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Peer Production and Prosumerism as a Model for the Future Organization of General Interest Services Provision in Developed Countries: Examples of Food Services Collectives

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Katarzyna Gajewska¹

Abstract

Based on the examples of two collectives preparing lunches and giving them for free with an option of donation at Montreal universities, this article considers how services of general interest could be organized in an alternative way—namely how the combination of paid and unpaid work, spontaneous work involving high number of volunteers, and the dissociation of annual income from sale of output can serve as a model for providing needed public services. The probable expansion of such services in the future is supported by several current trends in the developed countries: for example, underemployment of human resources, a new work ethos, and the democratic deficit inherent in the current system of service provision by state or market providers. This article applies the case study method to illustrate citizens' attitudes and to consider what structural and organizational changes may be needed to set up an alternative form of service provision potentially applicable to other venues.

Keywords

peer production, public services, prosumerism, self-management, self-organization, basic income, precariat, governance, democratic deficit, future of work

Given the current trend toward privatization throughout much of the world, the capitalist basis for production and provision of services of general interest in exchange for profit might seem to be the only game in town, despite a few successful ventures in re-municipalization (Pigeon et al. 2012). So before I begin presenting a possible alternative to this mode of service provision, I would like to explain what I mean by “services of general public interest.”

After the wave of new public management, it is a contested matter which services can be defined as public service. If the criteria of who provides the service are applied, then one

cannot find a consensus on which services are public because this is very much dependent on power relations among interest groups within a particular country. However, one can more or less agree that certain services are more essential and more related to the basic subsistence than others. Therefore, the notion of services of general public interest is a better one because it defines service by its relevance to the well-being of the population rather than to the

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way they are governed. Food is hardly ever provided by states in developed capitalist countries, yet it is essential to survival and its quality affects our lives. Food in the capitalist system is just another commodity, and the presumed goal of everyone involved in providing it is to achieve maximum profit. Food provision is notably absent in the conceptualization of future studies on governance (Hurley 2008).

In this paper, I propose to re-conceptualize the provision of services of general interest in developed countries by questioning three “grand divides” underpinning the current system. The first grand divide is the separation between citizen and end product, whether in the relation of voter to elected official, or of client to the provider, which results from focusing on outcome and not process (Ostrom 1993). The second grand divide is the perceived separation of the labor market structure from public service delivery. And the third grand divide sees production as solely based on hierarchy and employment—which creates the separation of formal from informal work. Together, these three grand divides effectively dissociate production from consumption. On the other hand, income is linked directly to employment and production in this model. So I will first present arguments pointing out the democratic deficit on the one hand, and the restructuring of the labor market and production system on the other. Both of these factors reveal the limits of the current system. This conclusion calls for transforming the governance of general public interest services.

Consider a case of service provision that transcends the grand divides: the production of food by collectives who give out food for free on two Montreal-based university campuses—These alternative university campus food services function in the middle of the capitalist system; however, their operations illustrate important differences from capitalist logic.

While my chosen examples of service provision currently exist within a university, a specific governance system, one can extrapolate the basic tenets of this model and consider how it might be translated to other services and to other venues such as a neighborhood or workplace. Data collection consisted of three

interviews, analysis of websites and a zine (Lewis 2009), and participative research in the form of eating several meals, participating in kitchen work, and observing an inter-university meeting of kitchen collectives. I conducted this research between February and March 2013 at three university campuses. Case selection was based on the correspondence of each case to presently observed trends demanding the re-conceptualization of service provision and the fact that these cases represent an innovative way of organizing production being more in sync with these trends than the conventional providers.

The Democratic Deficit and New Forms of Participation

Privatization of services largely deprives citizens of the opportunity to have a say in the governance of services. In both state-based and market-based governance, the citizen is not involved in the decision-making process until the very last stage. If there is any choice, it is a choice of the best alternative available (Box et al. 2001, 613). Citizens became critical of state-defined channels of participation and incumbents who do not respond to citizens’ preferences (Norris 2002). A new type of citizen—the “everyday maker”—is one who gets involved in his or her neighborhood outside state-defined channels of participation (Bang and Sorenson 1999) just as the “new politics” happens outside party-based organizations (Lowndes and Sullivan 2008).

