanding the behaviour of Canadian media.

Overview: The Enbridge Centre for Corporate Sustainability

On November 1, 2015, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) began releasing controversial findings from a freedom of information request into a short-lived "Enbridge Centre for Corporate Sustainability" at the University of Calgary. CBC's analysis of emails between academics and administrators involved in the Centre opened the University to steep criticism that the endowment from Enbridge had undermined academic freedom and altered the mission of the public institution toward Enbridge-specific public relations. The emails showed that the research centre itself, which still operates as the Centre for Corporate Sustainability under the Haskayne School of Business, was the cause of considerable tension within the University of Calgary. Dr. Joe Arvai, the first Director of the Centre, left the University after stating his concerns about the independence of the Centre to the then-Dean of Business, Dr. Leonard Waverman. Avrai wrote, "I am not sure what we are signing up for. I have the impression that Enbridge sees the centre as a PR machine for themselves, whereas I see it as an academic research centre" (Bakx and Haavardsrud 2015: Nov 3). CBC claimed their investigation had shown "a pattern of corporate influence" and "a university bending over backward to accommodate the apparent public relations ambitions of a corporate patron" (Bakx and Haavardsrud 2015: Nov 3). CBC charged that Enbridge sought influence over board memberships, staffing and even the type of students who might receive awards.

In addition, the CBC claimed that emails from academics involved showed that Enbridge hired its own public relations firm to manage the Centre's presence, insisted that the University of Calgary partner with Central Michigan University on the one-year anniversary of a major pipeline spill in Michigan, and expected customized opportunities for

executives and clients to meet with researchers at the Centre and at the Haskayne School of Business (Bakx and Haavardsrud 2015: Nov 3). Then Dean of Business Leonard Waverman wrote to Avrai, "[i]f CMU [Central Michigan University] is the price we pay in the short run — that's the price," (Bakx and Haavardsrud 2015: Nov 3) while a Development Officer at the University reportedly "told Arvai every time he raises concerns about CMU with Enbridge, it shows the U of C is not committed to its partnership with the company" (Bakx 2015: Nov 1). Joe Arvai responded publicly after the University of Calgary began insisting the endowment had been made free of corporate obstruction. Writing in the Globe and Mail, Avrai (2015: Nov 7) publicly stated that "the CBC story correctly points to several instances where certain wishes expressed by officials at Enbridge, and ultimately granted by officials at the U of C, were incompatible with the mission of a new academic centre… of academic and scholarly independence."

The media exposure of these tensions in the funding partnership between Enbridge and the University prompted several changes at the University of Calgary. In particular, it motivated the Board of Governors to commission an arms-length review led by retired justice Terrance McMahon that concluded in December 2015. An independent review was also started by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and was released in October 2017. University President Elizabeth Cannon was, at the time the endowment was made, a sitting member of the Board of Directors for Enbridge subsidiary Enbridge Income Fund Holdings Inc. She held the position from 2004 until November 6, 2015 and disclosed it to the University, which had not received substantial sponsorship from Enbridge until this endowment in 2012. As well, Bonnie Dupont, a former Enbridge executive, sat on the University of Calgary Board of Governors at the time of the endowment. CAUT's (2017) review notes that this conflict of interest was clear and avoidable.

While much of the media attention on this scandal focused on that conflict of interest and the individual people involved, CAUT's (2017) review focused primarily on the institution's core responsibility to uphold academic freedom and integrity. Though lost in much of the media analysis to follow, CAUT (2017) was unequivocal: how the University of Calgary managed this endowment compromised academic freedom and contributed to a culture of silencing and reprisal. In the roughly six weeks to follow CBC's initial news item regarding the relationship between Enbridge Inc. and the University of Calgary, approximately 70 news articles were published in papers or online in Canada that specifically discussed the issue. University President Elizabeth Cannon stepped down from her Board position with Enbridge Income Fund Holdings

Inc., and both Cannon and Dupont were excluded from decision-making regarding the University's commissioned review.

Canadian Research Sponsorship: Obstruction and Corruption

The methodology of critical media content analysis requires attention to cognate analyses regarding the role of the media in cases of public inquiry and investigation. McMillan and McClung (2006) exemplify this type of analysis, using content analysis methods to examine the construction of truth around the Westray mine explosion in 1992. McMullan and McClung (2006) found that over time, the capacity of corporate bodies to empower themselves as truth-tellers and authoritative claim-makers lessened. But in the early phase of reporting on the Westray mine disaster, the propaganda model of communication held, including a reliance on official sources of information that actively denied corporate and individual culpability and even referenced structural and contextual issues that justified the actions under scrutiny (McMillan and McClung 2006: 80).

