The Idea of a University: Enabling or Constraining Possible University Futures?

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Nothing is harder, yet nothing is more necessary, than to speak of certain things whose existence is neither demonstrable nor probable. The very fact that serious and conscientious people treat them as existing things brings them a step closer to existence and to the possibility of being born.

Herman Hesse, *The Glass Bead Game* (1949, Introduction)

An Idea does not exist in the physical world; it exists in the mind of man. None the less it may have a key role in history, for it shapes human events by the action it inspires. An Idea manifests itself in human action; although it never finds a fitting home in this world of imperfect mortals, its drives them onward and leaves behind a trail of human, historical experience.

Michael J. Hofstetter, *The Romantic Idea of the University* (2010, p. 10)

Abstract

The thesis explores how today's discourse about possible futures for the Western university is constrained by four contested ideas of the university – tacit cultural constructs that shape our understandings of the university's purpose and legitimacy. The primary research question is: *how are the university's possible futures constrained by contested ideas of the university?* The contested ideas are:

- the **Traditional Idea** that emerged in the nineteenth century in the form of the modern university;
- the **Managerial Idea** that emerged from the 1980s onwards, and that now manifests as the neoliberal university;
- the **Reframed Idea** that emerged in the first decades of the twenty-first century and that seeks to establish alternative university types beyond the neoliberal university; and
- the **Dismissive Idea** that emerged in the second decade of the twenty-first century and exists entirely *outside* the university, and that appears to have little interest in either the university's present or its future.

The overarching research findings are twofold: **first**, that the four contested ideas of the university *do* constrain the emergence of the university's possible futures in the discourse – primarily because each idea argues for the validity of its own single, assumed future at the expense of any others, effectively shutting down the discourse to alternative futures. **Second**, positioning the idea not as a singular conceptual construct but as an enduring and malleable *meta-concept* allows the power of the four ideas to shape the university's futures to be surfaced and recognised in the discourse so that all possible futures known in the present can be explored.

There are three contributions to knowledge. **First** is the positioning of the four ideas as specific, individual temporal variations of an underlying *meta-concept* that captures the myriad of ideas and university types discussed in the literature, creating a 'history of the ideas'. This positioning moves away from the singular conceptual idea to demonstrate how

many ideas can co-exist in the present *and* have integrated and interdependent trajectories as they collectively shape the university's possible futures today.

Second, the thesis problematises the shared assumption of the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas that the university will *always* exist, primarily because the recent emergence of the Dismissive Idea indicates clearly that this assumption *could* lose its validity into the future. Assuming the university of the present will always exist represents a significant cognitive constraint in the discourse that prevents *all* possible futures for the university from being considered as valid and useful in the present, and therefore from being taken into account in strategy development and decision making.

Third, drawing on Integral Futures, a new futures conversation framework provides a space for university futures to be surfaced and considered, providing university leaders, policy, and decision makers with a strategic thinking approach designed to generate a more inclusive, collaborative and longer-term discourse and context for policy and decision making today. This approach has been 'field tested' and its practical utility as such a tool appears valuable so far.

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This PhD has been a labour of love for me, something that would never have come to fruition without the support of the following people.

I had five supervisors during my candidature, and each of them helped me find my way at various points in time. Eddie Blass and Peter Hayward were my first supervisors and got me into the right mental space, variously challenging, questioning and prodding me to think in new ways and letting me tap into their very insightful minds. Peter always seemed to know what I needed to hear to keep me positive and on track, even after he was no longer a supervisor, and Eddie returned at short notice at the end of my research to be a critical reader for me, providing a lifeline of sorts to ensure I got my final version completed. Trish Buckley supervised me in the middle of my research and provided the critical comment at a point when I thought I would never find a way forward (as I describe in Appendix 1). That comment set me on the path to a refined topic and ultimately a completed thesis. Without that revelatory statement, I am not sure my thesis would have ended up where it did.

Joseph Voros saw me through to the end of the process – his insightful, quirky, deep, and challenging thinking that I valued so much when we worked together at Swinburne also kept me focused through to the submission of my thesis, with always the right balance of encouragement and critique. Finally, Jill Bamforth joined the team at the end of my candidature, and I am grateful for her quiet support from then on. Thank you all – you not only 'supervised' me, but you helped me keep going through the past eight years in the good times and when things got difficult. I would not have achieved my decades long goal without you all, and for that I am eternally grateful.

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Anne Cain always helped me through the never-ending administrative steps during the thesis with *amazing* professionalism and calm. Her unwavering ability to make things happen even though she was dealing with difficult circumstances herself was critical in enabling me to get to the finishing line. Thank you.

My family tolerated my preoccupation with the research and my need to get it finished, even when it seemed to be taking forever. I cannot put into words how much I need to thank you Alan. You let me put the PhD first and gave me the space to get it finished even though it took so much longer than a science PhD! Your years of support is what enabled this thesis to become a reality. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping me do what I needed to do.

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My parents saw me off to Griffith University to do a Bachelor of Arts in the mid-1970s as an extremely nervous 17-year-old, the first in our family to go to university – a country girl going to the city who had no idea then what that step would mean for her future. Their continuous support gave me the confidence to keep going in the face of disappointments and to trust myself to succeed. While they are not with me today, I hope they are proud.

A Personal Note

I worked for almost 28 years in universities and care about their futures. I sought to do two things by completing this PhD: one was to contribute to deepening our collective understanding of our roles in shaping the futures of and for the university; and two, was to fulfil a commitment made to myself in the late-1990s to contribute in some meaningful way to the discourse about the nature of the university as an academic institution and its role in society. Exactly how I would do that was unclear then, and the concept of the 'future university' had yet to enter my consciousness. Now, with the clarity that emerged as I have embedded foresight in my thinking and my professional practice, this thesis stands as that contribution.

What is clear for me now is that *the idea* has assumed an almost ethereal nature over the centuries the university has existed, something never quite understood or grasped in its entirety, but something that has always been accepted to have an innate value that defines what the university is and should be. The authors of the literatures explored, analysed, critiqued and integrated in this thesis have generated a vast range of ideas about the university past, present and future, and in writing this thesis, I recognise that I am a fortunate recipient of those ideas that have allowed me to join Glyn Davis's (2015) "crowded conversation" about the university.

I have strived to find and use the value in the legacy these writers left me, both within individual works and collectively. I aimed to critique and respect, not ignore or deny perspectives as so many have done, and value the beliefs that truly mattered to the people who have contributed to this now centuries old conversation about the university and its underpinning ideas – and who have helped shaped this thesis as it now exists. I submit the thesis now with the hope that my interpretations will indeed add to this wealth of understanding we have about the university and its formative ideas so that we can collectively and positively continue to imagine multiple possible pathways for the university into the many futures available to it today.

Declaration by Candidate

I declare that:

1. this thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award to the candidate of any other degree or diploma, except where prior permission to do so has been received by the ADRD, and with due reference made about this in the text of the examinable outcome;

2. to the best of my knowledge contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis, and with permission received to republish the work in the thesis; and,

3. where the work is based on joint research or publications, the thesis discloses the relative contributions of the respective creators or authors using the Authorship Declaration Form.

Signature: Maree Conway

Date: 30 October 2020

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Chapter 1: The Research

1.1   Introduction

This thesis explores how today's discourse about the Western university's possible futures (hereafter *the discourse*) is constrained by contested ideas of the university – tacit cultural constructs that shape our understandings of the university's purpose and legitimacy. The term 'the idea of the university' (hereafter *the idea*) most probably entered the higher education lexicon when Newman's *Idea of a University* was published in 1852, although its defining elements have coalesced over time, starting from when the first Western university emerged in Bologna around 1088 and its subsequent establishment as a distinct 'corporate' organisation in the late twelfth century (Perkin 2007, p. 159). This nineteenth century idea, termed the *Traditional Idea* in this thesis, shaped understanding of the university's purpose and legitimacy until around the middle of the twentieth century – when the emergence of neoliberalism as the dominant global organising philosophy resulted in challenges to both the university and the idea of the past.

This Traditional Idea is now only one of *four* contested ideas of the university (hereafter *the ideas*) that co-exist in the present. While the genesis and defence of the Traditional Idea remains located within universities, two other ideas now span the institutional boundary between the university and society – the *Managerial Idea* that was imposed on the university by the state from the 1980s, and the *Reframed Idea* that emerged around the second decade of the twenty-first century which seeks to establish alternative university types beyond the dominant managerial neoliberal university of the present. The fourth idea – the *Dismissive Idea* – originates entirely *outside* the university and appears to have little interest in either its present or its future forms. A brief description of each idea follows, and Chapter 5 discusses the evolution of the four ideas in more depth.

- **Traditional Idea**: the first articulated idea of the university, originating in the nineteenth century in von Humboldt's modern university and given a name and form with Newman's publication of *The Idea of a University* (1852). This was a university whose value was assumed and thus left alone by the state, with academics able to

essentially define the nature of their purpose, their work, and their relationship with society.

- **Managerial Idea**: the dominant idea in the present that manifests as the neoliberal university which remains legitimate providing it meets all government requirements. This dominance is not perpetual, however, and will decline when society's needs change to the degree where the university's purpose will need to be reframed in order to maintain its legitimacy.

- **Reframed Idea**: an idea that rejects the premises of the neoliberal university but not the assumptions and values embedded in the Traditional Idea. This idea underpins efforts to create alternative forms of the university in the present, beyond the control of the neoliberal university. These new universities essentially reframe the Traditional Idea for the present context.

- **Dismissive Idea:** a new idea that emerged in the second decade of the twenty-first century, one that is not beholden to the history and traditions of the university and that sees no value in its purpose. This idea dismisses the legitimacy of the neoliberal university and seeks instead to locate learning in and for society.

Three assumptions – purpose, legitimacy and assumed future – are considered to define the idea in its conceptual form. These formative assumptions are accepted as true in context, so much so that the idea is wholly taken-for-granted and are unquestioned. The idea then shapes and maintains what is believed to be 'real' and 'true' about the university, and these beliefs inform action and decision making about both the university in the present and what is accepted – or denied – as its possible futures. Critically for this research, these ideas not only hold incommensurate views of the university's purpose and legitimacy in the present, they also each embed quite different images *for* the future university, and for the future *of* the university. How these three assumptions construct the idea in a collective, cultural sense – and how they enable or constrain the emergence of the university's *possible* futures – is defined and interpreted in detail in Chapters 5 and 6 using a Futures Studies and Foresight approach (Chapters 2 and 3) within the context of an integrated conceptual frame linking the idea, the university and society (Chapter 4). Here, it is sufficient to note that until these three assumptions are accepted as valid – both individually and collectively – *an* idea does not become *real* and *visible* in the discourse.

The discourse generated by the multiple literatures that are used as data in this research (Chapter 3) is analysed throughout the thesis to: (i) explore the shifting nature of the university's purpose and legitimacy over time, defining how both are constructed differently in each idea; (ii) demonstrate how each idea embeds a *particular* view of the university's future, and (iii) how these ideas *collectively* enable or constrain the emergence of the university's possible futures. The primary research question is therefore: *how are the university's possible futures constrained by contested ideas of the university?*

1.1.1   Why Do Contested Ideas Matter?

The four co-existing ideas in the present matter for four reasons. **First**, the discourse is not equally receptive to the four ideas. An adversarial relationship between the Traditional and Managerial Ideas defines the extant discourse, and effectively prevents the nascent disruptive power of the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas to shape the university's futures from being recognised and understood. This means that assumptions about the university's purpose and legitimacy in the present, and into the future, remain challenged and unexamined, and possible futures for the university are not considered.

Second, contested understandings and perceptions about the university in the present shape different and conflicting ideas about its possible futures. The dominant Managerial Idea not only shapes and is shaped by its current organisational form as the neoliberal university (Davies, Gottsche & Bansel 2006; Peters 2013; Di Leo 2016); it also results in a single, constrained image of the future university, based on an assumption that the neoliberal university will continue to be accorded legitimacy into the future. That is, that *today's* university will be the university that the future *needs*. This is a tenuous assumption, simply because the future does not yet exist in any empirical sense, and so assumptions based upon the belief that today's university will always exist are inherently fragile.

Third, if we accept that the ideas shape different beliefs about the university's purpose and its possible futures, then the idea held by those who define the university's legitimacy in the present – that is, the dominant stakeholder group that has the power to make that idea 'real' (Chapters 5 and 6) – becomes important. The emergence of the Managerial Idea, for example, shows how the Traditional Idea – a centuries old and deeply embedded belief in the modern university held by academics *within* the university – was undermined rapidly when social changes moved the power to define its purpose and legitimacy *outside* the university to

governments. The continued existence of the neoliberal form of the university is *not* predetermined though, and its currently assumed future is *not* a given. Instead, the empirical nature of the university today is better understood as a *structure* that, as it has in the past and the present, will be reshaped by a new idea about the university's purpose; one that has not yet taken shape, and that will bring with it another contest for the power to define the university's legitimacy among its stakeholder groups.

Fourth, contested ideas – as cultural constructs – have an observable and defining impact on the structure and operations of the university (Chapters 4 and 5). For example, in the present, the collegial approaches to academic work and governance found in the Traditional Idea and the modern university of the nineteenth century have been replaced by the more business-like approaches of the Managerial Idea and the neoliberal university – which have seen, among other things:

- authority structures become more hierarchical and bureaucratic, essentially excluding academics from decision making and governance processes (Ryan & Goldric-Rab 2015; Clarke 2015);

- policies that promote a performative culture based on control and audit as the norm, creating a work environment focused on measurement not outcomes, such as 'publish or perish' (Lynch 2014a; Amsler & Facer 2017a);

- changing government and university funding models – underpinned by beliefs that university education is a private not a public good – that shift the financial burden of university education from governments to students (Peters 2013; Newfield 2016); and

- tension emerge between academics and managers as decision and policy making power has shifted from academics to university managers (Joyner 2012; Callier, Singiser & Vanderford 2015).

These forms of operating are, however, already being challenged by the Reframed Idea (Newfield 2016; Myton 2018b) and Dismissive Idea (Corey 2018; St. Amour 2020).

This research takes the position that, when considered separately, each idea constrains our understanding of the potential range of possible futures for the university in the present. By taking a deliberate *integrative* position, the thesis demonstrates how the discourse can expand beyond the confines and limited scope of the individual ideas to surface *the implicit power of*

the integrated ideas, articulated, and made visible. The discourse may then be able to move from its current state – in which such terms as 'toxic' (Smyth 2017), 'invasion' (Saunders 2010) 'violence' (Kalfa, Wilkinson & Gollan 2018), 'assault' (Bailey & Freedman 2011; Barkawi 2013) and 'divide and conquer' (Scott 2012) are used – to a more positive, inclusive and informed conversation; one that enables *all* ideas and *all* possible futures for the university to be valued and considered. Such a discourse would also develop a broader and longer-term view of the university's potential future operating environments that are already being shaped by the actions of leaders and policy and decision makers today – and enable its focus to move from the university of the present to include consideration of the university the future needs.

1.1.2   Finding the Ideas

It is the integration of the weighty literature about the university's past, present and futures that provides the data in this research needed to analyse and interpret the discourse to 'find' the ideas. As Section 1.7 and Chapters 2 and 3 make clear, this research is grounded in Futures Studies and Foresight (hereafter abbreviated as FSF) – an approach that allows the past-present-future integration to be achieved to demonstrate that the university as it exists now *can* and, as its history shows (Chapters 4 and 5), *will* take on new forms in the future (Chapters 6 and 7).

This literature is categorised into four generally distinct *sets* that generate the discourse to be analysed and interpreted:

- **Context**: literature about major changes in the university's external environment that influence both how the 'university-as-organisation' is structured and operates in the present;

- **Ideas:** this literature had two subsets:
  (i) **Philosophical**: literature about the tacit idea largely from a philosophical perspective, usually using the visible university as its reference point, and including literature on worldviews; and
  (ii) **Resistance**: literature about the idea as justification for resistance to the neoliberal university, and the desired development of alternative structures for the university;

- **University as Organisation**: literature about the visible university in the past and present, focusing on its structure, leadership, management, work, and internal and external relationships; this set also included literature about organisational culture, identity, and legitimacy; and

- **University Futures**: literature about possible futures for the university, found in both writing about the future university in general and in specific scenarios about the future university and its functions.

Chapter 3 defines how these four literature sets were identified and analysed. The first two sets focus on the ideas and the second two sets on the organisational form of the university. Barnett (2017, p. 81; italics in original) terms this division "two domains of inquiry, the university qua institution and the university qua idea," a division he actually sees as unhelpful because each generates insular understandings of the university. Instead, he writes:

> If … the university is understood as moving in time and space … as having a history in which it has unfolded both as institution and as idea … its present manifestation and its present accompanying and dominant ideas … will be understood as largely *ephemeral* phenomena, open to giving way to quite other incarnations and self-understandings. Correspondingly, if the university is seen as an institution that has deep layers and structures that may constitute its present 'generative mechanisms' … but which are moving and can move still further, such a sense of its potentially widening social ontology … opens the way again to yet other kinds of visions of the future university.