Heynen (2010) argues that as the realm of social rights and the welfare state has diminished over the last decades in the United States, new social movements have arisen to pursue desired objectives in new ways (e.g., self-organized food redistribution initiatives, such as Food Not Bombs). Robert J. F. Day identifies two logics of participation: the politics of demand and the politics of act. The former aims to improve existing institutions, and the latter tries to create alternatives within the system (Day 2004, 2005). Instead of contesting irresponsible state institutions, these people prefer self-organized service provision as a way to become autonomous of the institutions

(Cséfalvay and Webster 2012; Trombert 2013). Also market-based service production lacks transparency and a democratic control. Transparency in food production can be improved by taking control of the process and creating relationships among the stakeholders. Market-based food production does not take into account the conditions in which products are produced (rights of farmers, for instance) but concentrates mainly on the end product. Participation in the process rather than merely having the option of choosing the end product would democratize the provision of services (A. D. Wilson 2013) and seems to be better in sync with emerging citizen attitudes.

Precarious Employment and the Use of Human Resources

The false assumption that the capitalist system is based on an encompassing commodification and results in full-employment (cf. Standing 2011; Williams 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007) prevents clearly seeing the relation between provision of general interest services and the use of human resources in the market sector. Instead, one should consider the entirety of work being performed and examine the boundaries between sectors. The varied forms of work (formal/informal, public/private, and paid/unpaid) should be brought together under the term of total social organization of work (Taylor 2004).

Technological innovation was considered to change the nature of work and to increase the relevance of knowledge and information. This in turn was predicted to free people from manual labor (cf. Toffler 1980). However, the assumption that the service economy will invariably create skilled jobs has been criticized (Williams 2007, 121). Furthermore, postindustrial economy may produce divisions between technocratic elites and the rest (Beck 2000). The assumption that most work will be performed in exchange for money can be countered by evidence for informalization of work. On average, people engage in unpaid work in advanced Western economies almost half of the time (44.7 percent) according to time-budget studies (White and Williams 2012; Williams 2007, 39–47). The decreasing demand for paid labor makes the model of

full-employment outdated, and a new model needs to be developed. Standing (2011) proposes establishing cooperatives and guaranteeing a basic income for all as a remedy for the negative effects of this structural change and the increasing power of capital. Basic income is defined as “an income unconditionally paid to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement” (Van Parijs 2004, 7).

The lower demand for labor in private market requires that the organization of services of general interest be reconceptualized. Elinor Ostrom (1996), almost twenty years ago, argued that the extent of citizen involvement in the provision of services of general interest and the administrative capacities of the state were related to the demand for labor. In developing countries, the demand for labor is lower, and there is high level of underemployment; therefore, the state, being under-resourced, has limited capacities, and citizens should participate more in the co-production of services managed by the state. She presented examples of co-production in Brazil.

The assumption that there is a high demand for labor in developed countries is also untrue as we can observe a huge waste of human resources having temporary and unstable work contracts and spending the increasing amount of their time on job searching (Standing 2011). Beck (2000) writes about the “Brazilianization of the West”: as the part of the population in full-time employment becomes the minority. While a guaranteed basic income is recommended in developing countries by international institutions, the developed countries are advised to pursue austerity and new public management (Jessop 2002). Instead, why not imagine a restructuring of the way in which general interest services are provided: adopting a hybrid model combining formal employment and co-production, which is possible through mobilization of underemployed time?

Postcapitalist Production and the Alternative Organization of Work

A. Wilson (2010) argues that organizing workers into cooperatives can be a form of direct action against discrimination and the insecurity of

migrant labor. A cooperative market economy is based on worker-owned firms. While at the moment, many of these are isolated and therefore vulnerable to the external market forces and lack capital, a cooperative network around them could establish a stakeholder model where cooperative ties equip enterprises with resources, training, and other assistance (Wright 2010).

The example of the Mondragon cooperative situated in Basque Country showed that capitalist logic can be reversed by solidarity at the local level. Gibson-Graham (2003) outlines how this network of cooperatives goes against the grain of the capitalist system by the development of products meeting community's needs, enabling workers to determine their wages and other domains of the company's operating, and establishing a self-perpetuating system of cooperatives to assure the continuity of this local solidarity project. However, the enterprise still applied the capitalist logic in the international investment by focusing mainly on profit-making. Capitalist logic manifests itself not only in the ownership of the means of production but also in the process of production and in the market. Therefore, the Mondragon cooperative, though praised by many as a postcapitalist alternative, cannot fulfill the promise of a real alternative to the capitalist system (Kasmir 1996). The participation in market competition and the dependence on sales render cooperatives vulnerable to fail or to degenerate their principles of solidarity.