This propaganda model (Herman and Chomsky 1988) is found in corporate media reports on the Enbridge sponsorship scandal as well. Each of the five principles of the model — profit orientation of media outlets, the advertising license to do business, use of official sourcing, flak as a disincentive to critical reporting, and hysteria over social disorder — appear in the corporate reporting on the Enbridge sponsorship. Similar to the Westray disaster, reporting on the Enbridge-UofC scandal "conveyed the novelty of the disaster [scandal] rather than the mundane character of the… actions leading up to the event" (McMillan and McClung 2006: 82). In exploring the discursive claims of novelty in corporate media reporting on Enbridge's involvement at the University of Calgary, this study must contend with the mundane nature of the university as a business and bureaucracy infused institution.

The bureaucratic development of higher learning is present in both the process of inter-institutional review and media frames employed to justify the actions of institutional actors. Other public stakeholders are framed out of the conversation entirely and the actions of executive actors are considered within their bureaucratic frame. The eventual official exoneration of University of Calgary president Elizabeth Cannon, in fact, is announced by the Edmonton Journal headline "U of C cleared in deal with Enbridge; Cannon 'doing what presidents do'; in writing to business dean, review says" (2015: Dec 19). We see in this headline (as an exemplar) the importance of understanding the bureaucratic frame.

Cannon is lauded for living up to her institutional commitment to raise funds, rather than judged on her responsibility for upholding public trust (Gray 2015).

Moreover, the scandal includes particularities of Enbridge as well as those of the University of Calgary. The involvement of carbon extractive firms in shaping on-going social and energy transitions have become increasingly interior to Canada's political economy as carbon firms have become more central to the nation's corporate network since 1976 (Carroll and Shaw 2001). Termed in this paper as corporate obstructionism, we can place the Enbridge sponsorship scandal within a larger frame of active efforts by corporate bodies and executive capitalists to exert control over the political, economic, and social changes associated with the global recognition of a climate crisis (Carroll 2017; Carroll et al. 2018).

Methods

This study uses qualitative content analysis to compare and count discourses in Canadian media about the relationship of Enbridge Inc. and the University of Calgary regarding the Enbridge Centre for Corporate Sustainability endowment. This method relies on the transparency of the researchers to generate trustworthiness (Elo et al. 2014). Our study would be classified as a conventional content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005) as our coding and data analysis began directly from the data.

Data was collected from searches of both LexisNexis and Google News. Both databases were limited to the period of January 1, 2015 to November 1, 2016. Data searches were conducted in November 2016. Each database was needed for this study. As Weaver and Bimber (2008) note in their comparison of these two news databases, LexisNexis excludes wire service articles. Google News was necessary to capture both Canadian Press developed content and the considerable online news content developed by CBC and other non-print sources. Google News also captured local Calgary dailies and content from the University of Calgary's student newspaper, The Gauntlet. In comparison, LexisNexis captured news content from Canadian communities outside of Alberta served by Postmedia or Glacier Media papers, such as Victoria and Prince George, and included comprehensive coverage from key newspaper sources on the incident, namely The Calgary Herald and The Globe and Mail. Results from these searches are found in Table 1.

Table 1: Media Articles Included in the Analysis

Source and Search Terms	Search Returns	Study Inclusions
LexisNexis: ((University of Calgary OR UofC) AND Enbridge))	85	35
Google News: "University of Calgary" AND "Enbridge"	366	35
Total	451	**70**

All articles discussing the relationship of the University of Calgary and Enbridge or the endowment directly were included, and as such, returns from each database included considerable irrelevant material. LexisNexis returned a number of articles in which a University of Calgary academic was quoted in comment on the business of Enbridge Inc. without reference to the relationship between the two groups or the scandal. While the existence of such material may have meaning for understanding the application of expertise and naturalization of carbon extraction in Canadian media, our study focuses specifically on the coverage of the endowment scandal itself.

Google News, meanwhile, returned many similar false positives regarding the business and infrastructural development of Canada's carbon extractive industry, where Enbridge's 30 proposed pipeline expansions (at the time of the search) and the University of Calgary's many industry scholars and commentators overlapped. In addition to these excluded returns, our search of Google News included a large number of articles discussing pipeline failures, leaks, explosion and spills from around North America and especially Alberta. While an interesting project could be made on media coverage of oil spills that drew on the work of McMillan and McClung (2006), these results were also excluded as not pertaining to the coverage of the Enbridge Centre for Corporate Sustainability endowment. The equal inclusion of articles from each database is coincidental.