It is an understanding of this sense of a potentially widening social ontology about the ideas and the university that is being explored in this research – that the university can be other than what it is in the present, and that its future is not pre-determined by any single idea, or by the existence of the neoliberal university.

Each literature set is valuable because it deals with a specific aspect of the idea and the university. Considered *individually* however, the four sets do not provide the 'big picture' understanding of the university that is sought here. A more critical perspective is taken on the literature, considering it *holistically* so that the 'university qua idea' and the 'university qua institution' can be integrated in a conceptual sense. This integration allows a new discourse space to open up (Amsler & Amsler 2013), one that allows *all* ideas and *all* possible futures to be valued and considered. The stance taken in this research is that the future for the university as an organisational form *cannot* be considered separately to the ideas when possible futures – a construct of the mind – are being considered. We *cannot* identify and

explore the range of the university's possible futures in the present unless both the university *and* the ideas – as constructed both individually and collectively and as understood in the past and the present – are integrated to create a discourse space that values all ideas and all futures.

The focus *only* on the 'university qua institution' that permeates the literature reviewed in this research not only traps the discourse in the present and ignores the power of the ideas to shape the university's possible futures (Chapters 5, 6 and 7). It also constructs a university of the present that is assumed to be the university's *only* future – which, as this research demonstrates, is not the case. Apart from the Ideas Philosophical literature set, however, the idea generally remains *tacit* in the discourse, *so* tacit that, as Chapter 5 discusses, it is essentially *invisible* in the discourse. As a result, the idea is rarely acknowledged as a *primary* factor that shapes the university's future alongside other factors such as technological innovations (Faste 2016; Moodie 2016; Grajek 2018), social shifts in terms of access to knowledge (Biesta 2007; Barry 2011; Bacevic, D'Silva & Guzman-Concha 2018), economic transitions (Silim 2016; Brewer 2016; Robinson 2017) and geopolitical instability (Akaev & Pantin 2018; Burrows & Gnad 2018; Saxer & Andersson 2019) – all of which generate much data and have more visible and immediate effects on the university than the idea. This research seeks to rectify this lack of attention to ideas in the discourse by explicitly directing attention to their critical influence on the emergence of the university's possible futures; it seeks to move the ideas from tacit and invisible to conscious and visible facets of an integrated discourse. The research aims are further discussed in Section 1.3.2.

1.1.3   Chapter Structure

The remainder of this Chapter is structured as follows.

- Section 1.2 first clarifies key definitions. 'Discourse' is defined first since it is the conceptual arena in which the contest among the four ideas takes place. 'Purpose' and 'legitimacy' are then defined since together they provide constant reference points in this thesis to bound, explore and interpret the nature and impact of the four ideas on the university's present and its possible futures.

- Section 1.3 defines the thesis structure to provide context for discussion in this chapter and to make clear the temporal transition points across the thesis from the present, to the future, and back to the present.

- Section 1.4 positions the research by detailing the research questions and aims.

- Section 1.5 discusses the scope and constraints of the research.

- Section 1.6 defines the original contributions made by the research.

- Section 1.7 introduces the research approach provided by FSF that enables the past, present and possible futures for the university and the idea to be integrated and considered holistically.

- Section 1.8 concludes the chapter.

1.2   Some Definitions

Discourse is defined as the debate that emerges *across* individual texts (Heracleous 2011) and the meanings and ideas expressed in those texts (here the four literature sets defined in Section 1.1.2) that make an object of interest real for the relevant discourse community (Phillips & Hardy 2002). Some writers have used a discourse analysis approach (Phillips & Hardy 2002; Teubert 2010; Fairclough 2013) as a method to understand the impact of managerialism and the neoliberal university (see for example, Trowler 2001), but *discourse* is used here in the sense that Alvesson (2011, p. 9–10) describes: to "address a wider cultural terrain rather than only language use", recognising that "meaning is not only based in language, but also in actions and artefacts, in taken-for-granted assumptions and ideas that people may have problems in verbalizing". The discourse identified in the literature analysis used here – a cultural artefact in Alevsson's terms – is reflective of the taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs that underpin and shape the nature of the contest across the four ideas. Essentially, discourse is taken to mean an ontological narrative about the ideas and the university's futures that generates shared meaning about what a university is and what it should do – today and in the future.

The university's **purpose** is defined as how we understand *what a university is and why it exists*. Purpose helps define what makes the university different to other organisations in particular contexts and times, and as Chapters 5 and 6 show, the presence or absence of this sense of 'difference' has been pivotal in determining how the ideas have been constructed, articulated in the literature, and ultimately enacted in policy and decision making. The ideas shape our understanding of the 'right and proper' purpose of the university and, perhaps more

importantly, *who* is entitled to *define* that purpose. In this research, *purpose* is assumed to be underpinned by an *idea* of the university.

Legitimacy is defined by Suchman (1995 p.574) as a "generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions". That is, that what the university does meets specific social needs. All organisations need to maintain alignment between what they do and those social needs if organisational legitimacy is to be maintained (Deephouse et al. 2017 p. 14). Legitimacy is defined here as the degree to which services provided by the university to society are accepted by that society as legitimate – that is, those services are considered 'fit-for-purpose'. Chapters 4 and 5 further define and track how the university has maintained its legitimacy over time, and how the university has been accorded a different type of legitimacy at different times in its history. Legitimacy and purpose are considered to be aligned in this research – that is, to maintain organisational legitimacy, the purpose of the university must always reflect a social need.

1.3   Research Questions and Aims

1.3.1   Research Questions

The primary research question is: *how are the university's possible futures constrained by contested ideas of the university?* Sub-questions that follow from this question are:

- what ideas of the university exist in the present?
- what futures for the university are assumed by these ideas?
- what other possible futures exist for the university beyond the four ideas?
- how are these futures shaped by the ideas as understood in the present?
- how might these possible futures and their underpinning ideas be integrated to provide new insights to expand the discourse about the university's possible futures?

These questions focus on ideas, assumptions and futures that are cultural *constructs* which cannot be observed empirically, and which therefore have no specific 'reality' without active interpretation (Willis 2007; Goodsell 2013). Interpreting the literature used as data in this research allows these constructs to be identified in the form of 'indicators' such as images, metaphors, descriptions, phrases, assertions, assumptions and beliefs (discussed in Chapters 3 and 4). The approach required to answer the research questions therefore needs

to do two things: first, frame a research design that recognises the constructionist nature of the four contested ideas; and second, explicitly integrate the past, present *and* future. Chapter 3 defines the research design that meets these two requirements by using a social constructionist epistemology and a foresight methodology.

1.3.2   Research Aims

The thesis aims to expand today's discourse about the university's possible futures in ways that integrate core elements of *all* ideas and thus *all* possible futures that they imply or entail. Specific aims are to:

- integrate the 'university as idea' and the 'university as organisation' in the discourse to make overt their necessary interdependence for imagining possible futures for the university;
- demonstrate how today's discourse is constrained by the four contested ideas, preventing the active consideration of the ever-widening range of possible futures for the university rather than merely those embedded in the ideas; and
- develop a 'futures conversation' framework that makes explicit how FSF approaches enable the integration of all possible ideas and futures to frame the discourse in ways that can inform and enhance decision and policy making in the present.

By intentionally seeking to integrate consideration of the four ideas and the changing form of the university, a new perspective becomes visible, one that reframes the discourse in order to pursue a broader and deeper understanding of the university's multiple possible futures as a prerequisite for more informed action and decision and policy making in the present.

1.4   Thesis Structure

Figure 1.1 shows the structure of the thesis, provided at this point to set the context for discussion in both the remainder of this chapter and in the thesis. The colour code used in Figure 1 is:

- Part 1 (blue) positions the research in ontological, epistemological, and methodological terms and defines the research context;
- Part 2 (green) interprets the literature corpus to identify the nature of the ideas, their three core assumptions and dynamics of their co-existence *in the present*;

- Part 3 (orange) analyses existing scenarios for *the university's futures*, demonstrating how the ideas constrain the emergence of those futures in the present; and

- Part 4 (red) returns the thesis *to the present* where a new conversations framework designed to expand the extant discourse is discussed, before concluding the thesis.

Chapter 1: Defining the Research Research Context, Rationale Aims, Questions, Contributions to Knowledge	
Chapter 2: Futures Studies and Foresight Futures Studies and Foresight (FFS); ontological and epistemological positions of the research	**Part 1: The Research**
Chapter 3: The Research Methodology Social Construction as methodology; foresight methods – environmental scanning, Three Horizons, scenario archetypes	
Chapter 4: The Research Context Worldview Construction; Organisational Theory; Social Change Theory; Legitimacy Theory	

Chapter 5: Finding the Ideas Defining the ideas; three assumptions; evolution of the ideas over time; the idea as a meta-concept	**Part 2: The Ideas in the Present**
Chapter 6: The Dynamics of the Ideas Integrating the ideas into an ecosystem; mapping the ideas in the present; futures embedded in each idea	

Chapter 7: The University's Possible Futures Identifying and analysing scenarios for the future university; identifying underpinning ideas and archetypal futures; integrating archetypal futures to generate new futures	**Part 3: The Ideas in their Futures**

Chapter 8: The Expanded Present Defining a new conversation space to facilitate the emergence of a reframed discourse about the university's possible futures	**Part 4: Integration in the Present**
Chapter 9: Concluding the Thesis Revisits the integrative stance taken in the research, defines major research outcomes and contributions, and discusses areas for future research.	

Figure 1.1 Thesis Structure

The logic of the four parts reflects that of an FSF project. Part 1 defines the nature of the research – context and issues to be explored. Part 2 focuses on understanding the past and the present of the issues being investigated here, before moving to the future in Part 3 to identify

possible futures for the university. Part 4 returns the focus to the present to explore how possible futures can be used to identify new and novel perspectives in the present – to identify new futures and to generate new forms of action and decision making in the present.

Chapter 2 establishes the ontological and epistemological positions of the research: a relativist foresight ontology and a social constructionist epistemology. The rationale for the choice of FSF as the primary organising frame for the thesis is discussed and justified.

Chapter 3 discusses the applied foresight methodology used in this research, and the methods chosen to analyse and interpret the literature, which was reviewed using an integrated literature review approach. Integral Scanning (Slaughter 1999a; Voros 2001) framed the review to identify as much relevant literature as possible to answer the research questions. The literature is analysed to provide a conceptual mapping that demonstrates specific connections across the ideas, the university and society in the literature.

Chapter 4 defines a conceptual framework that integrates a set of theories to set the research context for this research: Vidal's **worldview construction theory** (2008, 2014) to define the ideas as collective worldviews; **organisational theory** to provide the frame to understand the university's structure, operations and culture; **social change theory** to understand the evolution of changes shaping the university's contexts over time; and **legitimacy theory** to explain the nature of the university's relationship with society as understood in this research.

Chapter 5 first discusses the conceptual nature of 'the idea of the university' and its relationship to the university in the literature. It identifies the three assumptions present in each idea – purpose, legitimacy and assumed future. The evolution of the ideas over time is discussed and their competing views of the university's purpose, legitimacy base and assumed future are identified. It is argued that it is changes in the university's purpose and legitimacy that signals the emergence of a new idea, not incremental changes to its operational functions over time. Finally, the concept of the idea as a *meta-concept* is proposed to demonstrate that the idea is a strong, enduring and malleable construct that generates a 'history of the ideas', a positioning different to that in the literature, where a singular idea is so assumed in the discourse that it is defined by ever changing university 'types'. This chapter answers the research question: *what ideas of the university exist in the present*?

Chapter 6 moves to consider dynamics *across* the ideas. It positions the ideas in the extant discourse using Williams' (1997) work on culture, maps their co-existence in the present using the Three Horizons framework (Sharpe & Hodgson 2006, 2017) and integrates the futures embedded in each idea to demonstrate how each idea argues for its future at the expense of other futures, which leads to identifying five possible futures rather than the four assumed by the ideas. This chapter answers the research question: *what futures for the university are assumed by these ideas*?

Chapter 7 identifies and analyses a set of ninety-one scenarios for the university's future that were sourced from the literature. The scenarios are categorised by both idea and scenario archetype (Bezold 2009b), providing the basis for developing a set of archetypal futures that generate ten possible futures for the university. The integration of these archetypal futures explores the intersection of the ideas in these futures and posits how a new discourse space might emerge if the boundaries between and across the ideas are broken down to enable seemingly antithetical ideas to collaborate to imagine new futures. This chapter answers two research questions: (i) *what other possible futures exist for the university beyond these four ideas*?; and (ii) *how are these futures shaped by the ideas as understood in the present*?

Chapter 8 defines a new 'futures conversation framework', the design of which is drawn from Integral Futures (Slaughter 2003, 2008b, 2013; Conway 2006a; Floyd, Burns & Ramos 2008; Hayward 2008; Voros 2008) which aims to facilitate the overt integration of individual, cultural, organisational, and social perspectives required to interpret the connections across the idea, the university and society. The chapter demonstrates how the discourse as constructed in the present can be reframed to be more open, integrated, inclusive, participatory, and long-term in nature, and one that values all ideas and all futures. This chapter answers the research question: *how might these possible futures and their underpinning ideas be integrated to provide new insights that expand and deepen the discourse about the university's possible futures*?

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis. It identifies how the research questions were answered; the value of the integrative approach used in the research, the major research findings and contributions, and areas for further research.

1.5   Scope and Constraints

1.5.1   Type of University

The university form being explored here is the one that traces its origins to the *anthenaeums* and *lyceums* of ancient Greece and the medieval *studia generale* that became a formal, 'corporate' structure in the twelfth century in Europe (Perkin 2007). A detailed history of the organisational form of this Western university is not provided – this has been done by many others (see for example, Rashdall 1895; Katz 1976; Perkin 2007; and Irish 2015), and too many authors to list here who include a section on the university's history in their texts to frame their arguments. This historical literature is drawn on in Chapters 4 and 5 to contextualise the evolution of the university and the ideas over time. Similarly, the university is considered here to be located within the higher education 'industry', but that industry and its history and development are not discussed in any detail, primarily because the industry itself is not the focus of this research, merely an aspect of the university's broader social context.

The 'university' referred to throughout the thesis uses the form as it exists today in Australia, Europe, the United Kingdom (UK), Canada and the United States of America (USA) as its reference point – that is, the 'Western' *public* university. This decision is made while cognizant of three things. **First**, the impetus for this research is the experience of the researcher of this Western university in Australia – as an undergraduate and postgraduate student for almost two decades in total, a worker *in* them for 28 years and now an external consultant working *with* them for more than fifteen years at the time of writing. Previous published research demonstrates a long-standing interest in the university, with a focus in the 1980s and 1990s on the relationship between academics and managers (Conway 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2012), while more recent publications – and the research discussed here – reflects a shift of focus from relationship dynamics taking place within the university to its possible futures more broadly (Conway 2003, 2011, 2012, 2020). Recognising this grounding of the research in my experiences of the Western university brings with it a non-negotiable responsibility to be critically reflective of the part I play in shaping the research choices made, and to make clear the impact of my background on the research when appropriate in the thesis (Blass 2012). As Section 3.2.2 identifies, this is done primarily by using footnotes at relevant places throughout the thesis.

Second, because the research focuses on the Western *public* university form it does not discuss other existing university types such as private or corporate universities – although these universities *are* found in scenarios for the university's futures discussed in Chapter 7. This decision was made to ensure the research was manageable, a decision that also reflects my background and experience discussed in the first point above. Whether or not those who work in 'non-public' universities hold *any* of the four ideas discussed here, or indeed have alternative ideas which might or might not shape possible futures for these university types is an important topic for future research (Chapter 9), and would expand understanding of the origins, nature, and relevance of the idea as a concept across all higher education institutions, not just Western public universities.

Third, the decision to focus on the Western university brings with it the clear constraint that the literature on universities of the East and the Global South, and the growing postcolonial literature, is not discussed here in detail. This literature is not ignored, however, particularly since it makes clear that the "thinning" of our thinking about the Western university that Barnett (2013a, p. 13) describes must now be understood as a "manifestation of historical patterns that have … *limited* human possibilities for imagining (and doing) otherwise" (Stein & Andreotti 2016 p. 131, italics added). Exploring potential futures for the university from a more global and decolonised perspective was deemed beyond the scope of this research while representing a strong imperative for future research (Chapter 9) – particularly to identify how these alternative discourses can provide new insights into the concept of 'the idea of the university' beyond what is discussed here.