An alternative to a traditional market economy can be seen in the dissociation of income and production. In the social economy model, civil society directly organizes production of services and goods without transferring them to economic actors, which depend on profit. It should be noted, however, that the term *social economy* is often used to describe other types of arrangements. In its broadest scope, it includes any initiative that pursues social goals exclusively or in addition to profit. According to Wright (2010), Wikipedia is an example of pure form of social economy, as it operates independent of market or state support. Introducing an unconditional basic income, which would separate income from employment, could result in spreading this type of

social economy initiatives (Bauwens 2005; Wright 2010, 139–43). In the current system, Wikipedia is dependent on private donations to assure its operation. The model of a Partner State assumes that peer production would be supported by state-funded infrastructures, protecting “the public infrastructure of co-operation” (Bauwens 2012). Another form of dissociating income from production is outlined in the model of the participatory economy, or *parecon* model. Albert (2003) has proposed setting the amount of money that will be allocated to produce a certain output to a democratic vote in advance of production. This would free enterprises from the need to compete for customers and to accumulate capital.

An interactive ethos is one of the characteristics of modern generations (Tapscott and Williams 2008, 36). Postbureaucratic management theories envision work performed in informal, decentralized, networked organizations where involvement is spontaneous (Williams 2007, 158). De-commodified work fits in naturally with the new work ethos. Another new approach is autonomous work, which should be creative, controllable, and socially useful (Gorz 1999). Peer production can function in a decentralized system composed of small-size modules, allowing participants to contribute their workshare spontaneously and in an asynchronic way (Benkler 2013; Benkler and Nissenbaum 2006). This feature of production seems to be particularly tuned to the life realities of the precariat, a class-in-the-making containing workforce on temporary work contracts with no hope for stable employment, which has limited control over its time (Standing 2013). In contrast to a formal employment, peer production is very inclusive as everyone who has time and skills can make a contribution (Shirky 2006, 2008).

Dissociating income from work can be combined with linking production and consumption. When consumption and production are done by the same person or when a consumer is somehow directly involved in the production of goods, that consumer gains much more from the process. For instance, the person who pays (partly or entirely) for vegetables through engaging in workshare, as Amanda Divito Wilson (2013) describes in her case

study, can see the conditions under which the produce is being cultivated. On the one hand, this form of payment allows an easier access to organic products for persons with less income. One activist has even proposed combining community supported agriculture with a time bank, which would make it possible for customers to access agricultural produce (Howard 2010).

Collectives of Alternative Food Services: Presentation of Cases

People's Potato was established at Concordia University in 1998 and Midnight Kitchen at McGill University in 2003. Both have managed to institutionalize and sustain their activity over more than a decade. This is a remarkable success of self-organization and taking control of food production.

The main goal of People's Potato is to assist in developing the skills to produce, the opportunities to afford, or simply the free distribution of healthy food to students and the community. On weekdays, four hundred free vegan meals are distributed at the university. Similarly, Midnight Kitchen serves up to two hundred vegan meals a day and provides catering for political events. The kitchens are also a space for practicing social justice values. The kitchen's policy is to provide an anti-oppression environment.

The People's Potato collective was established in 1998 and run by volunteers in the beginning. This was a protest against the monopolization of food services on the campus by a French multinational, Sodexo Alliance (present in many schools, universities, hospitals, and prisons worldwide). The food they offered was unhealthy and not appropriate for people with allergies. Once Sodexo's contract expired, the university signed another long-term contract with the Chartwells Corporation, but the quality of food and prices charged have not improved, according to Concordia Food Coalition group.

When People's Potato learned that part of kitchen space previously used by Sodexo/Marriot remained empty, although the major part was taken over by Chartwells, they began

to use this space for their own cooking. The corporate cafeteria, operating on the same floor as People's Potato, was offering meals for CAD\$12.06 tax included, and has consequently lost many of its clients. It is not very crowded during the lunch time, whereas a long line forms about thirty minutes before the opening of People's Potato.

The project is funded by a fee levy paid to student union, which amounts to thirty-seven cents per undergraduate credit. Graduate students have paid a lump sum of CAD\$5 per semester since 2008. Fee levies can be reimbursed if an opt-out request is made. This is the major income of the collective amounting to about CAD\$273,000 a year, supplemented by around CAD\$4,000 of donations and between CAD\$5,000 and CAD\$7,000 received from other organizations at the university.