Relevant articles from LexisNexis were downloaded as text-only PDFs. Relevant articles from Google News were copied and transformed into PDF format. This study did not analyze the images or enriched media presented and instead focused on a textual content analysis. Each news story was coded by narrative content to group and interpret discourses present in the coverage. Atlas.ti was employed to conduct this analysis, enabling the creation of a code book through inductive coding.

During initial coding, a stark contrast was found between sources regarding the frames employed. Re-organizing the data by source and period (before, during, and after the investigation by retired justice McMahon) rather than simply by date revealed the propaganda model more clearly. In this way, our theoretical approach to the data was inductive though not grounded.

Drawing from the propaganda model of critical media analysis, this study is attendant to what is not written as well as what is. We have chosen to consider the incident itself alongside its media coverage to move beyond the acknowledged limitations of analysis found in Canadian media coverage. Our contributions to the broader sociological analysis of public institutions, corporate obstruction, and institutional corruption are not inductive, but instead brought to bear on this example of a corporate endowment in Canadian universities.

Findings

(i) Overview

Discussion of the Enbridge endowment in Canadian media followed multiple patterns, both thematic and temporal. Kyle Bakx of the CBC released an initial report on November 1, 2015, finding immediate traction on multiple platforms. By November 2, the story was on CBC's program *The Current* and included an interview with James L. Turk, an outspoken critic on the subject of the corporate university (Turk 2008).[1] On November 3, 2015, Kyle Bakx and Paul Haavardsrud of the CBC released an even more biting expose on the Centre, including commentary from University of Calgary business professor Harrie Vrederburg, former UofC academic David Keith, and the words of Joe Arvai's emails. Vrederburg called it a case of "tune calling" by Enbridge. Keith claimed that similar corporate interference is why he left the University of Calgary. And Arvai's emails expressed concern at the Centre being a public relations effort by Enbridge.

Postmedia printed its first story about the controversy on November 3, 2015. On A1 of the Calgary Herald, the headline read, "U of C Boss defends role in Enbridge Research Centre" (2015: Nov 3). On A10 of the Edmonton Journal the same day, the headline read, "U of C president

1. Similarly, on November 3, co-author of this article, Garry Gray, was interviewed on CBC's morning radio program The Calgary Eyeopener (in the segment "Academic Freedom in Canada's Universities") and also gave a public talk on the subject matter as a guest speaker at the *Canadian Club of Calgary.*

denies conflict; Enbridge fund director panned academic leader" (2015: Nov 3). These types of competing claims continued and are reviewed thematically below. However, a significant difference was also found in the timing of the coverage. On November 6, 2015 (reported November 7, 2015 by corporate media sources), the University announced its intention to have a third-party review by retired justice McMahon, and the findings of that review were first reported on December 18, 2015. We can see in Table 2 that between that announcement and the eventual completion of that review by retired justice McMahon, the CBC reduced its coverage while corporate media increased its coverage. This rudimentary break down is also explored below in a simple contrast between corporate and non-corporate media.

Table 2: Timing of Media Articles by Publishing Outlet

	Pre-Investigation: Nov. 1-7, 2015	**During Investigation: Nov. 8-Dec. 17, 2015**	**Post-Investigation: Dec. 18-19, 2015**	**CAUT Investigation April 2016**
Non-Corporate	**8**	**6**	**1**	**3**
CBC	6	3	1	1
Gauntlet (UofC Student Paper)	2	3	0	1
National Observer**	0	0	0	1
Corporate	**17**	**24**	**5**	**2**
Calgary Herald	6	9	1	1
Edmonton Journal	2	0	1	0
Globe and Mail	0	7*	1*	0
Metro Dailies	1	2	1	1
National Post / Financial Post	2	3	0	0
Other Corporate	6	3	1	0
Total	**25**	**30**	**6**	**5**

* The Globe and Mail released multiple versions of the same core articles across its various regional papers. Only unique articles were counted in this table.
** Importantly, while the National Observer is technically a corporate enterprise, it strives to be an alternative media group and does not rely on advertising revenue. Consequently, it was a strong outlier in the corporate media group. It was not treated as corporate media in this study because of its alternative revenue sourcing and its adherence to independent journalistic principles.