1.5.2   Stakeholders

A range of stakeholders can rightfully claim a voice in shaping the future of and for the university, including academics, managers, students, parents, government, industry and society at large (Mainardes, Alves & Raposo 2010; Marshall 2018). Chapleo and Sims (2010, p. 12) point out, however, that: "Whilst stakeholder theory has been advanced in commercial arenas … there is less research in the public and non-profit areas … particularly with regard to universities." An attempt to identify a body of relevant stakeholder literature was made during the construction of the literature sets (Chapter 3, Section 3.5), but it was clear – at least for the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas – that only a quite limited relevant literature *about the ideas* held by stakeholder groups exists *outside* the university exists (that is, governments, parents, business, and industry). The term 'relevant' is important because

while, for example, there is a substantial body of literature about students and their participation *in* universities (Jenkins 2018; Hines 2017; Prensky 2001; Glazer 1968; Francis 2010), no commensurate work on students' *perceptions of* the idea of the university or their images of its preferred futures could be identified. That is, understandings of the relationship between the ideas, their assumed futures and the idea-university-society nexus has, until the recent emergence of the Dismissive Idea, been derived almost entirely from literature generated from *within* universities. The literature relating to the Dismissive Idea, by contrast, exists predominantly *outside* the university – suggesting that those who hold this idea might be more appropriately termed 'anti-stakeholders' – that is, they hold *no* stake in the university of the present or its continuation into the future.

The position taken here is that understanding the nature of the university as an organisation, and the beliefs and assumptions shaping the ideas, were and are *made real* primarily by those who work *in* these organisations. As Davis (2012) writes: "The university is not separate from its staff but reflects the interaction of an institutional form with the values and priorities of those who work within the gates." It is asserted here that it is the interpretations of staff and their sensemaking around what a university *is* and what it *does* – and how they put those interpretations into practice – that construct the social reality that is the university, that construct assumptions about its futures, that shape responses to social change, and that influence interactions with stakeholders beyond the university.

1.5.3   The Future Horizon Year

The second and third research questions both require exploration of the university's possible futures. Section 1.7 introduces the use of FSF as the research approach to facilitate this exploration, and Chapters 2 and 3 defines this approach in more detail. This 'futures orientation' generally uses a ten to twenty year time horizon beyond the present for developing and using scenarios of possible futures (Wilkinson, Mayer & Ringler 2014; Buehring & Liedtka 2018) to ensure thinking moves beyond the conceptual limits imposed by the more usual three to five-year time frames of conventional planning and/or forecasting, and to generate a space where new and assumption challenging views of the future can emerge. The point of positioning 'the future' as between ten and twenty years hence here is to ensure that exploration of the university's possible futures (Chapter 7) avoids what Van der Heijden (1999) calls the 'official future' – the 'business-as-usual' reproduction of today's university that is typically found in strategic plans in the vision and mission statement. For

this research, no specific future year is specified since the university's possible futures are identified from a wide range of existing diverse scenarios (Chapter 7), rather from a new set of scenarios developed specifically for this research. That is, the focus here is how the process of *emergence* of those futures is constrained in the literature, rather than on the detail of the futures themselves.

1.6   Contributions to Knowledge

This thesis makes an original contribution in three ways.

First, this research identifies and defines a new understanding of the idea of the university. The four contested ideas in the present are viewed as constituting a *meta-concept* – a term that, as is argued in Chapter 5, captures the myriad of ideas and university types identified in the literature and creates what can be called *a history of the ideas*. The research moves beyond present perspectives where the idea and the university are considered to be so interconnected that the idea is subsumed by the university in the discourse, a position that has resulted in the idea's essential conceptual validity being questioned. Positioning the idea instead as meta-concept allows a new and expanded understanding of the idea and its relationship with the university to be defined, one that demonstrates that the idea can be considered as a robust, enduring and malleable cultural construct that holds explanatory power for understanding the three-way relationship across the idea, the university and society over time. This positioning provides a new lens with which to view the complexity of the cultural milieu in which the university exists and demonstrates how the four ideas both co-exist and share interdependent trajectories as they shape the university's possible futures in the present.

Second, the shared assumption of the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas that the university will *always* exist is problematised, a necessity since the recent emergence of the Dismissive Idea indicates clearly that this assumption *could* lose its validity into the future. Problematising assumptions aims to "disrupt the reproduction and continuation of an institutionalized line of reasoning … by taking something that is commonly seen as good or natural, and turning it into something problematic" (Alvesson & Sandberg 2011). Assuming the university of the present will always exist into the future represents a strong cognitive constraint that prevents *all* possible, emergent futures for the university from being identified and considered as valid and useful – including the future without a university that is

embedded in the Dismissive Idea. Problematising this assumption therefore has the potential to allow new futures to be surfaced and considered in the discourse, a stance that then has clear policy and decision-making implications for university leadership and university strategy development processes in the present.

Third, a new futures conversation framework is developed in Chapter 8 that provides university leaders and policy and decision makers with a strategic thinking structure designed specifically to generate a more inclusive, collaborative and longer-term context for both ongoing strategic conversations and decision making about the university's futures today. This framework makes clear the constraints and potential impact on the university's continuing legitimacy and its possible futures if the four ideas are *not* integrated into the discourse in the present. A secondary contribution here is in terms of FSF methodology: the framework can also inform the design of FSF processes by ensuring that both the cultural and organisational dimensions of the issues being considered are identified and explored.

1.7   Integrating the Past, Present and Future

The need to consider the university's future is not new, with a distinct literature on this topic clearly emerging in the 1960s – for example, Ashby (1967, p. 417) identified the need to think about the future of the university:

> Only two generations ago we were far less interested in the future than we are today. It seemed safe to assume that the future would be a continuation of the past; with changes of course (in those days, we used to believe that change meant progress), but changes with a wave-length longer than the span of human life. It did occur to a few people that a college education might become obsolescent, but no one would have given that idea top priority. Today it has top priority.

Ashby might be suggesting that a future without a university is possible but the assumption that "A modern society is impossible without the university" (Pelikan 1994) is deeply embedded in the minds of most authors of texts reviewed here (Chapter 7). As indicated in Section 1.6, this assumption represents an immediate constraint on the emergence of the full range of university's possible futures in the discourse of the present.

This research brings a new perspective to our understanding of the future university as expressed in the extant discourse by explicitly moving beyond the assumed futures of the four ideas. This research instead *integrates* the ideas and their futures (Chapter 7) to demonstrate

their collective value and power when thinking moves to *the university the future will need*, as opposed to the university that each idea assumes *will* exist. A discourse about the future university that is 'trapped' by a single, deeply held belief in a single assumed future is unlikely to help people who care about the university's future to anticipate its possible futures in any meaningful way today (Miller 2018) – and the literature shows that many people do care deeply about the university's future. To escape this trap, the discourse – and more specifically, the stakeholders who shape and influence that discourse – *must* consider the potential implications of the co-existence of four contested images of the future in a more considered and integrated way in the present (Chapter 8).

Escaping this 'discourse trap', however, involves not simply considering the four ideas and their embedded images in a holistic way. It also involves facilitating the development of a futures *mindset* (Wilson 1996; Stevenson 2002) as a necessary precondition if that discourse is to be open to *possible* futures. If today's discourse continues to draw only on the university's past (the Traditional Idea) and present (the Managerial Idea) and does not consider at least two of the university's other possible futures (the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas), the result will be that the full range of its potential futures will not be made visible, the discourse will continue to privilege the future embedded in the now dominant Managerial Idea, and the university as an institution risks being blindsided by societal and historical change.

Integrating the four ideas and their assumed futures in an explicit way allows both individual thinking and the collective discourse to move beyond the cognitive constraints of 'contest', 'resistance' and the language of war (Perkins 2007) that characterise the literature today – that is, beyond the constraints of the individual ideas themselves. The *full range* of possible futures for the university can then be made visible, valued, viewed as plausible and explored and challenged for relevance. Integrating the past, present *and* futures of and for the university requires a *transformed* discourse however, one that moves beyond the ideas to accept as valid "new ideas, new imaginative ideas, that are going to help us break out of the present imaginaries [about the future university] … the imagination – in the first place – should be unconfined" (Barnett 2013a). That is, we need to think about the future university in new ways (Stein & de Andreotti 2016), and resist the 'capture', 'foreclosure' and 'colonisation' of [its] future … [to prise and keep] new possibilities open" (Amsler & Facer 2017b) – beyond the assumed future of the neoliberal university.

Futures Studies is the only research approach that offers this necessary integration of past, present and future. It provides the approaches used to explore "possible, probable and preferable futures including … the worldviews and myths that underlie each future" (Inayatullah 2005, p. 1), and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2. **Foresight** is the innate human cognitive capacity that allows us to think in new ways about the future in the present (Slaughter 1999b; Miller 2018), that is made visible through the use of FSF methods and processes (Chapter 3). A fundamental tenet of using these methods is that the present is highly unlikely to continue intact into the future because the future does not yet exist, so consideration of *alternative* futures is essential, even for universities assumed to have a perpetual existence.

Images of alternative futures are generated using our innate foresight capacities (Chapter 2) and allow us to deepen our understanding of those alternatives *and* challenge imaginaries constructed and maintained in the present (Barnett 2011b; Amsler & Amsler 2013). This process of challenge is designed to provoke the more integrated debate sought in this research - not about *the* 'right' future for the university derived from the past and present, but rather about assuring that if a university does exist in the future, it *is* the university the future needs. Such an integrated positioning can enable the current discourse to break free of its present constraints and open up thinking beyond the dominant idea. It is a position that seeks to demonstrate how creating a discourse space that values all ideas and all possible futures *will* enable the full range of those futures to become visible – and ultimately ensure policy and decision making today is anchored with the long term in mind, rather than only past and present knowledge, data and events. This more open discourse can then construct a stronger understanding of the relationships between and across the ideas, which is critical because while it is clear that the Managerial Idea is now dominant in the discourse, the very existence of *four* ideas indicates there are many people within and outside the university sector who do not accept the Managerial Idea as legitimate (Chapter 5).

The university's evolution will occur in an environment that is uncertain, complex, emergent and 'post normal' (Sardar 2010b; Montuori 2011; Kuzmanovic & Gaffney 2017). The future is *inherently* indeterminate (Van der Heijden 2000), and we cannot know with any certainty either what the purpose of the university will be or how its legitimacy will be determined in ten, twenty or fifty years. It is *only* when we *consciously* seek to explore the full range of futures available to the university in the present (Voros 2017b) that the opportunity emerges to envision, articulate and then enact a shared future that ensures whatever form of the

university might ultimately emerge is the one the future is likely to need. By anticipating the university's possible futures in the present, proactive responses to the nascent presence of the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas can also be considered to ensure that, ideally, the university and its academics can avoid the situation that occurred when the Managerial Idea and its manifestation as the neoliberal university emerged, blindsided, and overwhelmed the university built upon the Traditional Idea (Chapter 5).

1.8   Concluding Comments

This chapter has positioned the research as an exploration of ways to expand our understanding of possible futures for the university by integrating the relationship between the four contested ideas and the university as an organisation – which leads to a new lens with which to understand the relationship across the ideas, the university and society. This integrative stance ensures that universities are able to find what Inayatullah (2008, p. 5) calls the "the disowned future," the one that is not considered because of the power of the dominant idea in the present. As Inayatullah notes: "What we excel at becomes our downfall." That is, while the neoliberal university ensures the university's legitimacy is maintained in the present, a focus on only the assumed future of the dominant Managerial Idea ultimately means other futures with the potential to disrupt the present are ignored. As a result, the assumed future is never tested for validity and relevance because it is considered to be the *only* possible future.

Finally, this research is conceptual in orientation – it uses existing literature as data and does not aim to generate new futures for the university. It instead seeks to explore how each idea generates an assumed future that disowns the futures of the three other ideas and constrains the emergence of other possible futures. By exploring just what an idea is and how it emerges, how the four ideas evolved and now co-exist, and how they actually constrain the emergence of the full range of possible futures articulated in the present, the three currently disowned futures can be returned to the extant discourse, and a significantly richer and better-informed conversation about the university the future needs then becomes possible.

Chapter 2: Defining the Approach

2.1   Overview

Philosophical assumptions that underpin research shape understanding about what reality *is* and how knowledge about that reality can be accessed and known. These assumptions are taken-for-granted beliefs that generate discipline-specific ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives about how research should be conducted (Maxwell 1996; Creswell & Poth 2017), and which define the role of the researcher in the research (Blass 2012). Clarifying the assumptions that underpin the research approach for this research is the focus of this chapter.

The primary research question is: *how are possible futures for the university constrained by contested ideas of the university?* Sub-questions that underpin this question are:

- what *ideas* of the university exist in the present?
- what *futures* for the university are assumed by these ideas?
- what other possible *futures* exist for the university beyond the four ideas?
- how are these *futures* shaped by the *ideas* as understood in the present?
- how might these possible futures and their underpinning ideas be *integrated* to provide new insights to expand the discourse about the university's possible futures?

Since these questions deal with ideas, images and possible futures that are created by *people*, the research approach necessarily has to be *constructionist* and *interpretivist* in nature (Guba & Lincoln 1994). Because one of the research aims (Section 1.3) is to identify the range of possible futures available to the university based on the four ideas, the research is grounded in FSF, which are considered to be the *only* approaches that provide the *overt* integration of past, present *and* future required to answer the research questions. This chapter defines the research approach and provides a detailed explanation about how the literature used as data was identified, categorised, and mapped.

2.1.1   Chapter Structure

 The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 2.2 introduces FSF as the research frame and explores its evolution as a formal field of study, its basic tenets and the types of futures work that now exist;
- Section 2.3 discusses the human act of thinking about the future and defines the ontological and theoretical grounding of the research, including a discussion of *worldviews* as the locus for the ideas of the university;
- Section 2.4 discusses and defines how using foresight as a form of social construction provides the epistemological frame for the research; and
- Section 2.5 concludes the chapter.

2.2   Futures Studies and Foresight

While exploring 'the future' has never been the exclusive province of FSF (Marien 2002), it is possibly the only field that considers the future to be part of the present. Miller (2018) asserts the future exists in the present in the form of *anticipation*, while Adam and Groves (2007, p. 32) define it as "present futures amenable to contemporary futurist inquiry," and Slaughter (2001, p. 91–92) sees it as a "principle of present action, present being … it can be understood, explored, mapped and created, but not predicted." This section defines how FSF purposes, assumptions and principles provide a rigorous and systematic way to engage with, explore, and use the future in the present. It first provides a brief overview of the historical evolution of FSF, highlighting two issues that have been consistently mentioned in the literature: terminology and theory.

2.2.1   A Brief History

Humans have used many ways to call on the future such as oracles, divination, prophesy and palmistry (Milojević 2002; Godhe & Goode 2018). As Bell (2009, p. 2) writes: "Thinking about the future … is not new … In every known society, people have conceptions of time and the future, even though some of their conceptions appear diverse". Andersson's timeline of futures studies (2007) demonstrates how early oral and mystic approaches evolved over time to the point where thinking about the future was formalised as the field of Futures Studies in the post-World War II period. Histories of Western futures studies are numerous –

see for example: Moll (1996); Bell (2009); Masini (2006); Jemala (2010); Kuosa (2009, 2011); Seefried (2014); Son (2015); and Andersson (2018). Milojević (2002) notes that the modern iteration of thinking about the future is "firmly based within the Western intellectual tradition and has emerged from within the Western epistemological framework", a constraint that did not break down until the late twentieth/early twenty-first centuries (Sardar 1999). Common across these histories is viewing FSF as evolving in stages, and Schultz (2016, p. 5–7) provides a succinct summary of the major 'waves of futures thinking' since ancient times:

1. Oral tradition – the "oral wave of shamans and mystics";
2. Early written age – early macrohistorians outside Europe and early European writings about the future;
3. Extraction and enlightenment – a wave "deeply embedded in the idea of progress through science, technology and rationalism";
4. Systems and cybernetics – post World War II, when "grand scale planning and forecasting" saw the rise of systems science and futures studies, the first formal futures organisations and conferences and teaching futures in Europe and the USA; and
5. Complexity and emergence – the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries where "a sea change from the more technocratic and deterministic theories and approaches" of the last wave was marked by new approaches that saw the "melding of futures theory with integral philosophy" and models to "dig into the social and cultural substructures of changing human systems".

In the fifth wave too, Schultz (2016, p. 7) identifies the rise of chaos and complexity theory as providing "enhanced understanding of the dynamics of intertwined human and planetary systems [providing] a paradigm of change as an emergent property of complex, adaptive, living systems, emergent but rarely predictable." Engaging with complexity is now a primary FSF focus (Section 2.2.1.2).

Andersson's book *The Future of the World: Futurology, Futurists, and the Struggle for the Post-Cold War Imagination* (2018) provides the most recent in depth analysis of the emergence of the modern futures field, and it would be difficult to improve on her analysis, which moves from the need for historians to remember the future, the future as a moral imperative, a very detailed discussion of the emergence of modern futures across the world, and an exploration of the works of futurists – all based in a frame of shifting ideologies and

approaches as the world recovered from and splintered after World War II, when, as Magda McHale (1993, p. 55) indicated, "old problems needed urgent attention in this changed global environment."