At first, People's Potato had difficulties obtaining kitchen space and struggled with the university administration for about two years. They do not need to pay rent to university but pay for the maintenance of equipment from their budget. Electricity, water, and garbage removal are paid by university from student fee levies. The status of the collective within the university structure remains ambiguous, and there is always a fear of losing support from other organizations and the kitchen space as no official contract has been signed. The financial coordinator perceives that the main obstacles in relations with the administration are exclusivity contracts that the university has signed with multinational companies. But last year, the university used People's Potato as part of its advertising strategy to increase the school's attractiveness to students.

Midnight Kitchen was established as a service of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU), which provided financial support and free kitchen space in the student union building. It was also a matter of negotiations to get the space. They got a grant of CAD\$500 from QPIRG McGill (Quebec Public Interest Research Group)¹ to buy commercial-sized pots and pans at the very beginning. In 2007, they successfully campaigned for student levy of CAD\$2.25 per student each year, which makes CAD\$84,000 annually. In

the same building, there is a room where everyone can bring food and eat.

Work and Production in the Collectives

Both collectives save money by using “recuperated” or “dumpster-dived” food that otherwise would be thrown away, by involving volunteers, and by not paying rent. People’s Potato collective is managed by a Board of Directors (consisting of nine general members) elected at the Annual General Meeting. Staff are employed based on equity policy privileging people marginalized on the labor market: based on race, sexual orientation, gender, and disabilities. There are currently eleven employees: four of them being students at Concordia or other universities and six are full-time employees. The salary at People’s Potato is CAD\$15.91 per hour, which is about one-third higher than the average in the local restaurant sector. Work contracts last for nineteen weeks. The major part of the budget is spent on salaries: CAD\$265,000 a year. Only three collective members work in the kitchen at one time; all the other work is done by volunteers. Collective has signed insurance for potential accidents to volunteers. About ten volunteers are needed each day, though, in theory, forty people can work in the kitchen at a time. Some have been coming for years and work for six hours. Part of the employees’ job is to manage volunteers. For instance, an employee of People’s Potato mentioned that sometimes volunteers are not socialized with this culture and may make sexual jokes or complain about the French language. Kitchen staff need to intervene in conflicts and explain why certain remarks are wrong. Sometimes a volunteer leaves the kitchen crying. If not enough volunteers show up, the staff will ask people waiting in the line to give a hand with preparation. Volunteers are involved in Midnight Kitchen in all four shifts: pick-up, cooking, serving, and cleaning. Volunteers sign up for shifts through an online form, but a spontaneous drop-by is also welcome. The collective gets CAD\$84,000 from student fee levies and spends CAD\$13,000 on food and CAD\$50,000 on staff.

People’s Potato purchases organic cooking oils, seeds, grains, and beans. They also buy

nonorganic vegetables: potato, onions, carrots, cabbage, turnip, and beets, spending around CAD\$30,000 for produce annually. It also receives food donations from the food bank warehouse *Moisson Montréal*, where they get vegetables such as pepper or cauliflower. *Moisson Montréal* is supported by a network of nearly one hundred fifty agri-food suppliers that aims at collecting perishable and nonperishable foodstuffs. The foodstuff collected are mainly obtained from the food product surplus of suppliers, wholesalers, manufacturers, and farmers (*Moisson Montréal* 2013). The proportion of donated to bought food is one to two. Another source of produce is People’s Potato’s Community Garden located on the Loyola Campus near the center. Volunteers cultivate food, which is distributed to volunteers and to a local Food Depot.

Midnight Kitchen gets a part of their food from surplus vegetables donated by vendors and grocers, which is also seen as part of protest against food politics producing waste. Vegan cooking is more economical because storage is less complicated than in case of dairy and meat products.

These two collectives embody an alternative to the current models of production by state and market actors and redefine the relation between provider and consumer. The fact that work is partly done by volunteers illustrates that a more flexible arrangement of work based on spontaneous involvement by a larger group of people can be a viable option to contracting salaried workers. Both collectives operate similarly to Wikipedia and other peer-production projects. A small coordinating body is supplemented by a far larger spontaneous and self-selected group of volunteers, and the work is divided into small tasks.