Non-Corporate Media

As noted above, the CBC was boldly critical of the UofC, President Elizabeth Cannon and then-Dean of Business Leonard Waverman in their early reports. Along with the critical inquiry by Kyle Bakx, CBC's Tracy Johnson connected the Enbridge Centre endowment to other Enbridge public relations efforts in Canada, including publicized donations to first responder services across Enbridge pipeline routes, coverage of a donation of laptops to elementary schools, named-sponsorship of the Ride to Conquer Cancer and more (Johnson 2015: Nov 5). Johnson argued that Enbridge's $15 million budget for "community investment" along its pipeline routes was part of a larger public relations strategy coordinated with their ad campaign "Life takes energy" and attempts at university and college sponsorship (Johnson 2015: Nov 5). CBC was also clear that schools had different ethics regarding this money. A school in Terrace, BC refused to administer student bursaries offered by Enbridge (Johnson 2015: Nov 5) and the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) — situated at the end of Enbridge's controversial proposed Northern Gateway pipeline — declined to partner with the UofC and Enbridge Centre (Bakx 2015: Nov 1).

While CBC reported the denials of Cannon and Enbridge spokesperson D'Arcy Levesque, it did so in a rich context of evidence that the company had interfered in the Centre's operations and that the University allowed it. Moreover, CBC articulated that the denials were in response to accusations of ethical misconduct constraining academic freedom and integrity. "Both Enbridge and the University of Calgary deny the company exerted any influence over the mandate and operations of an Enbridge-sponsored research centre at the post-secondary institution, despite emails that suggest the contrary," started the story on November 3rd (Bakx 2015: Nov 3). For its part, the UofC student newspaper (The Gauntlet) reported Cannon's non-specific reflections on the controversy while reminding readers of the broad influence of corporate endowment dollars at the University. Fabian Mayer (2015: Nov 2) wrote, "U of C has received $66 million in corporate donations since April 1, 2011. Many buildings are named after individual donors and several classrooms bear the name of corporations."

Corporate Media

Table 3: Ownership of the media sources (included in this study) as of December 21, 2016.

Source	Owner	Number of Articles Included
Non-Corporate		**18**
CBC	(Public Broadcaster)	11
Gauntlet (UofC Student Paper)	UofC Student Society	6
National Observer	Observer Media Group	1
Corporate		**52**
Calgary Herald	Postmedia Network	17
Edmonton Journal		3
National Post / Financial Post		5
Globe and Mail	Woodbridge Company	11
Metro Dailies	Star Media Group	6
Global News	Shaw Communications (formerly Canwest Global)	2
Huffington Post	AOL	1
Times Colonist	Glacier Media	3
Prince George Citizen		3
Nanaimo Daily News*	Black Press	1

*Nanaimo Daily News was sold from Glacier Media earlier in 2015 and is now defunct.

The corporate media coverage prior to the announcement of a third-party review leaned heavily on official sources for commentary. Postmedia's first articles on November 3 included reaction statements from an interview with Elizabeth Cannon and discussed the public comments by Enbridge and the University. On November 4, Postmedia covered the reaction of Alberta Premier Rachel Notley, who raised the issue of whether academic units should comply with provincial conflict-of-interest legislation.

On November 3, 2015, the Calgary Herald focused on the potential conflict of interest presented by Cannon being both a sitting member of an Enbridge subsidiary board and the President of the University over-

seeing the endowment (Klingbeil and McClure 2015: Nov 3). The story notes Cannon's $810,000 in Enbridge stock holdings as well as her remuneration of $130,500 for sitting on the Enbridge Income Fund Holdings board. Further, Annalise Klingbeil and Matt McClure of the Herald cite Cannon's indication of why this Centre was so important, despite a relatively small endowment of $2.25M over 10 years. In an email to Dean Waverman, Cannon told him, "'They (Enbridge) have traditionally been strong supporters of (the University of Alberta) and this is the first major gift to the U of C'" and that "'They [Enbridge] are not seeing your leadership on this'" (Klingbeil and McClure 2015: Nov 3).

While similar materials were presented by the CBC as evidence of potential wrong-doing, the frame and context used by the Herald (in particular) and Postmedia (in general) was strikingly different. Klingbeil and McClure interviewed Cannon to get her clarifying comments about her apparent conflict of interest and the email in question. Cannon called the email to Dean Waverman a "simple reminder" to "deliver back to the community" and was clear that her emails offered no particular directions and did not contravene ethical standards policy. This presentation evoked balance in reporting, effectively devolving a well-evidenced investigation into an apparent misunderstanding. A similar but shorter piece appeared by the same writers in Postmedia's Edmonton Journal the same day.