Many writers and thinkers have made significant contributions to the evolution of the modern futures field, particularly in the last two waves defined by Schultz. Bell (2001, p. 140), for example, devotes half a page to simply listing who he calls "exemplars of the futures field." H.G. Wells (1932) and his call for professors of foresight is usually cited in any history, as is Flectheim's (1945) coining of the word 'futurology' to define thinking about the future. The early work around 'prospective' of Bertrand de Jouvenel (2012), Hughes de Jouvenel (2004) and Berger (Cournand & Levy 1973) in France in the **1950s and 1960s** introduced the concept of 'building the future', a philosophy based on seeing the future as "a realm of freedom, power and will" (de Jouvenel 2004, p. 10). This is a period Bell (2009, p. 20) describes as "clearly an incubator for the modern futurist movement."

In the **1970s** Polak's defining of the importance of 'the image of the future' for societies in *The Image of the Future* (1973) made images and imaginations valid topics of investigation. McHale (1969, 1973), John McHale and Magda McHale (1976); Helmer (1972, 1975), Boucher (1977), Linstone (1977) and Elise Boulding (1979) among others, developed and reviewed futures approaches, methods and research for use in governments and organisations in this decade. Boulding's (1979) concept of the *200-year present* makes it clear that both what exists in the present has not always existed and so is not fixed, and the consequent critical importance of exploring different images of the future. Two seminal publications often cited from these times are *Silent Spring* (Carson 1962) and *Limits to Growth* (Meadows et al. 1972)*,* both of which challenged existing beliefs and assumptions about how humans use the physical world, and invoke a futures perspective to make the case for change in the present; both are also considered to underpin the subsequent emergence of the environmental movement.

The **1970s and 1980s** marked the origins and increasing use of scenario planning, an approach usually attributed to the work of Pierre Wack and his Shell colleagues in the 1970s (discussed further in Chapter 7), but General Electric also used scenario planning for future consumer markets in that decade (Millett 2017). Scenario planning as a strategic approach spread across organisations from that time and has been variously considered to be a theory (Chermack 2004, 2005; Derbyshire 2019), a methodology (Markley 2011; Kahane 2012;

Millett 2017) and a method (Bishop, Hines & Collins 2007; Bowman et al. 2013). It is also an *approach* used beyond futures studies in organisational strategy development in general (Tibbs 1999; Godet 2000; Lindgren & Bandhold 2009), and it has been adapted and revised to suit the practitioner and the context (Johansson, Lassbo & Nehls 2013; Cairns et al. 2017). Like FSF, scenario planning comes in two varieties, one that is quantitative in nature that uses modelling and forecasting, and the other that uses more interpretive and social constructionist approaches that is sometimes termed 'scenario thinking' and 'scenario learning' to disassociate the process from more formulaic strategic planning (Lüdeke 2013; Amer, Daim & Jetter 2013). The value of developing scenarios has been questioned (Slaughter 2002; Molitor 2009), and its dominance as a method is probably why claims are made that methods dominate the FSF field at the expense of theory and methodology (Yeoman & Curry 2019; Curry 2020a). One critical contribution of this method, however, is that it brought imagination into organisations as a legitimate activity, albeit disguised in a planning process. Chapter 7 discusses the origins and use of scenario planning in more detail.

In the **1990s**, the work of many – such as Dator (1995, 1998); Slaughter (1998, 1999b, 1999a), Inayatullah (1990, 1993; 1998), Masini (1997, 1998), Galtung (1996), and Nandy (1996) among others – continued to develop the field creating a body of literature that has contributed to FSF being considered as a legitimate field of inquiry. Bell (2009) published the first edition of his two-volume work on the *Foundations of Futures Studies* in 1997 and Slaughter (1995) edited the first edition of his *Knowledge Base of Futures Studies* in this decade. There was also a cogent reminder from Sardar (1993, p. 2) who pointed out that:

> The evolution of futures studies since World War II has followed a well-defined pattern: at each phase of its development, future studies has used the dominant relationship between Western and non-Western cultures to define itself and delineate its scope and areas of research … future studies is increasingly becoming an instrument for the marginalization of non-Western cultures from the future.

During the following years, FSF did move beyond its initial Western boundaries. Son (2015, p. 120) notes "the rise of worldwide discourse on global futures", and Gidley (2016, p. 25) describes FSF now as "a transdisciplinary, transnational, and multisectoral field that includes thousands of academics and practitioners, many of whom operate globally."

The **first decades of the twenty-first century** saw what Schultz (2012, p. 7) calls "a sea change from the more technocratic and deterministic theories and approaches which had served it since the 1950s". This was a major shift towards a more integral and inclusive

stance in futures studies, with the rise of *Integral Futures* (Hayward 2008; Slaughter 1999a, 2008b, 2016; Voros 2008), *participatory futures* (van der Helm 2007; Rhisiart 2013; Nikolova 2014; Oteros-Rozas et al. 2015; Kelliher & Byrne 2015), *anticipatory action learning* (Stevenson 2002; Inayatullah 2006), *experiential futures* (Candy & Dunagan 2007; Candy et al. 2016; Cuhls & Daheim 2017), *'gaming the future'* (McGonigal 2011; Candy 2015; Stein, Watson & Candy 2015), and a strengthening connection between futures studies and *design thinking* (Selin et al. 2015; Hines & Zindato 2016; Buehring & Liedtka 2018) – all of which have expanded access to futures work beyond professionals. As Schultz (2016, p. 7) writes: "The futures [sic] are now for everyone to envision."

While FSF today may have conflicting terminology (Sections 2.2.1.2) and is claimed by many to be a field in search of a theory (Section 2.2.1.3), it *is* considered here to be an established field which Bell (2002, p. 237) suggested is less fragmented compared to other academic disciplines. There are professional associations (notably the World Futures Studies Federations and the Association of Professional Futurists), journals and conferences – all of which Abbott (1991) defines as indicators of professionalisation. There are many people working full-time who count themselves as 'futurists', irrespective of whether they are trained as professional futurists, academic futurists, or practitioners. There are numerous foresight methods (Slaughter 2002; Keenan 2007; Markley 2011; Farrington, Henson & Crews 2012; Popper 2013; Voros 2017a) that can be applied to multiple contexts, and the theoretical base of the field, including its underlying assumptions, continues to be articulated (Voros 2007; Karlsen, Øverland & Karlsen 2010; Öner 2010; Inayatullah 2012). Its knowledge claim is, broadly, how we use the future *in the present* to inform thinking, action and decision making (Slaughter 2001; Inayatullah 2002a; Dufva 2015; Kuosa 2017).

Governments at all levels seek to have 'futures thinking' included in their research and policy development (Conway & Stewart 2005; Draeger 2018) often in the guise of 'evidence-based decision making' required in funding proposals (Schultz 2006b; Habegger 2010), and corporate foresight facilitates the use of foresight approaches in organisations globally (Rohrbeck, Battistella & Huizingh 2015; ARUP 2017; Reed 2017). FSF is taught in universities as full award courses, short courses and individuals subjects (Slaughter 2008a; Hayward, Voros & Morrow 2012; Bengston 2018) – also one of the first steps in the professionalisation of a field. Academic disciplines claim an interest in the future too – for example, a body of sociological literature that is concerned with how people think about the future exists (Selin 2008; Bas 2010; Masini 2010; Adam 2014; Hammershoj 2017; Mandich

2019; Tutton 2019), but it is more focused on claiming futures studies as a sociological activity (Bell & Mau 1973; Urry 2016) than exploring possible futures. That said, Bell and Mau's *The Sociology of the Future* (1973) is notable for their coverage of images of the future, time, utopias, values, design and methodology – all common FSF topics – from a sociological perspective.

The field as a whole has been analysed at various times – for example, John and Magda McHale's assessment of futures studies (1976); Homann and Moll's review of Western futures organisations (Homann & Moll 1993); Helmer's review of futures research (1999), Slaughter's State of Play in the Futures Field (Slaughter 2009), Dator's review of women in the history of futures studies (1992) and Gidley and Ferguson's history of women in Australian futures (2015). The FSF literature that has been generated since World War II is substantial – it is sufficient to note here that the focus of that literature includes methods, theory, philosophy and internal critique, as well as the applications of futures approaches to an increasing number of fields.

This brief, selective historical summary cannot do justice to the people who contribute daily to the continuing evolution of FSF that has seen its increasing acceptance as a necessary approach across a wide range of fields. Sardar (2010a, p. 178), makes the critical point that the people who work in, teach and study FSF do, however, need to better understand its history in order to better contribute to it in the present:

> As a subject of inquiry with a body of learned literature, recognisable knowledge base, and definable contour of concepts, methodologies, practices and processes, futures studies is now well over 50 years old ... But there seems to be little awareness of this history …we do not even know what to call all those who take the study of alternative futures seriously: futurists, futurologist, prospectivists, foresight practitioners, even horizon scanners have common currency. Moreover, lack of appreciation of this history leads, not so infrequently, to reinventing the field.

Sardar's comment is an indicator that FSF is a 'broad church', one that is home to a wide variety of approaches, beliefs, and practices. As Bell (2009, p. 67) writes: "the diversity of backgrounds of futurists may be a strength for a field that attempts to be holistic and integrative, to deal with … reality among things in order to inform human decision and action." The field should probably not fear reinvention *per se*, since improving and updating knowledge and practice will keep it current, but it should perhaps pay attention to two other

issues that are mentioned consistently in histories of the field – its terminology and its theory base – to inform that reinvention.

2.2.1.1 Terminology Challenges

FSF is a field that still grapples with exactly how to describe itself, with early discussions emerging in the 1970s (Amara 1974; McHale & McHale 1976; Boucher 1977). Öner (2010, p. 1024) provides a list of FSF terms, pointing out a lack of consistency in usage that leads him to suggest that "the time has come for Futures Studies and Foresight to focus on the definitions of the concepts used in the field", a task attempted by van der Helm (2013, p. 24) who considered more work needed to be done on "defining the future". Sardar (2010, p. 7) points out that:

> The terms we use to describe the study of alternative futures is important. Disciplines and discourses do not emerge from a vacuum but have a history and a cultural context; and their names can hide as much as they reveal.

Terms such as futurology, futurism, prospective, and prognostics have been used (Andersson 2018) and calling futures studies a 'field' has been questioned (Marien 2002, 2010). Foresight is used in a variety of ways – as a cognitive capacity (Hayward 2005a; Ehresmann 2013; Rhisiart, Miller & Brooks 2015), as practice (Giaoutzi & Sapio 2013) and as method (Krawczyk & Slaughter 2010; Popper 2013; Curry 2015a). 'Futures research' is also used in opposition to 'futures studies', the former taking a more quantitative or 'rigorous' position, while the latter is more qualitative in nature (Slaughter 1982). Inayatullah (1993, p. 236) saw this division as "two modes of knowledge – the *technical* concerned with predicting the future and the *humanist* concerned with developing a good society [italics in original]." Miller (2018, p. 55) sees the current discourse as defined by *forecasting* – "futures generated by closed anticipatory assumptions" – and *foresight* – futures invented by combining open and closed anticipatory assumptions." Gidley (2016) calls the division a "bifurcation" of the field into more constructionist/interpretive futures studies approaches and positivist futures research, which neatly reflects the paradigm wars of the social sciences (Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Given 2017). Poli (2013) notes "while both positions have something to offer … they are both unilateral and (in their own way) dogmatic", suggesting that futures thinking and practice should seek to remain open, rather than conform to any existing disciplinary definitions (Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Adams & Roulston 2006; Given 2017). Slaughter (1993, p. 292) seems to concur with the open stance when he describes 'futures movements' as an addition to future studies and futures research: movements generated by people outside the

field who collaboratively create movements "such as the women's movement, the peace movement and the environmental movement, as well as many NGOs [non-governmental organisations] … the most successful of these movements are among the main agents of change." This stance also aligns with the *third* Habermas interest: "the human emancipatory interest; or, simply, the fundamental interest of all persons in freedom, self-constitution and unconstrained conditions of life" (Slaughter 1998, p. 5).

Most recently, 'anticipation' has entered the language of FSF, not from within the field, but from a wider movement to establish anticipation as a scientific discipline (Poli 2009, 2017; Aaltonen 2010; Miller, Poli & Rossel 2013; Sharpe & Hodgson 2017; Voros 2017a; Miller 2018). A concept researched in many disciplines from biology to psychology to neuroscience, Miller, Poli and Rossel (2013, p. 3) define anticipation as: "All efforts to 'know the future' in the sense of thinking about and 'using the future' … the future is incorporated into all phenomena, conscious or unconscious, physical or ideational, as anticipation." Notably, anticipation is positioned as "a combination of capacities that allow human beings to consider and evaluate the present in the light of the way they imagine the future [and is] a key contributor to the human activity of decision making" (p. 53), which is not unlike the language and definitions used to describe FSF. Miller (2018) has developed a framework for developing 'futures literacy' that potentially incorporates FSF as a specialised form of anticipation – but, as an emergent discipline, the impact of anticipation on FSF is not yet clear. An initial reaction suggests that the differences between the two approaches may be fewer than their similarities (Curry 2016). Indeed, preferences for different terminology to define what it is futurists and practitioners do and how they do it may be usefully considered to be a fundamental characteristic of the field – particularly since language use is usually culturally, temporally and context determined (Elder-Vass 2012; Alvares & Faruqi 2014; Putnam & Banghart 2017), especially in government or corporate sectors, where 'seriousness' is mandatory.

2.2.1.2 In Search of Theory

FSF has been criticised for being a practice in search of a theory (Wildman and Inayatullah 2008; Piirainen & Gonzalez 2015; Ahlqvist & Rhisiart 2015; Chermack 2005; Kurki 2019) that lacks attention to its ontological base (Patomäki 2006; Bergman, Karlsson & Axelsson 2010; Poli 2011; Øverland 2013), and that is dominated by the use of methods, particularly what Slaughter (2009, pp 11-12) terms "linear" and "systemic" methods. Bell (2009, p. 87)

notes that "futurists have been prolific in constructing, using and criticizing methods of futures research … [but] have accomplished much less in stating the philosophical bases of their assertions about possible, probable and preferable futures." Alonso-Concheiro (2015, p. 332) asserts that:

> there is a great hole in terms of theory in the middle of our surrounding current practices of futures studies. Our fundamental questions are so problematic that we may even ask ourselves if we are currently in a position to build a truly solid theoretical foundation for the futures field.

Alonso-Concheiro is rightly concerned with the clarity of futures concepts and knowledge development, but his critique of theory development is perhaps extreme since significant work *has* appeared in the last two decades (Adam & Groves 2007, 2011; Walton 2008; Inayatullah 2010b; Poli 2010, 2015; Miller 2018) that is defining the theoretical base of futures studies – most of which identify a number of common concepts:

- **layers**: reality is viewed as layered, consisting of deeper structures that shape what is consider 'real' (Inayatullah 2002a; Voros 2005, 2006);
- **foresight**: the capacity to think about – to *perceive* – the future in a systematic way to imagine and engage with alternative futures *and* to then take action in the present (Voros 2003; Amsteus 2008; Ahvenharju, Minkkinen & Lalot 2018);
- **uncertainty**: lack of knowledge about particular topics that, in a dynamic external environment, produces uncertain outcomes over time, often generating ambiguity and anxiety about the future (Michael 1993; van Dorsser et. al. 2018; Schoemaker 2019); and
- **complexity**: considered in terms of the complexity of social change generated by intersecting shifts across a range of domains that is understood to some degree, and from unforeseeable change and novelty (North 2013; Miller 2018; Dufva & Dufva 2018; Schoemaker 2019; Tuomi 2019).

The search for theory is reflective of the desire for 'the future' to be recognised as a valid area of study and work in the present (Voros 2007) and, in the case of current work on anticipation, to gain explicit recognition as a scientific discipline (Miller 2018). The theory base for FSF *is* being constructed, and the imperative to give that base some consistency across FSF research and practice may actually be a *more* urgent concern than simply trying to define a consistent terminology. Indeed, the literature reviewed suggests that this theory base should maintain the field's generally accepted 'open' stance while also delineating clearly

what it adds to existing research theory and practice beyond futures studies (Masini 1997; Lo Presti 2010).

2.2.2   Basic Principles

Irrespective of the approach taken to the future, there is a set of basic principles that underpin FSF that are summarised in this section (adapted from the work of Slaughter 1993; Dator 1995; Voros 2003; Bell 2009). Whatever language is used to describe these principles, they inform *both* thinking *and* practice in FSF work.