Relations between Producers and Consumers

The projects described here constitute a major change in consumer/producer relations. Production and income are organized in a different way, only part comes from contributions—donations (in People’s Potato CAD\$4,000 annually, which makes eight cents per meal, whereas CAD\$30,000

is spent on produce). Potential customers have a choice as to whether they want to support the project during one year. Since the workers are dependent directly on the consumers, the latter can have a say in the process of production. This principle resembles Albert's *parecon*, in which citizens decide in advance what services and what production is needed and how much the community should contribute to a specific task (Albert 2003). The result is a lower priced end product and more inclusive access to goods for those who cannot work full-time. The collectives operate outside capitalist market pressures by having relatively stable incomes at the outset and by redistributing rather than competing for profit in the market. The contributed costs for each student are equivalent to one or two meals a year, and the sustenance of organization is independent of investors searching for profit.

In theory, People's Potato could operate as a worker cooperative within the market logic. The rough estimate of single meal's price is CAD\$5.30 if annual operating costs are divided by the number of meals distributed. This is still a competitive price in comparison to the surrounding providers, and the social justice activism of the collective could be retained. However, it would make the project vulnerable by exposing it to market competition. Due to a potential waste of produce related to participating in market competition, the price of a single meal would need to rise in the long run.

Through opening the kitchen to consumers, one can potentially gain more transparency in the process of food production. This hardly ever happens in the traditional market where asymmetry of information between consumer and producer dominates. Instead of relying only on state inspection, consumers have the opportunity to gain insight directly about the conditions of food preparation. This aspect gains particular importance because of the lack of information about genetically modified food (GMO), which does not need to be indicated, under Canadian regulations. Vegan food is one of the ways to avoid these products as over 80 percent of GMO produce is consumed in animal products because animals are usually

fed with genetically modified soy or corn. However, even in vegan food, GMOs can be "hidden" in such additives as fructose, glucose, soy lecithin, vegetal oils (Quebec group *Vigilance OGM*). Therefore, having opportunities to influence and control food preparation is essential. Such an arrangement of production could also be used to exercise control over other areas of daily life consumption.

The Future of General Interest Services

The key elements in the alternative described above are as follows: a worker-run cooperative giving autonomy to the providers of service; involvement by unpaid workers; a philosophy of prosumerism, which assures participation and enhanced transparency to consumers; and spreading costs among a large population so as to ensure stable annual income independent of revenues from sales.

Such collectives can provide useful occupations to those who are currently underemployed. Furthermore, the model presented above is based on postcapitalist logic because while the workers do not own the means of production, they still can use the space and equipment (means of production), which the university provides for free. If translated to governance systems other than university, one could imagine how the state might provide space and equipment for self-organization rather than choosing to engage directly in the provision of service, particularly where some forms of democratic aggregation already exist such as in a neighborhood or workplace. This could become a major role of a Partner State—a concept being currently developed by peer-production scholars (Bauwens/P2P Foundation n.d). Although the food services are self-managed, the state still plays a role, for instance, in hygiene and safety control/inspection.

What is the probability that this model will develop into a more encompassing system for providing general interest services? So far, the market model prevails, and the urban governance policy for the developed world tends to "sustain the continued dominance of the neoliberal project" (Jessop 2002, 456). By contrast, measures like

minimum income guarantee—whether as *citizens' wage*, *basic income*, or *carers' allowances*—have all been suggested as appropriate for developing countries, according to the members of World Commission, who wrote “World Report on the Urban Future 21” where these strategies are outlined (Jessop 2002, 463). So far, a basic income, which would foster public service reorganization, has not been introduced in an encompassing way but only in the form of fixed-term experiments in Canada, India, Namibia, and the United States. Ecuadorian authorities sponsored a research project, the first phase to be finished in May 2014, to develop a national policy to reorganize the production into a model based on open source and peer production (further information can be found at http://en.wiki.floksociety.org/w/Research_Portal). The recent proposals to develop the Big Society in the United Kingdom recognize the important contribution that society itself can make in the provision of public services, but this project is rather a way to undermine the commons by cutting social expenditures (Bauwens 2012). However, this is an elite-driven agenda that does not take into account bottom-up processes. Futurist analysis should explore the possibilities of “bottom-up self-organisation,” instead of concentrating only on initiatives from policy makers and managers (Smith 2005, 28).