A Global News piece from November 2, 2015 indicated two more frames frequent in the coverage to come. "Oil companies have been donating to the University of Calgary for many years, but allegations arose Monday that the university's relationship with Enbridge has gone too far" started the article (Kury de Castillo 2015: Nov 2). In this case, the frame is one of novelty. The piece ends by noting the official University line, repeated throughout corporate media coverage, that "no academics filed formal complaints about their freedom being impacted" (Kury de Castillo 2015: Nov 2). On November 3, both the Huffington Post and Metro ran a piece assembled from the Canadian Press which began with the concerns of the officials being investigated: "[t]he president of the University of Calgary doesn't believe the school's reputation as a research facility will be hurt by concerns from faculty members over corporate influence" (CP: Nov 3). On November 4, in both the Herald and Journal, Klingbeil and McClure printed a statement from the UofC board of governors chaired by former Enbridge executive Bonnie Dupont that no investigation would take place because no formal complaint had been received (Klingbeil and McClure 2015: Nov 4).

We see in these pieces the beginning of several frames that would carry through Postmedia coverage throughout the scandal. First, the cen-

tral issue is presented as a possible personal conflict of interest from a single email sent by Cannon to Waverman calling for closer attention to the Enbridge Centre. This frame worked to efface the considerable evidence compiled by CBC that Enbridge expected academics at the Centre and the University of Calgary more broadly to participate in ongoing public relations on behalf of Enbridge. Second, official sourcing was used to not only narrow the scope of the potential corruption to a matter of syntax and University policy, but also to re-orient the story to imagine University officials as the wronged party and the investigation as the instigator of harm. In point of fact, the officials at the centre of the investigation were being accused of abusing their public, tax-funded positions. And lastly, each piece engaged in a frame — either explicitly or implicitly — of novelty, focusing narrowly on this single endowment as potentially fraught and evincing effortful avoidance of other corporate endowments and the general pattern of corporate involvement in public institutions.

(iii) Coverage During the Third-Party Review

On November 6, Elizabeth Cannon resigned from her board seat at Enbridge Income Holdings Ltd. and the UofC board of governors announced a third-party review would take place without the involvement of Cannon or DuPont. This was reported by the CBC on November 6 and by all other media on November 7. Beginning from the announcement of a third party review, coverage changes considerably in corporate media. The Globe and Mail and Glacier Media (Times Colonist, most notably) first begin to release news of the scandal. The Globe and Mail, in fact, launches a lengthy series looking at private funding in universities. Meanwhile, Postmedia begins generating editorial-style content only tangentially related to the scandal itself but defending the importance of corporate donations to academic research.

The CBC only produced three articles in the roughly 6 weeks between the UofC board announcement of an independent review and the conclusion of that review. In that time, they produced an article on the announcement of the review, the University's annual town hall meeting, and the pressure on business schools to fundraise; each time mentioning the CBC's earlier investigations.

In that same period, Postmedia ran opinion and editorial pieces defending corporate entanglements titled: "We need more strong leaders like Cannon;" "Corporate donors make research happen faster;" "Giving back big time: Corporate donors are vital to business schools;" and "The gift of a business education that keeps on giving." These four editorials

are only a sample of the 12 articles that ran in Postmedia papers during the period of the McMahon investigation. Still, they underscore a particular agenda by the media giant. In one such opinion piece, former chancellor of the University of Calgary, Jim Dinning wrote, "I believe Cannon's passion and pursuit of excellence made her a target for individuals who are threatened by hard work and strong leadership" (Dinning 2015: Nov 22). He goes on, "[a]s we see far too often in these days of toxic social media driven news stories, these are the people who began a witch hunt around the Enbridge Income Fund" (Dinning 2015: Nov 22).

As well, aphorisms and platitudes are used as arguments in these pieces and in other corporate media in this time period. Corporate media offered a number of such arguments regarding why universities need corporate donations. "Because new ideas don't just happen. And ideas alone won't change the world" (Collins 2015: Nov 14). The Globe and Mail, setting a more neutral tone of balance in negotiation, levelled pragmatism as an argument against academic freedom. "'It's not realistic for universities to say: 'Throw the bag of money over the fence'" (Chiose 2015: Nov 13). The frame of novel, individual, and innocent error was also asserted, effacing the reality of a large, bureaucratic institution with many levels of governance and a public responsibility. In defence of President Cannon, Dinning writes "our mistakes are our teachers, not our undertakers" (Dinning 2015: Nov 22). Gary Mason of the Globe and Mail (2015: Nov 14) writes, "Dr. Cannon should not have been sending out threatening and intimidating messages to a dean regarding the frustrations of Enbridge." In each article, the personal qualities of Dr. Cannon are discussed, highlighting that this incident is singular in her otherwise stellar career. But in each case, the larger public concern that corporations are exerting influence in public institutions of learning is erased and replaced with a personal and procedural concern for whether Dr. Cannon intended to break university rules.