1. **The future is not predetermined, inevitable or fixed**. This principle is foundational for FSF and posits that as soon as we start to imagine possible futures, we start to influence what sort of future might emerge (Voros 2007, p. 70). Fundamentally, there are always alternative futures available to us in the present, and it can be reasonably expected that the world will continue to transform into the future (Slaughter 1993). That is, the future is not fixed, a position that is in contrast to the outcomes of conventional strategy and policy approaches which, by their very nature, generally assume a single linear future, extrapolated from the present – a 'presentist' and 'present-forward' approach rather than a futures and 'futures-present' stance.

2. **The future is uncertain and is not predictable**. Predictions are generated by bounded imaginations that create little more than assumed extrapolations of today. Moving beyond predictions to 'using the future in the present' (Miller, Poli & Rossel 2013; Rhisiart, Miller & Brooks 2015) is essential to engage with the complexity and uncertainty that is characteristic of possible futures if we are to generate a stronger and longer-term framework for our actions and decisions today. Understanding the future as 'open' – with no single 'fixed' future – allows perceptions of possible futures in the present to expand (see Figure 2.1).

3. **Possible futures exist only as images and ideas**. Polak (1973) demonstrated why images of the futures are critical to society's futures, while Dator's First Law of the Future reminds us that we can only study ideas about the future because the future does not yet exist (Dator 1995) and therefore, there are no "future facts" (Slaughter 1997b). Imagination then becomes one approach to source data about the future in the present.

4. Futures outcomes can be influenced by our action or inaction today. The notion that humans have agency to use the future in the present is critical. We can and probably should act to move towards a preferred future or to mitigate a perceived undesirable future for an organisation, country or even humanity. Lack of action, however, means that the opportunity to influence the shape of emerging futures is lost which inevitably leads to surprise when something once thought highly improbable becomes a reality. It is therefore human agency that shapes the future – both action and inaction have consequences in the present.

5. We are all responsible for future generations. Slaughter (1993, pp. 290-300) writes: "decisions have long term consequences" and some of those consequences have been "displaced into the future and represent challenges we have created, but which future generations will have to grapple with." Bell (2009, p. 88) asserts that accepting this responsibility "is among the most important purposes of futures studies" because every decision made today affects those who inherit the world from us (Tough 1993, 1995, 1998).[1]

6. There are always more futures beyond the one linear future assumed in most organisations and governments today. This linear future is frequently called the "official future" which Scearce and Fulton (2004, p. 88) define:

> The explicit articulation of a set of commonly held beliefs about the future external environment that a group, organization, or industry implicitly expects to unfold. Once articulated, the official future captures an organization's shared assumptions or mental map.

The Futures Cone (Voros 2017b) demonstrates that there are always many alternative futures available to an organisation beyond the official future (Figure 2.1). The origins of the Futures Cone are detailed by Voros (2017b) and Hancock and Bezold (Hancock & Bezold 1994) – it demonstrates that there are always many alternative futures available to an organisation in the present beyond the official future. Each alternative future in the Futures Cone is defined as follows:

- **Potential**: beyond today exists any number of potential futures simply because the future is not fixed (Principle 1, page 12);

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[1] Accepting this particular principle is personal for me. When, at the end of the first year of the Master of Strategic Foresight at Swinburne University of Technology in 2003, I articulated this principle as my critical learning from the year, I recognised that the future was with us in the present, something that could be shaped, both individually and collectively, and not something that we should leave to chance.
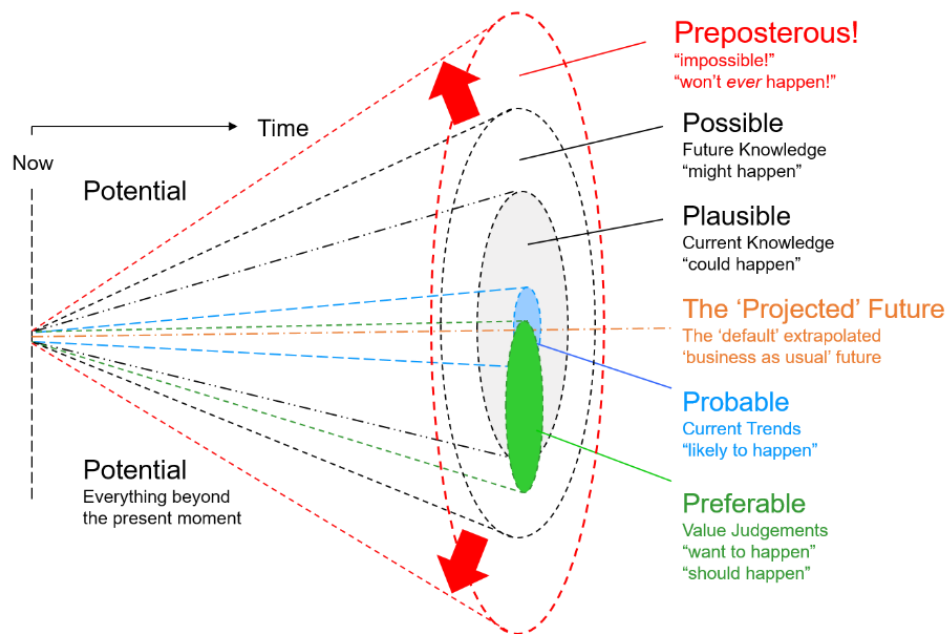
Figure 2.1 Futures Cone (this version copyright Joseph Voros 2017a)

- **Preposterous**: futures that are, at first sight, seemingly absurd, and the futures that can cause conflict with existing worldviews; however, 'seeds of the future' can be found in this space – this is Dator's (1995) Second Law that any useful idea about the future must first appear to be ridiculous; and Clarke's third law (2000, p. 250) that any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic

- **Possible**: futures that are based on knowledge we do not yet have – what is being considered *might* become reality if specific knowledge can be developed, or equally, may not;

- **Plausible**: futures based on today's knowledge of how things work (for example, the laws of nature); this familiarity often constrains challenging assumptions that generate linear futures;

- **Projected**: the official futures projected from the present, most often found in strategic plans;

- **Probable**: this is the future that is likely to happen, the one based on current trends; and

- **Preferable**: normative futures, the futures desired by groups and individuals who take action to shape those futures in the present (for example, activist and climate change groups).

Voros (2017) writes that all types of futures are:

> considered to be *subjective judgements* about the future that are *based in the present moment,* so the categories for the same idea can obviously change over time as time goes on (the canonical example of which is the Apollo XI Moon landing, which has gone through most of the categories from 'preposterous' to 'projected' and thence into history as 'the past').

In summary, the longer the time horizon considered when thinking about the future, the more uncertainty is involved (van Dorsser 2018), the more possible futures there are to explore, and the harder it is to move beyond the cognitive constraints of the present. Most FSF work – particularly that undertaken in organisational strategy and policy development – ultimately rests in the domain of plausible futures to allow feasible action to be identified in the present, but in terms of expanding thinking about the future, Schultz (2011, p. 4) sees this focus as problematic:

> it is actually code for 'don't give the clients crazy futures, or they'll reject them, reject us, and we won't get paid and will never work in this town again'. How often in strategic foresight projects do the end results offer truly transformational futures that challenge participants to consider the possibilities of deep structural change? How often do scenarios create 'productive discomfort' in how people see the world (Ramirez and Selin, 2014, p67)? Of worlds with entirely different economic or political systems? Of usefully crazy futures?

Brand (1999, p. 115) notes that reality does not care about what we consider plausible, and so does its own thing. What is considered *plausible* then is best considered after a range of crazy, seemingly preposterous futures are explored. Without first considering these crazy futures, the system for which futures are being considered will remain in 'sustaining mode' where the dominant voice in the discourse is reinforced and the potential of genuine transformation is overlooked (Hodgson and Midgley 2015, p. 3).

2.2.3   Images of the Future

Images and ideas about the future (Principle 3, Section 2.2.2) are constructed in people's minds and generate social, collective realities that are relevant in specific contexts – they are the construct by which our futures are made 'real.' The idea of images of the future first emerged in the French 'prospective' school in the 1950s and 1960s, (Berger 1957; de Jouvenel (1967), while Polak's *Image of the Future* (1973) and Boulding's subsequent publication of *The Image* (Boulding 1961) reinforced the power of the image in consideration of the future. In his seminal work, Polak (1973, p. 19) notes: "The rise and fall of images of

the future precedes or accompanies the rise and fall of cultures" with images shaped by the degree of optimism or pessimism about the future and the degree of human agency to influence that future:

> It will be helpful to make distinctions between optimism and pessimism along the lines of the concepts of Seinmiissen, "what must be," and Seinsollen, "what ought to be." It would then be possible to speak of Seinoptimismus or Seinpessimismus, which we shall refer to as essence-optimism or essence-pessimism, and Willensoptimismus or Willenspessimismus, which we shall refer to as influence-optimism or influence-pessimism. The essence categories refer to an unchangeable course of events; the influence categories refer to the supposed or rejected possibility of human intervention. The first point of view sees history as a book that has already been written; the second sees history as a process that man can or cannot manipulate.

Bell and Mau (1971, p. 2; italics added) draw on Polak's work when they discuss the key role of images of the future in society noting that "it may be profitable to look upon society as less a problem of order and *more as a problem of steering* in which images of the future are of crucial importance [stressing] dynamism and change, the causal interaction of ideas – beliefs and values – and social structure, decisions, and the deliberate efforts of man to shape society." Slaughter (1997b, p. 619) suggests that images of the future "illuminate otherwise abstract ideas and summarize a wide range of propositional (or interpretative) knowledge about the near-term future in ways that can be clearly understood." But, as Voros (2005, p. 38) notes, the entire process of helping people to imagine futures that are different to the present and that challenge often deeply held assumptions requires a high level of skill in the practitioner:

> Such methods used without a deep knowledge of their underpinnings, and the potential impact on the human beings involved in the processes of these methodologies, can easily produce results which are unsatisfactory, un-useful, and possibly even hurtful to the people involved. Done well and with due care, visioning, and imaging open people up to vast new vistas of insight and often lead to the dropping of guardedness and a setting-aside of emotional 'shielding', at least for a short while. If people are not treated carefully while in this more vulnerable state, they can be left disillusioned, disheartened, and disagreeable to any further foresight processes.

This issue of depth of skill in the practitioner is further discussed in Chapter 8.

Like Polak, Vásquez (2010, p. 337) sees images as carriers of the future that are important when studying the role they play "in the understanding and management of social change,

since they are the seeds that carry the future world." Vásquez (2010, p. 337) also points out that since the early work on the image, images have become less visible in the literature:

> The study of images of the future has a wide, diverse and fragmented historical background; it appears, disappears and reappears according to schools, approaches and problems of fashion; it is driven by many interests, topics and perspectives, and it is a multifaceted field, with many difficulties for its research and epistemological function. It is thus an essential topic, but somewhat put aside in the structuring of the discipline.

This lack of visibility of images in FSF work may in part be due to the dominance of scenario development as a preferred method (Chapter 7) which generates narratives more than images, and it could be because, as Vasquez (2010, p. 337) notes: "images of the future are assumed as given or understood" and are so taken-for-granted that they are not considered during FSF processes – unless such processes are designed specifically to surface and challenge them for relevance (Chapter 8).

More recently, Dator's (2005) First Law of the Future highlights the centrality of images: "'the future' cannot be 'studied' because 'the future' does not exist. Futures studies does not – or should not –pretend to study the future. It studies ideas about the future (what I usually call 'images of the future')." Voros (2007, p. 83) asserts that such images inform and shape action and decision making in the present, and that identifying images, along with latent futures, beliefs and probabilities are the central aim of futures inquiry and can be explored empirically in ways that "demonstrate careful, rigorous and disciplined thinking".

In recent work on futures consciousness, Ahvenharju, Minkkinen and Lalot (2018, p. 11) note that images of the future are thematic in nature, and that individuals with "a high level of future consciousness may have well-articulated images of the future, and likewise the development of future images is likely to increase their future consciousness." They define futures consciousness as:

> the capacity that an organization or an individual has for considering future consequences, having a sense of empowerment towards influencing their courses of action, openly assessing alternative courses, approaching problems from a holistic and systemic point of view, and striving for a better future not only for the self but for all of humanity.

A validated survey tool (Lalot et al. 2019, p. 8) measures five elements of futures consciousness: time perspective, agency beliefs, openness to alternatives, systems perceptions, and concern for others. They position futures consciousness as a "general

conceptual model" that assumes such a consciousness can be considered separate to images, scenarios, and contexts. Chapter 8 explores how the capacity to develop individual and collective levels of futures consciousness might be achieved in an expanded discourse.

2.2.4 Approaches to Futures Studies and Foresight

2.2.4.1 Overview

A range of typologies to define FSF exist – for example, Bergman, Karlsson & Axelsson's ontological typology (2010); Tapio & Hietanen (2002), Hideg (2005), and Gidley's (2016) paradigmatic typologies; Markley's wildcard typologies (2011); and Van Notten et al's scenario typology (2003). Karlsen, Øverland & Karlsen (2010, p. 63) suggest the existence of both futures research and futures studies reflects two types of activity: foresight as invention and foresight as prediction. Slaughter (2009, p. 10) defines three types of futures work based on social interests from organisational to global: "'pragmatic' (carrying on today's business but perhaps doing it better), 'progressive' (going beyond today's practices to invent and encourage new ways of doing things), and 'civilisational' (looking beyond what exists and consciously working to create the foundations of the next level of world civilization and culture)."

Inayatullah (2002b, p. 296) classifies three types of thinking about the future: empirical-predictive (forecasting/predicting the future), interpretive-culture (meaning and data in cultural contexts), and critical-poststructural (identifying what is missing in images of the future) which are strongly reminiscent of Habermas's knowledge framework of technical, hermeneutic and emancipatory knowledge (Slaughter 1992), while Mannernaa (1986, p. 668) notes that "futures research with an emancipatory interest has perhaps the greatest potential for being a useful aid in social planning and decision making." Slaughter's (2004, p. 89) categorisation of futures thinking defines three approaches as pop (superficial), problem-oriented (focused on the near term), and critical and epistemological (critiquing the foundations of social life), while Inayatullah (1990, p. 116) classifies epistemological positions in futures studies as empirical (meaning is found in language used), interpretive (meaning rests with the author, the person speaking) and post-structural (meaning derives from the "linguistics structure in which subjects find themselves), a structure designed to "accentuate their differences in the hope of developing more enabling understandings of the ways the future can be conceived".

For a field that is around seventy years old and still evolving, this number of typologies might indicate either that there is little agreement about exactly what the field is and what it does, or – considered more likely here – the work of practitioners is context based. That is, the best choice of approach is decided in each context, and that might mean adapting an existing process so that it is viewed as new, or as a 'sub-type' of an existing method. This more fluid approach to methodology is reflective of terminology challenges in the field (Section 2.2.1.2) and is not necessarily a negative characteristic of FSF approaches.

2.2.4.2 Positioning the Research

The approach required in this research is one that can engage directly with the ideas, images and possible futures that are created by people in the present, both individually and collectively. This approach is necessarily *constructionist* in nature and grounded in the belief that the aim is not to "establish the 'reality' of one social construction [that is, one idea] over another" but to "address the question of *how* social reality is constructed" (Holstein & Gubrium 2008, p. 6). By using social construction as the frame for knowledge generation, it is possible "to demonstrate … how certain states of affairs that others have taken to be eternal and/or beyond the reach of social influence are actually products of historical and/or social interactional processes" (Weinberg 2008, p. 14). With this frame, the literature used as data here can be investigated to understand how different contested ideas –considered valid by those who hold them – can co-exist in the present, and the resulting impact of that co-existence on the construction of university's futures. Section 2.4.2 defines how foresight and social construction intersect, and Chapter 3 defines how this intersection influences overall methodological approach and method choice.

The work of Slaughter (2002), Inayatullah (2004) and Voros (2005) – all of whom view reality as layered and multi-faceted and consider meaning as constructed – is used to problematise the contested ideas and question taken-for-granted assumptions, and to imagine possible futures. Slaughter (1999, p. 208) identified that early futures work paid little attention to the reality that "language mediates the interpretation of experience and is constitutive of understanding" and that "underlying values, perceptions, traditions etc" all play a part in constructing reality (p. 91). Inayatullah (2004, p. 55) draws attention to the need to view reality as layered and how problematising units of analysis to enable "historicizing and deconstructing the future [to create] new epistemological spaces that enable the formation of alternative futures" allows what is *perceived* to be real to become *open for*

discussion. Voros (2005, p. 29) indicates that "the uncovering, or rather, recognition, of deeper underlying causes usually provides for greater conceptual clarity and insight into the situation being analysed". For all three, 'mind' and worldviews become critical aspects of reality with the aim of foresight work to *integrate* "the boundary between the exterior world of observation and measurement to the interior world of perception and interpretation" (Voros 2005, p. 30). The remainder of the chapter defines how this boundary may be crossed to understand the ideas, the university, and its possible futures within such an integrated frame.