The changes in the organization of work in the private sector initiated by capitalists can become the base for a broader change in the organization of economy, toward worker self-management. The significant number of enterprises in Western world depends on creativity and skilled workforce. This type of employees is more likely to demand participation at the workplace. One can predict that the more employees become involved in problem-solving and innovation, the more they will come to question the hierarchy and pay inequality (Rothschild 2000). This may lead to the development of coalitions between workers searching for autonomy and consumers aware of the lack of transparency in the current system.

The analysis of these examples of alternative food services can be translated into new policy measures necessary to bring about the restructuring of how general interest services are

provided. Born within the specific context of the university, these collectives are operating under a set of conditions that make their emergence and growth more probable. The founders and workers in these collectives share a deeper ideal of democracy than that promoted by representative democracy. The university setting is also characterized by the concentration of underemployed human resources that still includes some degree of stable revenue: in the form of parents' support, student loans, stipends, and/or paid employment.² The situation of these stable but limited resources resembles the condition that might exist in a state that supplied its citizens a basic income.

The university also allows students to make their own choices regarding very concrete initiatives and ensures the transparency of money spent due to the proximity of providers and consumers. In other venues, this would imply the decentralization of spending decisions. One could imagine a conversion of today's tax system to incorporate optional contributions at the district level (as is done today for public television in France or Germany), or to allow individual taxpayers to allocate one percent of their taxes to a specific nonprofit organization, as is currently the case in Hungary and Poland (Török and Moss 2004). Furthermore, projects of this kind can have particular success when they offer services involving direct consumption by a large population of consumers, and where they provide these more cheaply than the market or state can do.

My study illustrates that the inception of free food services operating next to commercial providers depended on a self-organization and some sort of civil disobedience. Although they became part of the university governance system, their continuity is not ensured. Exclusivity contracts with large private providers may stay in the way of sustenance of such initiatives. A transition to a system of service provision based on peer-production principles will probably start with single initiatives of self-organization from below. This could lead to a mobilization to overtake state or privately owned spaces and infrastructures, similarly as it is already done by squatters. In the long run, state authorities may be forced to

introduce some regulations on the accessibility of public spaces for such projects or the right to occupy a private infrastructure if it is not used. Consumer mobilization plays a crucial role in this development as private providers can sustain their activity as long as they are able to make enough profit. The first step toward the transformation has already been made as the example of the successful functioning of such alternatives for over ten years demonstrates that it can work. This alternative production organization provides counter-evidence to the capitalist hegemony and its “relentless campaign against the human imagination” (Graeber 2013).

If we look at the development of social organization from a broader perspective, we can distinguish several periods of transformation in the way goods and services were provided. So far, these transformations have led from a decentralized family-based system toward a centralized organization based on rational design and procedures as described by Max Weber (Kreiss et al. 2011). The next development could well involve a new decentralization of organizations whose base will be in chosen and spontaneous groups fulfilling certain functions, and whose membership will be overlapping and not exclusive. Such development can be observed in numerous peer-production projects mainly producing digital goods and knowledge, and in some physical world services such as Internet-assisted exchanges of hospitality and help (couch surfing, woofing) or peer services provision, for instance, car pooling, AirnB, or time banks.

Whether this spontaneous and self-managed system of public service provision could develop into a model for services in health care, child and elderly care, infrastructure maintenance, and other essential-for-survival sectors needs to be further examined.

This will require an in-depth analysis of work organization and skill demand in these domains to identify how they could be reorganized to fit to the peer-production logic by dividing the work into smaller tasks. Further research should focus on the factors sustaining worker motivation in physical peer production and nonhierarchical ways of ensuring quality output (cf. O’Neil

2013). To sustain this production model will require understanding of human resources management in such projects. Research on these topics will give substance to thought experiments about alternatives to the current system. However, it is impossible to outline a detailed model or predict in which domains peer-production logic can be established. In the end, it will be a result of trial and error and the mobilization of different interests as has been the case with other paradigm changes in the organization of service provision in the past.

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Notes

1. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) is a university group generating expertise, advocacy and popular education. The establishment of these groups was inspired by Ralph Nader, a consumer activist. Nader encouraged students to form their own campus-based public interest organizations. Nowadays, groups are working at universities across Canada.
2. According to a survey from 2009, which was conducted by *Léger Marketing*, 80 percent of Quebec undergraduate students earned on average CAD\$10,220 per year; 39 percent were receiving student loans in the average amount of CAD\$3,140; 26 percent of students received stipend in the average amount of CAD\$3,950; and 69 percent of students under the age of twenty-four years were receiving money from their parents.

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