

Tax, time and territory: The development of early childhood education and child care in Canada and Great Britain ^[1]

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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AVAILABILITY

Full thesis in PDF ^[2]

Abstract

This dissertation examines the evolution of Britain's and Canada's early childhood education and child care (ECEC) sectors, especially the growing number of policy initiatives adopted in both countries over the past thirty years. I contend that policy coalitions in both countries have been able to promote gradual but nevertheless important policy changes by grafting new purposes onto inherited institutions. The result of these incremental changes has been ECEC systems that often appear incoherent and disjointed.

The dissertation also explores how Canada and Great Britain have increasingly followed distinct trajectories. In particular, I demonstrate that while a growing proportion of ECEC services are provided by the commercial sector in Britain, Canada has instead increasingly relied on the non-profit sector to deliver such services. I contend in this dissertation that differences between the two cases are the result of distinct policy coalitions that have emerged in both countries. I make the case that the character of these coalitions and their capacity to promote, institutionalize, protect and further their policy preferences are the result of, first, the sequence of policy development and, second, the territorial organization of the welfare state in both countries. In short, as a result of the federal nature of Canada, Canadian child care activists were able to ensure the early institutionalization of a regulatory framework that constrained the expansion of for-profit services. By the time Britain adopted a national framework, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, on the other hand, the for-profit sector had already established a strong presence.

Covering more than one hundred twenty five years of policy development in both countries, this dissertation draws both on extensive archival research and on interviews with policy-makers and ECEC activists.

Region: Canada ^[3]

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