2.3   The Ontology of the Future

Ontology "raises basic questions about the nature of reality and the nature of the human being in the world" (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, p. 22) and are cognitive positions that define what we believe exists, and how what exists can be understood. Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2018, p. 111) identify five inquiry paradigms – positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, constructivism and participatory – which "define for inquirers what it is they are about, what falls within and outside the limits of legitimate inquiry" (Guba & Lincoln 1994, p. 108), and which are defined by distinct and interdependent beliefs about ontology, epistemology and methodology. Levers (2013, p. 2) notes that "Reality existing independent of human consciousness and experience, or reality existing within our consciousness and only through experience, is the eternal ontological debate."

For Levers, the three major ontological positions are realist, relativist, and critical realism. Positivist paradigms are underpinned by a realist ontology that holds that a single truth that can be observed and measured; an objective approach is taken that assumes a separation of researcher and the research. Interpretivist and constructionist paradigms hold reality to be relativist: "there is no access to reality independent of our minds … Reality is continuously recreated by its participants based on their intersubjective understanding of it" (Reed 2017). A relativist ontology leads to researchers seeking to understand the *perceptions* people accept as real in *their* context, and since such perceptions are subjective and can only be interpreted, not observed, the researcher and the research are necessarily interdependent (Levers 2013). A critical realist ontology accepts that there is a reality that exists independent of our awareness of it although "our knowledge about that reality is always historically, socially, and culturally situated" (Archer et al. 2016).

The paradox for futures studies is that its apparent object of study does not exist, yet we talk about it and plan for it in our everyday life as if it did – "it is ahead but also behind us, it never arrives but is always with us, it is unknowable yet there are things we do know" (Sardar 2013, p. 6). The future 'subsists' (Locke 2016) because we claim it to be real in our minds, and ideas about, and images of, the future influence our thinking and actions in the present. Øverland (2013, p. 41) suggests that "The act of anticipating possible futures does … create a kind of basic reality (ontology) – the reality itself as constructed through the ambition of identifying possible realities in the future."

The ontological position required in this research is one that can engage directly with the ideas, images and possible futures that are created by people in the present, both individually and collectively. It is therefore grounded in the relativist ontology that underpins social constructionism (Chapter 3), one that, as Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 111) write:

> assumes multiple, apprehendable, and sometimes conflicting social realities that are the products of human intellects, but that may change as their constructors become more informed and sophisticated.

The aim of social constructionism is not to "establish the 'reality' of one social construction [that is, one idea] over another" but to "address the question of *how* social reality is constructed" (Holstein & Gubrium 2008, p. 6). By using social construction as the frame for knowledge generation, it is possible "to demonstrate … how certain states of affairs that others have taken to be eternal and/or beyond the reach of social influence are actually products of historical and/or social interactional processes" (Weinberg 2008, p. 14). Here, the research inquiry seeks to identify images of the university's futures and the ideas that underpin those images that are, by their very nature, social constructions. Understanding these constructions can only been understood if the people who created them share them in explicit ways – in this research, this is through the literature they have produced (Section 3.5). Section 2.4.2 discusses how foresight and social construction intersect, and Chapter 3 defines how this intersection influences overall methodological approach and method choice.

2.3.2   What is Foresight?

2.3.2.1 Defining Foresight

Many types of foresight have been identified: narrative (Milojevic & Inayatullah 2015; Sools, Tromp & Mooren 2015); strategic (Slaughter 1997a; Kuosa 2012; Lustig 2015); worldviews

(Hayward 2005b) and training (Policy Horizons Canada 2016). Like FSF in general (Section 2.3.2.1) and scenario development (Chapter 7), terminology use to define the term 'foresight' is not consistent. Hayward's definition (2005a, p. 16) of foresight is used here:

> a cognitive construct, something that an individual assembles in their consciousness, and then acts as if this construct carries significance for the real world … [it is] a capability which operates to increase the biological continuation of a human organism by reducing risk, employing prudence, and taking care.

Foresight is the cognitive capacity that allows us to 'pre-experience the future' in the present (Gilbert & Wilson 2007; McKiernan 2017; Rhemann 2019). Neuroscience research from around 2007 is showing that this ability to think about the future is closely connected with the ability to recall past memories as Suddendorf (2010, p. 119, italics added) notes:

> There are grounds to argue that both *episodic memory* and *episodic foresight* draw on the same neurocognitive resources. However, episodic memory may also be an integral part of the foresight system. This is reflected in various differences, for instance, in development and in typical errors and biases. New evidence suggests that episodic memory has a range of future-oriented adaptive characteristics.

That is, the *same* brain system supports both remembering the past *and* imagining the future, with research showing that brain damage removes not only the capacity to remember the past but also the ability to imagine the future. Episodic memory has also been associated with a particular type of consciousness – autonoetic or self-knowing – a self-reflective capacity that emerges when we remember the past or imagine the future and that enables us to reflect on our experience in those mental spaces (Klein 2016; Natsoulas 2017), or as Tulving (1985, p. 5) describes:

> A normal healthy person who possesses autonoetic consciousness is capable of becoming aware of her own past as well as her own future; she is capable of mental time travel, roaming at will over what has happened as readily as over what might happen, independently of physical laws that govern the universe.

Since Ingvar (1985, p. 127) coined the term 'memory of the future' in his study of the "neuronal machineries which are responsible for the experience of a past, present, and a future," research on episodic memory, along with related areas such as creative thought (Beaty et al. 2018), openness to experience (McCrae & John 1992; Sun et al. 2019) and temporal focus (Zimbardo & Boyd 1999; Shipp, Edwards & Lambert 2009) have been major areas of neuroscience and psychological research.

Schacter et.al. (2007, p. 660) write of the 'prospective brain' in which the memory function supports "the construction of future events by extracting and recombining stored information into a simulation of a novel event" to generate simulations of the future, and as having a "crucial role in the planning, foresight and programming of complex action sequences – examples of 'memories for the future'" (p.657). Mullally and Macquire (2014) write of the 'mental time travel' enabled by shared neural structures that allow us to recall past memories and 'self-project' into the future. The capacity to imagine the future then, is as innate and subconscious as remembering the past. It is a primary human capacity, which, in FSF terms, is called foresight. As Seligman et. al. (2013, p. 119) suggests that: "A wide range of evidence suggests that prospection is a central organizing feature of perception, cognition, affect, memory, motivation, and action … navigation into the future is seen as a core organizing principle of … human behavior." The neurological basis, design and discussion found in this neurological research is well beyond the scope of this thesis to explore in any depth, but its findings are clear in terms of how the brain allows us to imagine the future and to generate new ideas about those 'simulations'.

Foresight also enables humans to grasp the concepts of *dispositionals* (Bell, 2003, p. 76), "facts with an anchor in the future; they are facts that can happen if the relevant triggers are activated (Poli 2015, p. 87). Poli (2011, p. 68) sees dispositionals as a form of latents, "features of reality embedded beneath its surface" that are no less real than visible features" and allow us to see the future as both active and dormant in the present. Latents hold the potential for change in direction in the present, and different actions *can* lead to new pathways to the future once they become visible. Adam and Groves (2007, p. 172) point out that while only the present 'exists' as real, the "past, present and future interleave – futures are not merely planned or imagined but set on their way" in the present. For them, latents are the "processes that set future presents in motion." They are what we draw on when we imagine the future by asking questions such as: what is it that exists today that we can only just glimpse that has the potential to shape my/our future?

While this capacity to think about the future is innate, it is not always active as Wells (1902, p. 326) describes when comparing two types of mind:

> The first ... the predominant type …is that which seems scarcely to think of the future at all, which regards it as a sort of black non-existence upon which the advancing present will presently write events. The second type … a more modern and much less abundant type of mind thinks constantly and by preference of things to come, and of present things mainly in relation to the results that must arise from them. The former type of mind … is retrospective in habit … the latter type of mind is constructive in habit, it interprets the things of the present … entirely in relation to things designed or foreseen… It sees the world as one great workshop, and the present is no more than material for the future, for the thing yet destined to be.

The latter type of mind described by Wells is one that generates a long-term perspective to inform the present, one that has a futures orientation, one that in more recent years has been termed our foresight capacity. But, as Hayward (2003, p. 37) notes: "Factors like social learning, enculturation and education … can act to enhance or deaden this native capacity … All future sense is not certainly foresight." Consequently, some form of *intervention* is needed to surface and develop a foresight capacity, such as using an applied foresight process, which is discussed further in Chapter 7.

2.3.2.2 Developing Foresight Capacities

People develop beliefs about how the future might emerge that are congruent both with their worldviews, their way of making sense of, and generating meaning about, their reality in the present – so the development of foresight capacities will always vary from individual to individual (Van Der Laan & Erwee 2012, p. 375). If we accept that this innate human capacity for foresight develops over time and builds into a form of 'foresight competence' (van der Lan and Erwee 2012), a question arises: how exactly how does that development occur? How can Tuomi's (2012, p. 741) ontological expansion that allows new constructions about the future to be generated in ways that move thinking about the future to "a new 'phenomenological domain' that cannot be reduced to earlier ontological realms" become a reality?

A detailed discussion of this exact question is beyond the scope of this research, but as a prospective capacity, foresight *is* a 'skill' that *can* be developed through the use of well-designed processes and appropriate methods that enable alternative futures to be constructed (Chapter 8). Foresight processes allow us to face the quandary of how to engage with something that our minds tell us is not real, to challenge the ontological logic that risks us becoming victims of what I have termed elsewhere as our "assumption walls …brick walls in our thinking that keep us trapped in the present" (Conway 2016). Without *active* foresight,

where we recognise the nature of our foresight capacities, our minds retreat to what we know, reject the unknown, "revert to some basic ontological assumptions about the future" (Karlsen, Øverland & Karlsen 2010, p. 62) and so generate presentist, linear-projected futures. Continuous social change ensures that the present is unlikely to be replicated exactly in any version of the future we can imagine now – connected and influential certainly, but not identical. Thinking about the future therefore requires the capacity to look for both the *known* as well as the *new and novel* in the present, seeking understanding of the *complexity* of social change instead of reducing it to match existing simpler patterns of understanding. It requires a form of thinking that challenges and even disrupts deeply held assumptions, recognises latent futures, and builds new ways of sensemaking that can inform wiser, more considered and futures-inclusive decision making and policy development in the present.

Poli (2017, p. 261), suggests that "the present can no longer be considered a kind of durationless interface between the past and the future, as an infinitely thin boundary between what has been and what will be." Our foresight capacities instead allow us to recognise that this thin boundary is permeable, and that our knowledge of the as not yet existent future can aid us in better understanding the present. Rhisiart, Miller and Brooks (2015, p. 127) see our foresight capacities as the key to generating "new knowledge about the present" that can take us beyond what is known already, and beyond the assumed linear projected futures that dominate strategy and policy making today. Miller (2018) terms this ability to anticipate the future in the present Futures Literacy, a term similar to 'futures fluency' that was used earlier by Schultz (1995). Whether the frame or lens for using the future is anticipation or futures studies, foresight competence or futures literacy, the critical point is that *engaging* with the future *in the present* requires our foresight capacities to be developed to the point where the *new and novel* is generated in imaginings of possible futures (Adam & Groves 2007; Miller 2018) – and that, as part of this process, people are able to tolerate or accept ideas and beliefs that challenge, often in quite fundamental ways, their taken-for-granted worldviews so that the new and novel is able to emerge.

The degree to which we are open to engaging with the future in the present, to grasp a fragile concept like the future and accept it as worthy of investigation, is an ontological issue. It is a question of what a person considers to be true, real, and possible, and whether our worldviews are closed or open to the future. The first step in understanding the nature of the worldviews that shape the ideas is to explore the more philosophical link between ontology and worldviews, for the former is not independent, but is rather a component of a worldview.

2.3.3 Worldviews

2.3.3.1 Defining Worldviews

Worldviews frame the way we make sense of the world. They represent our beliefs, values, and assumptions about what matters, what we define as 'real' and what is not, what we accept as 'right' and what we reject. Koltko-Rivera (2004, p. 4 italics added) provides the following definition:

> A worldview is a way of describing the universe and life within it, *both in terms of what is and what ought to be*. A given worldview is a set of beliefs that *includes limiting statements and assumptions regarding what exists and what does not* (either in actuality, or in principle), what objects or experiences are good or bad, and what objectives, behaviors, and relationships are desirable or undesirable …Worldviews *include assumptions that may be unproven, and even unprovable*, but these assumptions are superordinate, in that they provide the epistemic and ontological foundations for other beliefs within a belief system.

Each person, then, holds a worldview that shapes their perspective on, and how they make sense of, the present and, by extension what they believe will emerge in the future. Collective religious, scientific and political worldviews have existed throughout history, while the ecological worldview is a more recent construct (Du Plessis & Brandon 2015; Landrum & Ohsowski 2018), as are those defined in professional fields such as psychology (Slife, O'Grady & Kosits 2017). Vidal and Riegler (2007, p. 6) describe work being undertaken to "make a conscious effort towards the construction of global world views … since most of the macro-problems and micro-problems of our present time are directly or indirectly related" to the lack of such a view.

Vidal's work (2008, 2014) on worldviews is used here to frame understanding of the ideas as specific worldviews, and the identification of *indicators* (see Section 2.2.2.3) for analysis and interpretation of the literature in Chapters 3 and 4. Vidal (2008, pp. 3) suggests that while the term 'worldview' is "often used without any precise definition behind it" humans "need a specific worldview even if it is not made fully explicit [in order] to interact with our world" (p.7):

> Most people adopt and follow a worldview without thinking much about it. Their worldview remains implicit. They intuitively have a representation of the world … And this is enough to get by. But some curious, reflexive, critical, thinking, or philosophical minds wake up and start to question their worldview. They aspire to make it explicit. Articulating one's worldview explicitly is an extremely difficult task.

Here, the approach is to explicitly identify and question the worldviews underpinning the four contested ideas, and to demonstrate that only by challenging taken-for-granted assumptions in the literature about what is 'true' about the university can new and novel images of the university's possible futures emerge. The first step in that questioning is to identify how worldviews are constructed and to determine how to identify these constructions in the literature reviewed for this research.

2.3.3.2 The Construction of Worldviews

Vidal (2014, p. 4) sees worldview construction as "always connected to a culture in which 'meanings' are circulated … [and that] the materials used to construct a worldview comes from our inner experience and our practical dealings with things" as well as history and science (Vidal & Riegler 2007, p. 9). The construction process is grounded in six philosophical dimensions – descriptive, normative, practical, critical, dialectical and synthetic – that Vidal divides into first, second and third order knowledge – and that are, in turn, understood by answering seven enduring questions derived from the 'big questions' of philosophy. Table 2.1 summarises Vidal's components of worldview construction.

Table 2.1 Vidal's Worldview Construction (2014)

First Order Knowledge – about the world		
Descriptive Dimension - *reality*	What is?	Ontology (model of being)
	Where does it all come from?	Explanation (model of the past)
	Where are we going?	Futurology (model of the future)
Normative Dimension – *values*	What is good and what is evil?	Axiology (theory of values)
Practical Dimension – *action*	How should we act?	Praxeology (theory of actions)
Second Order Knowledge – about knowledge itself		
Critical Dimension – *knowledge*	What is true and what is false?	Epistemology (theory of knowledge)
Dialectical Dimension – *debate*	Where do we start to answer the previous questions?	The art of debate – stating/ reconstructing issues and positions about them – without taking a point of view.
Third Order Knowledge – synthesis of first and second order knowledge		
Synthetic Dimension - *synthesis*	Integrates the previous five dimensions	Worldview synthesis – "a comprehensive and coherent synthesis of [a] time" (p.7)

Vidal (2014, p. 6) defines first order questions as those that "directly question our world and how to interact with it". The second order questions "are about the origin of our answers to those first-order questions" and determine second order analysis. He notes that achieving synthesis at the third order level is a difficult, if not impossible, philosophical task, but that "Even if synthesis remains an ideal, it is important to note that each dimension of philosophizing can be pursued relatively independently. What is dangerous and ridiculous is for a philosopher to claim that one of the dimensions is the only real or true way of philosophizing" (Vidal 2014, p. 8).

The seven questions in Table 2.1 define a worldview that allows "us to construct a global image of the world, and in this way to understand as many elements of our experience as possible" (Vidal & Riegler 2007, p. 8). Vidal's work is significantly more complex and layered than Table 2.1 indicates since it ultimately focuses on cosmic evolution, but his worldview framework allows a comprehensive approach to be developed here to identify indicators that allow the components of the taken-for-granted beliefs and assumptions about the ideas, the university and its possible futures to be made visible in the literature. How Vidal's theory is used to develop 'indicators' of the idea that are applied to the literature is discussed and applied in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.4   The Epistemology of the Future

2.4.1   An Overview of Social Construction

The epistemological challenge of acquiring knowledge of the future (Principle 4, Section 2.2.2) is that no facts about the future exist in the sense that 'objective' data is understood. Indeed, Michael (1993, p. 359) asserted that "Futures studies … are epistemologically groundless." In the almost three decades that has elapsed since Michael made this claim, however, work *has* been undertaken to better define an epistemology of the future (Tapio & Hietanen 2002; Bell & Olick 2002; Inayatullah 2010a; Piirainen & Gonzalez 2015). It is our worldviews (and perhaps our foresight capacities) however, that influence whether we *believe* we can actually construct meaningful knowledge about the future – that is, whether we can use the future in the present – and that leads to the choice of a social constructionist epistemological frame for this research.