As the events of the investigation grew quiet, the column inches on the story increased in corporate media while shrinking in public media. The obvious effort of corporate media to fill the gap with opinion helped frame positively the findings by McMahon that Cannon had not broken any University policy or procedures.

(iv) How the McMahon Review Findings were reported

Non-Corporate Media

CBC used the release of McMahon's findings to reiterate their own findings and to indicate the narrow definition of Cannon's exoneration. "A report commissioned by the University of Calgary concludes there were no breaches of university policies or procedures in the institution's relationship with pipeline company Enbridge" (Bakx 2015: Dec 18). But the institution immediately began to stretch that definition. "'Nobody from the university was found to have done anything inappropriate in the context of our policies and procedures, or in the context of academic freedom,' said Gord Ritchie, vice-chair of the university's board of governors, in an interview" (Bakx 2015: Dec 18). CBC's article concludes with news of CAUT's on-going, larger-scope investigation.

Corporate Media

Somewhat in contrast, corporate media response accepted the finality of McMahon's report. The Calgary Herald also noted the limited scope of the review, but put the desire for a more broad-reaching investigation in wishful terms attributed to a student. "Levi Nilson, president of U of C's undergraduate student's union, said he was satisfied with the review's findings, but he wished McMahon had been asked to look more broadly at whether academic freedom has been infringed through corporate naming and sponsorships. 'There are larger questions,' said Nilson, 'that this review doesn't begin to answer'" (McClure 2015: Dec 19). In fact, though David Robinson of CAUT is quoted in the Herald, the quote chosen is an equivocal statement about the unknown context of Cannon's infamous email, maintaining focus on the narrow procedural issue at the centre of much of Postmedia's coverage as well as McMahon's investigation. The same article ran in the Journal with a different title proclaiming Cannon only did what presidents do (McClure 2015: Dec 19).

The Globe and Mail ran a 353 word Canadian Press written story on S3 of its Alberta edition only. Despite its brevity, the piece radically expands the nature of the McMahon review by stating, "[a]n independent investigation has found no evidence that the University of Calgary allowed money from an energy firm to limit its academic freedom" (CP: Dec 19). Helen Pike of Star Media's Metro was similarly reaching. "An independent review conducted by the University of Calgary has exonerated President Elizabeth Cannon of any wrongdoing — a review prompt-

ed by a media report earlier this year" (Pike 2015: Dec 18). The Prince George Citizen was the only other corporate paper to cover the report. With 103 words in the section "Canada in Brief," the paper chides, "McMahon concludes there was no academic interference — largely because there was little actual work getting done at the centre" (Dec 19).

(v) CAUT on Campus

In April 2016, this story re-emerged in Canadian news media when the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) planned a visit to the UofC campus as part of their investigation. UofC Provost Dru Marshall sent an email to UofC faculty warning them — incorrectly — that CAUT would not protect anonymity and stating — correctly — that they had no obligation to participate.

Non-Corporate Media

CBC took the opportunity to re-hash the key elements of the investigation, including the limited scope of the McMahon investigation. "The University of Calgary subsequently launched its own review which concluded there were no breaches of university policies or procedures in the institution's relationship with Enbridge" (Bakx 2016: Apr 13). Noting the broader scope of the CAUT investigation, CBC sought out and published CAUT Executive Director David Robinson's response to Dru Marshall's email. Robinson called it "intimidating" to faculty. Robinson told the CBC, "Universities are taking a much more aggressive stance against us [CAUT]. I think it is because our investigations matter… They potentially expose things that powerful people would rather keep quiet," (Bakx 2016: Apr 13). The National Observer positioned CAUT as receiving evidence from faculty warranting an investigation (Adams 2016: Aug 10). CBC positioned the investigation as necessary given the limited scope of the McMahon report.

Corporate Media

The frames used by corporate media differed markedly. Metro reported the email by Provost Marshall as a misunderstanding, rather than a further example of institutional corruption. Metro did not seek or print comments from CAUT, instead printing clarifying comments from Provost Marshall. "It was a courtesy email, it was an informational email, this

is standard practice," (Pike 2016: Apr 13). Helen Pike at Metro also clarified that UofC "already completed its 'comprehensive independent review' which is available online. The review exonerated Elizabeth Cannon from any wrongdoing, but CAUT's review will continue and the group is set to step onto campus next week" (Pike 2016: Apr 13). Metro positions the review as wasteful and CAUT as somehow intruding — "stepping" onto campus — rather than an organization representing faculty and faculty interests, including at the University of Calgary.