Crotty (1998, p. 42) describes social constructionism as "…the view that all … knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices". Ways of knowing and shared meaning, whether overt or tacit, "are actively constructed in and through forms of social action" (Holstein & Gubrium 2011, p. 341). Lincoln and Guba (2013, p. 46) see the "creation of constructions" as not resulting "in objective truth, but only in sets of symbols and meanings defined and applied by humans to enhance their ability to deal with the surround, to survive, cope and prosper."

Like most qualitative and interpretive approaches, however, social constructionism's temporal locus is the *present*, and its focus is on working with people to make sense of the present. Here, the daily life of universities as constructed by people in the present is of less interest than seeking to understand how *meaning* about the university's purpose and legitimacy is constructed by people in the form of an *idea*, and how those constructions may restrict the emergence of its futures. That is, understanding the meaning generated about the university in the present is useful here *only* because it provides the basis for exploring how *possible futures* for the university are thereby constructed.

How people have understood the university's purpose and legitimacy during the *past*, and how it is understood in the *present*, are based upon assumptions and beliefs that are generally unchallenged. Yet as Burr (2003, p. 2) observes, we should be "ever suspicious of our assumptions about how the world appears to be". That is, it can never be assumed that the views of any single person, any single discipline, or any single paradigmatic stance underpinning the ideas can be accepted at face value – without first having identified and tested the assumptions and beliefs, and the contexts within which they were constructed. Constructionist research then is about moving beyond the straitjacket of "conventional meaning …to approach the [research] object in a radical spirit of openness to its potential for new or richer meaning. It is an invitation to reinterpretation" (Crotty 1998, p. 51).

Noting the range of ways in which authors variably use 'constructionism' and 'constructivism' in the literature, Crotty's (1998, p. 58) explanation is accepted and the term 'constructionism' is used here: "it would appear useful then, to reserve the term *constructivism* for epistemological considerations focusing exclusively on 'the meaning-making activity of the individual mind' and to use *constructionism* where the focus includes 'the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning". The distinction is a fine one – assumptions and beliefs about possible futures for the university are initially

constructed within individual worldviews – a *constructivist* process. This research focuses on how those assumptions and beliefs are constructed in the literature to make the *inter*subjective 'social reality' of the university visible in the analysis – a *constructionist* process, defined collectively by people working within the social context of the university. Linders (cited in Holstein & Gubrium 2008, p. 468) frames this stance clearly:

> What all constructionist projects share is a commitment to documenting how some aspect of reality is constructed through the efforts of social actors; that is, to trace the process whereby some element of social life – meanings, institutions, identities, norms, problems, routines, and all other conceivable aspects of social reality – *comes into being, emerges, takes shape, becomes understandable, acquires visible and meaningful boundaries, and takes on constraining and/or facilitating characteristics* (italics added).

Social constructionism, then, is the appropriate epistemological position for this research because it allows the literature to be viewed as social constructions, full of embedded meanings and beliefs about the university that have been accepted as valid by more and more people over time. Identifying those meanings then allows a sensemaking process to occur, as Lincoln and Guba (2013, p. 45) define:

> Sense-making is an effort by human beings, utilizing the constructive character of the mind and limited only by the imagination, to deal with confusion [in the present] … Making sense of something means organizing it and rendering it into an apparently comprehensible, understandable, and explainable form (giving it form and substance) so that it is possible to cope with it, turning from random congeries of sense impressions into something that can be ordered and fitted into a larger conceptual structure, theory, discipline, or philosophy.

Gergan (2001, p. 5) indicates that this sensemaking is 'made real' when communicated in some way. The literature analysed and interpreted in Chapters 5 and 7 represents the tacit and explicit sensemaking of these authors about the idea, the university and the futures they assume for it, that has been "rendered into language and symbols" (Lincoln and Guba 2013, p. 46). This research then represents a *new* construction of the selected literature that generates "a coherent, articulated set of constructs" (Lincoln & Guba 2013, p. 47) about the ideas and their possible futures. This new construction is but one of many that are possible, however, all of which are generated within particular social contexts (Gergen 2001), and each of which creates a potential social world of the university– "the world created for and by humans interacting with other humans" (Lincoln and Guba 2013, p. 46) – and how its possible futures are understood. The next section explores the relationship between foresight and social construction.

2.4.2 Foresight as Social Construction

Foresight as a cognitive capacity may also be viewed as a form of social construction. Both approaches:

- claim that there is no singular truth (Slaughter 1993; Lincoln & Guba 2013);
- view reality as constructed, that word and symbols that are used to make sense of the social world are constructions that we use when taking action and making decisions (Searle 1995; Fuller & Loogma 2009; Elder-Vass 2012);
- accept that knowledge and meaning is constructed within individual minds and collectively through social interaction (Andrews 2013; Lincoln & Guba 2013; Fuller 2015);
- seek to problematise what is taken-for-granted in the present and challenge the dominant hegemony related to the issue being explored (Inayatullah 1993; MacKay & Burr 2006); and
- have people at the core of the approaches – because in both fields, people construct reality, whether that reality is the present (social constructionism) or the future (foresight).

While social construction was developed as a position to explore social issues in the present (Section 2.4.1), it is also an applicable frame for exploring the *future* as it is understood in the *present*. Slaughter (2002, p. 31) described the role it could play in thinking about the future as "an attempt to operationalise the deepest purposes of critical futures work in ways that consciously and deliberately lead toward more humanly viable futures than those currently in prospect." Since then, others (Chermack & van der Merwe 2003; Fuller 2015; Hines 2016) have identified the value of social construction as a way, essentially, to begin to develop our foresight capacities, and change our thinking to value both what *is* and what *might be*. Tuomi (2019, p. 8), in his exploration of the impact of 'chronotope' on ways to think about the future identifies what he terms 'constructivist foresight' where:

> The future is not something to be known; indeed, it cannot be known as it does not exist yet. In the constructivist approach, the future is not known or understood; instead it is something *to be created* (italics added).

A chronotope "structures the possibilities for meaningful action and different chronotypes thus generate different forms of agency and future". Here, while noting his use of construct*iv*ism, Tuomi's discussion of construct<u>iv</u>ist foresight as a process for collectively

"creating novel futures" where "action emerges with a shared interpretation of the meaning of this action" (p. 9) positions images of the future as a form of social construction. Fuller and Loogma (2009, p. 71) argue that:

> social constructionism is highly resonant with the way in which knowledge of the future is produced and used… foresight that produces symbols without inter-subjective meaning neither anticipates nor produces futures…foresight is both a social construction, and a mechanism for social construction."

That is, foresight capacities allow us to construct images of alternative futures in our minds that are made 'real' through the use of symbols – language use in the case of this research – which, in turn, generate intersubjective meaning about a topic. Fuller and Loogma (2009, p. 78) also see social constructionism as implicit in foresight:

> in the way that more overtly constructivist accounts (visions, hopes and fears, imagination etc.) have been assumed to somehow form collective meaning and action and implicit also in the confluence of epistemological and ontological relativism [but] because the constructionist perspective has been implicit, the well-grounded foundations of futures studies are open to less than rigorous interpretation.

For Fuller and Loogma (p. 78), "foresight is both a social construction and a mechanism for social construction." In this research, both the ideas and their images of the future university are social constructions. That is, both arise from the shared beliefs that gain acceptance or 'truth' over time. Foresight approaches, like social construction, seek to challenge these truths, to demonstrate their constructionist nature, and to problematise the assumptions lying below the surface understanding of both the ideas and the university. Making this connection between foresight and social construction explicit highlights the importance and value of integrating non-empirical, tacit and socially created knowledge about the future university into the discourse.

Any view of the future is first an interpretation of reality in an individual brain. It is only when collective interpretations of the future – collective worldviews – are defined and considered holistically that their influence on action and decision making in the present becomes apparent. That is, it is not until individual images of the future are surfaced can they be used in the present – *defining* individual images of the future is a precursor to *using* them collectively in the present. In this sense then, a foresight view of social construction is grounded in the work of researchers and practitioners who seek not to present a single truth about the future, but to instead facilitate processes where people can surface their individual

constructions of the futures to enable collectives images of multiple possible futures to be generated and used in the present.

2.5   Concluding Comments

This chapter sought to make clear the assumptions underpinning the research approach. The research was positioned within FSF, considered to be the only approach that integrates past, present *and* future in the way required to answer the research questions. Foresight as a cognitive capacity was explored, particularly its role as a central factor involved in constructing worldviews in general, and the ideas which are viewed as contested worldviews that shape understanding about the university purpose and legitimacy. This positioning leads to the social constructionist epistemology discussed in this chapter and the use of FSF as methodology and method which will now be discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: The Research Design

3.1 Overview

Chapter 2 discussed the ontological and epistemological challenges that arise when thinking about the future as individuals and in groups and identified that the ontology of the future – that is, what possible futures are considered 'real' – depends on the degree to which foresight capacities are surfaced, developed and used in applied FSF processes. This ability to understand the future as *real in the present* is grounded in a relativist ontology, one that can accept multiple possibilities, ambiguity and complexity simultaneously, and one that recognises *imagination* as a valid means of generating 'data'. The epistemology of the future is grounded in an acceptance that knowledge about the future in the present is likely to always be imperfect (Cornish 1994) and limited by available information about social change, by the degree of development of our foresight capacities, by our imaginations, and by our ability to construct knowledge that moves beyond 'what we know' to what we 'don't know we don't know' in order to identify the new and novel in the present. That is, to recognise that our very ability to imagine possible futures is itself a form of social construction.

FSF was identified in Chapter 2 as the only field that enables the integration of the past, present and future and the multi-disciplinary frame that is required to answer the research questions. Foresight was also identified as the cognitive capacity that allows exploration of possible futures – one that enables a shift from seeking '*the* future' to finding and exploring alternative futures available in the present. This ontological and epistemological positioning for the research necessarily leads to an applied foresight methodology and the use of foresight methods, which are discussed in the following sections.

3.1.1 Chapter Structure

This chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 3.2 discusses the rationale for the choice of foresight as the methodological frame for this research as well as the limitations of that choice;

- Section 3.3 explores the range of foresight frameworks now available for research and practice and identifies why the Generic Foresight Process Framework was chosen to provide the methodological frame for this research - a decision based primarily on familiarity with the approach but also because it provides the required scope for a *range* of foresight methods to be used;

- Section 3.4 details the foresight methods to be used; and

- Section 3.5 provides the process used for the identification and preliminary analysis of the literature used as data in this research;

- Section 3.6 provides a preliminary analysis of the literature reviewed in the research; and

- Section 3.7 concludes the chapter.

3.2   Foresight as Methodology

3.2.1   Clarifying the Foresight Frame

Methodology is the "overall approach to research linked to the paradigm or theoretical framework, while the *method* refers to systematic modes, procedures or tools used for collection and analysis of data" (Mackenzie & Knipe 2006, p. 5). It is the justification for using specific methods to answer research questions. The applied FSF methodology discussed in this section provides the approach required to answer the research questions not only because a number of suitable methods are used but also because it contributes to understanding the connection between the ideas, the university and society in new ways.

As indicated in Chapter 2, FSF is sometimes considered to be dominated by methods and as Ahlqvist and Rhisiart (2015, p. 92) note: "it could be argued that those engaged in futures studies and work are, on the whole, less reflective of the implications of methodological choices in constructing future-oriented knowledge" as a result. This might be expected in a field where ontological and epistemological approaches are contested (Chapter 2) suggesting that, as Karslen, Øverland and Karlsen (2010, p. 63) write: "we should not be surprised that there is strong disagreement about which methods are the most suitable for mapping the future." As with theory development in FSF (Section 2.2.1.2), however, developing a strong

foresight methodological framework has also attracted more attention in the first decades of the twenty-first century (Ramos 2002; Giaoutzi & Sapio 2013; Popper 2013).

Slaughter (1982, 1993, 2002) identified a significant methodological shift from the then dominant methods of forecasting and scenarios to social construction in the 1990s – a shift that formed the basis of his development of Critical Futures. He describes a key discovery for him as: "that the 'inner' world appears to precede and underpin the 'outer' world … the point is that the world 'out there' is framed, understood and conditioned through the world 'in here'" (Slaughter 2002, p. 29). This shift did not mean that forecasting and scenario development ceased to exist, but rather that a new way of understanding how the future can be used in the present became apparent to him. Slaughter's positioning of foresight as a form of social construction gave legitimacy to those who sought to use qualitative foresight methods, and this legitimisation of the world 'in here' is particularly relevant for this research – since it is in individuals minds that the ideas are first constructed (Chapters 5 and 7).

The connection of the 'world in here' and the 'world out there' is also at the core of Integral Futures (Slaughter 1999a, 2001; Voros 2008; Hayward, Voros & Morrow 2012; Gidley 2017) where the inner and outer worlds of the individual, culture, the organisation and society are explicitly considered in an holistic way. Barnett's (2017, p. 82) desire to integrate the 'university qua idea' and the 'university qua institution' similarly recognises that understanding the organisational form of the university also requires an understanding of its invisible "hinterland." These approaches accept that below the surface elements of everyday life are a "host of structures, processes, factors, realities" (Slaughter 2002, p. 29) that must be considered in any research or process or when considering 'wicked problems' that require an expansion of thinking in order to generate new solutions. A methodological framework that allows this integration of *inner* and *outer* domains is therefore essential for this research.

3.2.2   Limitations of Methodology

Using foresight as a methodology situates the research as qualitative, constructionist and interpretive. It defines the use of methods that require creativity, innovation and at times, instinct for analysis (Hayward 2005b; Van de Laan 2010; Nadin 2016). Here, the research engaged with the literature as the source of data about the ideas and the university, rather than gathering data from direct interaction with people. This creates a potential limitation that, as a piece of conceptual thinking that occurred in only one mind, researcher preferences and

biases on the topic may have unduly shaped the research. This limitation is essentially a validity issue, a long-contested issue in qualitative research for more than half a century (Atkinson, Coffey & Delamont 2003). Angen (2000, p. 390) argues that "Subjective prejudices, rather than being viewed as a distortion of reality … become the background from which all further understanding springs," and this is the stance taken here – that it is, in any practical sense, impossible to separate the researcher from the research (Blass 2012) and that, indeed, recognising and making this connection overt may generate *more* valid research outcomes compared to studies where an impossible-to-achieve objective stance is sought.

Cho and Trent (2006) discuss a specific form of validity: transformational validity is an approach that seeks to both accept the value laden nature of qualitative research that depends on the ability of the researcher to be self-reflexive, and to view research as valid "only if it achieves an eventual idea" (p. 320) that leads "towards social change …achieved by the research endeavor itself" (p. 321). This stance sees validity as "convergent with the way the researcher self-reflects, both explicitly and implicitly, upon the multiple dimensions in which the inquiry is conducted." (p. 324).

Attempts to be self-reflective and transparent in this research were enacted here by:

- making clear where my past experience has had an influence on decisions made in the research focus and design and interpretation of the literature;
- identifying my assumptions about the university in the present and its possible futures; and
- identifying if/when those assumptions have been challenged as the research progressed.

Footnotes are used in the thesis where an appropriate notation is needed to make one or more of these three points clear, and occasionally, first person tense is used in the text.

3.3   Foresight Frameworks

3.3.1   Overview

In keeping with its open nature, a range of methodological frameworks have been designed specifically for foresight research and practice, shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Indicative Foresight Frameworks

Framework	Process Steps
Horton (1999) *A successful foresight process*	Inputs Foresight Outputs and Action
Miles (2002) *The foresight cycle*	PreForesight Recruitment Generation Action Renewal
Voros (2003) *Generic foresight process framework*	Inputs Analysis Interpretation Prospection Outputs Strategy/Policy
Schultz (2006b) *Key activities of integrated foresight*	Identify and Monitor change Assess and Critique Impacts Imagine Alternative Outcomes Envision Preferred Futures Plan and Implement Change
Bishop & Hines (2006) *Thinking about the future: guidelines for* *strategic foresight*	Framing Scanning Forecasting Visioning Planning Action Applying the Framework
Keenan (2007) *Five mental acts (stages) for foresight*	Understanding Synthesising and models of the future Analysis and selection Transformation Action
Inayatullah (2013) *Six pillars: futures thinking for transforming*	Mapping Anticipating Timing Deepening Creating Transforming

The frameworks define similar foresight stages/phases that can be used to explore possible futures – the major difference being choice of terminology. The frameworks all provide a structure that allows expansion of perspectives to seek new possibilities as external changes evolve over time, to imagine futures that generate new strategic or policy options, and to decide on action to take today to prepare for and work towards a preferred future that is 'owned', as opposed to 'disowned' or 'used' (Inayatullah 2008). That is, the frameworks aim to help people take a 'prospective' not reactive stance to the future. Voros (2006, p. 43) suggests that it is a "systematic and conscious use of explicitly prospective methods" that

allows foresight capacities to emerge and generate images of the future. It is argued here that it is only when such a prospective stance is taken that the new and novel can emerge, and conventional thinking and assumptions challenged for veracity and usefulness – specifically because prospective thinking explores the latent futures in the present not yet recognised, and possible futures not yet imagined (Adam & Groves 2007; Poli 2011).