While the stark contrast in corporate and non-corporate frames is clear, a compare and contrast approach holds limitations. Notably, such a compare and contrast analysis inhibits a broader thematic analysis and is quickly drawn into a good-bad duality. The next two sub-sections focus on our thematic Findings.

(vi) Theme 1: Impeding the University's Competitive Edge

Twenty-two of the 70 included news articles mentioned damage to the University of Calgary's reputation as a potential consequence of this scandal. The November 3 CP piece, posted by Metro and Huffington Post, led with such a fear. Colleen Collins of the Herald wrote in her November 14 (2015) opinion piece, "[t]he company's reputation is as much at stake as the institution's." Others claimed the damage was done simply by the nature of the controversy. Gary Mason of the Globe and Mail wrote, "[w]hen all is said and done, work will be needed to repair the personal and reputational damage of this controversy" (Mason 2015: Nov 14). Importantly, media on this scandal constructed the notion of reputation as congruent with the value of the institution, drawing to its defence all those stakeholders with personal attachment to the institution. "Students and faculty at the University of Calgary say recent conflict-of-interest allegations have challenged the school's reputation and they welcome an independent investigation into the matter to 'maintain the public's confidence in the (U of C)'" (Klingbeil 2015: Nov 10). A student, publicly critical of Cannon at an annual town hall meeting, invoked the damage done to the "standing" of the institution in calling for Cannon's resignation. In response, Elizabeth Cannon defended the credibility and reputation of the University, echoing the stakes of the controversy as reputational (Bakx 2015: Nov 18).

By presenting this notion of reputation as an institutional asset, media frame the university as inherently competitive. Rather than trying to live up to a particular standard of ethical conduct — either an ideational or bureaucratic standard — the goal of the institution is framed

as image management. This sense of saleable reputation is particularly troubling when considered in its context: a scandal for possibly selling the legitimacy of the institution to a corporation in need of public image repair. But while the media frame draws in all associated stakeholders as sharing in the consequences, former justice McMahon's report underlines another type of reputation at risk. McMahon wrote, "I conclude unequivocally that Dr. Cannon's involvement in matters arising from the operation of the Enbridge Centre was proper, responsible and required of her as president to protect the *reputation of the University of Calgary as an institution that honours its commitment to donors*" (Bakx 2015: Dec 18; italics added).[2] While little was determined in the media regarding the University's competitive potential in academic circles, both the CBC and McMahon investigations revealed that the University remains competitive in seeking out corporate endowments. CBC reported a 30.6% increase in corporate and individual donations since 2011 (Bakx 2015: Nov 12).

(vii) Theme 2: A pattern of corporate influence

An early article by Kyle Bakx of the CBC uses the phrase "a pattern of corporate influence" to describe the University of Calgary's involvement with major oil and gas companies (Bakx and Haavardsrud 2015: Nov 3). This same phrase was repeated by Bakx (2015: Dec 18) when reporting the findings of the McMahon review, and again by Bakx (2016: Apr 13) when discussing a warning given to professors by the University administration about participating in the CAUT review. In general, the CBC

2. According to Gray and Carroll (2018), former justice Terrence F. McMahon was not entirely independent of the University of Calgary, despite repeated claims by the Board of Governors that the investigation he led was completely independent and fully transparent. In his report, McMahon neglected to publicly disclose "his prior relationships with the university which could be perceived as a financial or relational conflict of interest. For instance, while McMahon was conducting his independent investigation into conflicts of interest between the University of Calgary President and a corporate donor, he never disclosed in the report that he was himself a former donor to the university and even received a public 'Thank You' for his donation in a University of Calgary President's Report. In addition, McMahon previously spent a judicial sabbatical year at the University of Calgary's law school, participating in classes and law school activities." We believe this failure in full transparency in the McMahon report speaks to the idea that university administrators often view academic integrity violations, such as requirements to disclose, in terms of compliance with specific rules, policies and regulations (cf. Gray and Silbey 2014) as opposed to organizational behaviours that risk academic independence and threaten public trust in research.

quoted academics involved with or formerly involved with the University of Calgary who claimed that corporate interference was part of the culture of the University. David Keith noted that an "effective managerial culture" would have responded differently (Bakx and Haavardsrud 2015: Nov 3) and told CBC, "'[t]he institution really needs to examine, in a deep way beyond just one single person, the way it manages institutes that are meant to do high quality analysis on issues that really matter for public policy in Alberta,'" (Bakx: Nov 12). Harrie Vredenburg told the CBC, "it smacks of us being apologists for the fossil fuel industry rather than independent scholars and teachers doing work in broadly defined areas" (Bakx 2015: Dec 18). Arvai himself wrote in the Globe and Mail, "the post hoc suggestions by some that decisions made by the U of C in setting up the Enbridge Centre were transparent, legitimate and free of corporate interference or conflict-of-interest are as difficult for me to accept today as they were in 2012" (Arvai 2015: Nov 7).

The academics involved both at the University of Calgary and through CAUT pointed media toward the primary concern in their institution and workplace, and yet only two articles of the 70 reviewed included mention of other instances of corporate obstructionism at the University. On November 10, the Financial Post wrote about another endowment to the University of Calgary made by Chevron Canada to fund research into fracking. The funded position — the first industrial research chair in microseismic system dynamics — was intended to be a public event in which Elizabeth Cannon and Chevron Canada President Jeff Gustavson appeared together. With the publishing of CBC's investigation, the event was made private, and Elizabeth Cannon was replaced with Ed McCauley, the VP Research.

The National Observer was the only source to offer background research in its article. Christopher Adams (2016: Aug 10) argues that the Enbridge incident was one example of a broad pattern of carbon corporate obstruction in expert knowledge generation at the University of Calgary and that UofC's administration is aware of the controversy surrounding their corporate partnerships. Elizabeth Cannon was found to have approved $90,000 in legal fees to fight the CBC freedom of information claim that launched this investigation (Adams 2016: Aug 10). But more damningly, Christopher Adams (2016: Aug 10) found a host of other clear ethical violations by the University related to carbon extractive firm sponsorship.

> In 2007, the university shut down a pair of research accounts when an audit concluded they were being used for partisan purposes by climate change doubters at an organization called the Friends of Science, with significant funding from a fossil fuel company, Talisman Energy.

> In 2013, the association of university teachers released a report following an investigation of partnerships between corporate donors and a dozen universities. It found that the University of Calgary, through multiple research agreements, allowed oil companies like Nexen, Royal Dutch Shell and Husky Energy to dictate how funding they provided was spent. The report concluded that these arrangements had compromised the university's academic integrity.
>
> In 2014, a "think tank" housed out of the University of Calgary that was doing advocacy work to promote the oil and gas companies, wound down its operations in the midst of a police investigation looking into what it did with millions of dollars in federal and provincial government funding. (Adams 2016: Aug 10)

Conclusion

The findings from CBC's investigation were ultimately presented as novel by both the public broadcaster and corporate media alike, albeit with starkly different frames. However, as corporate sponsorship continues to flow into the University of Calgary and universities across the country, the question of their purpose and value as public institutions returns to the fore. Regan Boychuk, a former policy director at the Parkland Institute, was clear with the National Observer that oil companies in particular have a vested interest in exploiting the public and expert nature of the university to achieve its ends. "'People don't trust what [oil companies] say, so when they want to make their arguments they have a much better chance [to be taken seriously by] supporting universities and think-tanks. They fund think-tanks and university research to have academics and economists make those arguments,' Boychuk said" (Adams 2016: Aug 10). The politically fraught nature of oil company interests in an era of global energy transition is particularly pernicious to the stated purpose of the university.

The observed support from corporate media for these practices reminds us of the continued importance of the propaganda model (Herman and Chomsky 1988) of media analysis. The effortful framing out of alternatives, even those currently existing, coincides with argument by assertion on the pages of Postmedia that Elizabeth Cannon must make corporate fundraising a priority. Postmedia and corporate media in general rely on corporate advertising revenues and on the 150 oil and gas companies in Calgary for both official news and commentary. In addition, they rely on the University as an official source and an institution of

expert opinions. The profit orientation of corporate media, their advertising license to do business and use of official sourcing were clear when compared to how non-corporate media treated the same controversy.

The willingness of administrators to sell the legitimacy of the university to corporate interests, and that of academics to participate in producing research under the guise of apolitical scientific progress, demonstrates Gray's (2013a, 2015) notion of institutional corruption inside academia whereby normalized functions of an institution cause harm and break public trust. That fossil fuel companies are leveraging publicly funded centres of education and learning to promote a carbon-intensive future is the very definition of corporate obstruction in democracy.

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