3.3.2   The Generic Foresight Process Framework

The frameworks identified in the previous section all include some form of 'prospection' in their methodologies and all can be used in FSF research and practice. The Generic Foresight Process Framework (GFPF), shown in Figure 3.1, provides the methodological framework for this research.
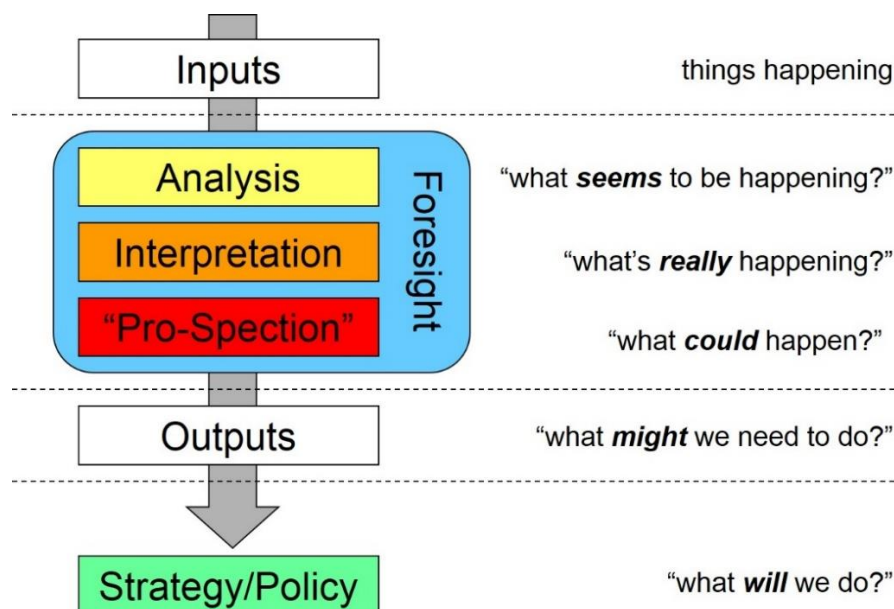
Figure 3.1 Generic Foresight Process Framework (Voros 2017a)

Developed by Joseph Voros (2003), the GFPF was designed initially as a strategy development process to integrate thinking about the future with conventional strategic planning and policy development and was later expanded to conceptualise the GFPF as a way to approach social analysis in general – which makes it an appropriate framework for use in this research. The GFPF was developed for a specific purpose (strategy development) in a single institution at a specific time (Swinburne University of Technology in the early 2000s) but continues to be a consistent reference point for practitioners (see for example, Saurin

2012; Darkow 2015; Hines 2016).[2] Each phase is summarised below.

- **Inputs** involve scanning the external environment to identify changes that are shaping the future of an organization in its marker, industry, social and global contexts.

- **Analysis** of the environment scanning outcomes identify major change shifts that an organization needs to explore to identify potential strategic implications.

- **Interpretation** helps people identify assumptions and underpinning beliefs about the future, looking for deeper system dynamics and worldviews shaping how the future of the organization is understood, and the use of one or more framework of understanding.

- **Prospection** is the step most often missed in conventional strategy work. It develops possible images or scenarios for the organisation's future in order to make decisions informed by the future as well as the past and the present. This is also the step where imagination is used as a method to generate images of the future.

The Inputs and Analysis phases are focused on understanding the external environment in the context of the organisation. The Interpretation phase aims to move below surface understanding to deeper layers of worldviews, mindsets and assumptions, and the Prospection phase taps into what people individually and collectively believe about the future and how those beliefs enable or constrain the acceptance of possible futures. Figure 3.1 might suggest that the GFPF is a linear process, but it is inherently iterative, and in actual practice, work moves up and down between levels to ensure depth and breadth of understanding can be generated (Voros 2007). Once strategy or policy is developed, its currency is monitored by continuous environmental scanning to identify external changes that could undermine it or that

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[2]A specific reason for choosing the GFPF for this research must be noted here. Voros developed the GFPF while working in the planning department at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia. I led the department at that time and while I lay absolutely no claim to having participated in the creation of the framework itself, I have used the GFPF in my work since its first iteration in 2001, at Swinburne (2001-2004) and Victoria Universities (2005-2007), and in my consulting work since 2007. Our work and processes designed at Swinburne aimed to integrate foresight approaches into the existing university planning framework, so the approach had to be practical, derived from published research and practice, and suit the Swinburne context, where our foresight work was being resisted overtly as a result of a Vice-Chancellorial decision to 'use foresight' (Conway 2016). In this early work, we had first-hand experience of the power of a foresight process and its different thinking mode to trigger a worldview shift that enabled the future to be accepted as real in the present. We came to understand that this thinking shift was as valuable as the tangible scenarios and strategic options that emerged from the foresight processes we conducted (Conway 2001; Conway & Voros 2002).

decreases its strategic 'fit' in the organisation's external environment. Voros (2005, p. 34) specifies that the methods used at each stage "remain open to an informed choice by the foresight practitioner, subject to the specific requirements of the foresight engagement", making the GFPF a flexible framework that can be adapted to suit a range of foresight work and research.

3.4 Foresight Methods

3.4.1 Overview

The GFPF is an applied foresight methodology that can allow a range of foresight methods to be applied at each GFPF level depending on the context and reason for the foresight process. Popper (2008) developed the Foresight Diamond (Figure 3.2) to demonstrate that these methods can be both qualitative and quantitative and vary in how knowledge about the future is developed.
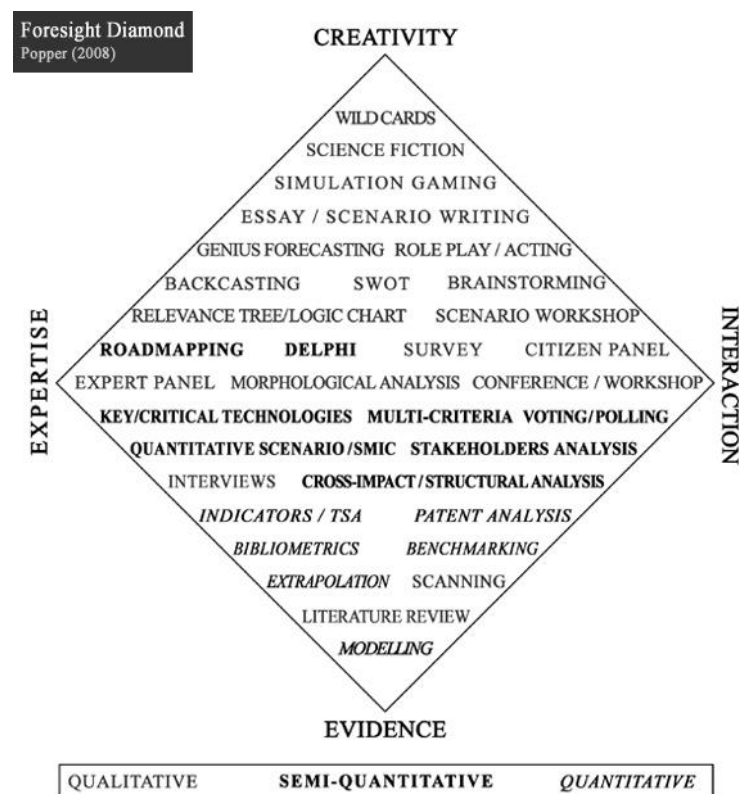
Figure 3.2 The Foresight Diamond (Popper 2008)

Creative methods use imagination to identify possible futures and can be used by individuals and groups; these methods are intuition and interpretative in nature. **Expertise** based methods

depend on knowledge held by specific individuals in specific areas, while **interaction**-based methods can be used by groups of experts and non-experts. **Evidence** based methods usually involve forecasting and similar approaches to generate data about the state of an issue/challenge today.

Together these methods form a type of 'foresight toolbox' that allows both researchers and practitioners to select methods that suit the context in which they are working – and their individual preferences (Poulsen 2005; Keenan 2007; Smith & Saritas 2011; Poli 2018). Like Blass (2003), Popper (2008, p. 82) recommends a bricolage type choice of methods across all four types, noting that choice "requires the acknowledgement of foresight as a process together with the recognition of the fundamental attributes of methods." In this research, the methods used (Table 3.2) are clustered around the Creative area.

3.4.2 Method Choice

It was originally planned to use the GFPF as a framework to inform choice of methods, but as the research continued, it became apparent that the planned pre-allocation of a specific method(s) to each GFPF phase, while perhaps logical, was actually constraining for this research.[3] Instead, the GFPF was used as an overarching guide to ensure that methods used covered all four phases – input, analysis, interpretation and prospection, a use that Joseph Voros (personal communication, 2020) assures me is also a perfectly valid use of the GFPF. That shift in approach led to the following choice of methods, each of which is discussed in more detail in the sections and chapters indicated in brackets below and detailed in Table 3.2:

Input: *Integral Scanning*– that provided the initial literature categories that needed to be identified and analysed (Section 3.5.2), and the associated theories that framed the analysis of the literature (Chapter 4);

Analysis: *Worldview Indicators* – based on the work of Vidal (2014) that provided indicators to use to identify the ideas and their possible futures in the literature (Chapters 4, 5 and 7);

Interpretation: several approaches have been used to interpret the ideas in a collective sense as an 'ideas ecosystem' – Raymond Williams' work on culture (1997); the Three Horizons

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[3] This was a learning point for me that changed my approach to the research – to understand that the GFPF does not require a specific method at each phase, which was the way I had always used it in my work. Instead, I needed to see the GFPF in a more integral way, focused on ensuring the intent of the process as a whole was achieved, without such a limited focus on the choice of a specific method in each phase.

(Sharpe 2015); and, drawing on the Horizons Mindsets of the Three Horizons, an integration of ideas into what has here been termed a Futures Mindsets matrix is developed (Chapter 6);

Prospection: the university's assumed futures defined in each idea are explored in Chapter 6, and in Chapter 7 where existing *scenarios for the university's futures* sourced from the University Futures literature set are analysed and interpreted using Scenario Archetypes (Bezold 2009; Dator 2009);

Strategy/Policy: a new *futures conversations framework* is developed in Chapter 8 that draws on several futures approaches: Integral Futures; scenario development; narrative foresight that focuses on "discovering and creating new stories that … facilitate desired … futures (Milojevic & Inayatullah 2015, p. 152); and other conversational frameworks such as World Café (Chen & Hoffman 2017) and Futures Search (Janoff & Weisbord 2006). The fundamental principle underpinning this futures conversation framework is *inclusivity* – that is, *all* opinions are valued and used to *collectively* construct an *integrated* and *shared* view of the *range* of potential futures available to the university *in the present*.

Table 3.2 shows how the GFPF has been applied to the task of answering the research questions and the foresight methods that were used. Each method is defined and the chapters in which they are applied is indicated. The two tops rows (headed *Research Question*) provide the research sub-questions. The next two rows (headed *Approach for Answering the Question*) details the activities required to answer the research questions. The next two rows (headed *Research Methods Used*) identifies the specific method used to answer each question. Finally, the last two rows (headed *Time Orientation*) identify the time orientation that underpins the application of each method.

Table 3.2 Research Design and Methods

Research Question(s)

What ideas of the university exist in the present?	What futures for the university are assumed by these ideas?	What other possible futures exist for the university?	How are these futures shaped by the ideas as understood in the present?	How can possible futures & underpinning ideas be integrated to provide new insights to expand & deepen the discourse for the future & reframe policy & decision making in the present?

Approach for Answering the Questions

Identify the literature to be used in the research	Define the ideas, their foundational assumptions, and their evolution since 1800	Define how the ideas generate idea-specific futures, as well as constraining the emergence of other possible futures	Identify and analyse existing scenarios for the university's possible futures and categorise them by idea and scenario archetype.	Analyse patterns in existing scenarios to identify both underpinning ideas and Scenario Archetype, integrate archetypes to identify new potential futures for the university.	Develop a foresight framework to incorporate consideration of the future into decision and policy development in the present

Research Methods Used

Input: Using an *Integral Scanning* approach to identify literature categories to frame the literature review *Chapter 3*	**Analysis**: Finding the ideas in the literature and defining their assumptions using *Worldview Indicators* *Chapter 5*	**Interpretation**: Three perspectives: Williams (1977) on culture; *The Three Horizons*; and ideas analysis to integrate futures across the ideas *Chapter 6*	**Prospection 1:** Categorise existing scenarios for the university's futures by idea and *Scenario Archetype* to identify archetypal futures for each idea. *Chapter 7*	**Prospection 2**: Expand the archetypal futures analysis to integrate individual futures in each idea into new cross-idea archetypes to define new possible futures for the university. *Chapter 7*	**Strategy/Policy/Action**: Defining a new *futures conversations* framework to integrate all ideas and all possible futures for the university into the extant discourse *Chapter 8*

Time Orientation

Past and Present	Past and Present	Present	Future	Future	Present

3.5   Literature as Data

3.5.1 Overview

Accepted ways to identify tacit, intuitive understandings of the university today and in the future could include methods such as participation observation, interviews, surveys, futures workshops, experiential futures and design projects – any process that enables people to articulate how they define their idea, and provide indicators of their underpinning assumptions and beliefs (Poulsen 2005). As this research is conceptual in nature, data was sourced from the literature which was treated as an artefact or empirical asset available for inquiry. The literature as a whole is viewed as a 'document set' where the individual texts "should not merely be regarded as containers for words, images, information, instructions, and so forth, [but also explored in terms of] how they can influence episodes of social interaction, and schemes of social organization, and how they might enter into the analysis of such interactions and organization" (Prior 2008, p. 822). That is, the literature, as it has developed over time forms a discourse: language that "generates, and as a result constitutes, the social world … It means that changes in discourse are a means by which the social world is changed" (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002, p. 9).

Exploring this discourse generated by the literature is the focus of this section which provides a detailed explanation about how the literature was sourced using an integral scanning approach that provided the initial keywords, the search process to identify relevant literature, how that literature was classified, and how the outcomes of the searches were analysed. The degree of detail provided in the following sections is in keeping with approaches for integrative reviews (Section 3.5.4) where organising assumptions, clarity of process, criteria for selection and defining how the literature was organised for analysis is essential (Walsh & Downe 2005; Torraco 2016).

3.5.2   Context for Literature Selection

Selecting relevant literature for this research was iterative and cumulative from the late 1990s beginning with enrolment in a previous incomplete PhD program at the University of Melbourne on the relationship between academics and administrators. This earlier PhD research provided a sub-set of relevant literature that was incorporated into the literature reviewed for the PhD research at Swinburne University of Technology which began in 2012.

In the period from 2012 to 2015, the research topic evolved from *The future of university management: integrating academic and administrator beliefs about how work gets done in universities*' in 2013 to *The future of university management* in 2014 before the current topic was first explored during 2015 and finalised in 2016. These shifts in focus ultimately provided clarity around the literature that needed to be selected and analysed and represent a maturing of my thinking about the research topic and the area in which most impact could be achieved (see Appendix 1 for a discussion of the nature of these shifts). Finally, my candidature was converted from the PhD by Practice Based Research to a PhD program in 2018 to recognise the transition of my research from a practice-based approach to a more theoretical orientation. Literature sourced for earlier research topics that was deemed relevant to the research question was also incorporated into the literature selection process discussed in the following sections.

3.5.3 Integral Scanning

Integral scanning (Slaughter 1999a; Voros 2001) is a form of environmental scanning (hereafter termed scanning), one of the first steps in foresight work that aims to map an organisation's external environment to identify relevant changes shaping its present and futures. The aim is to build a deeper and more expansive understanding of the organisation's 'change ecosystem' – the external environment into which the organisation is seeking a 'strategic fit'. Information about change found in that 'ecosystem' can be overwhelming in terms of number of sources and the amount of information available, so scanning is usually focused around an anchor or *focal* question about a particular strategic question or issue for which no answer is readily available (Schwartz 1996; Scearce & Fulton 2004; Konno, Nonaka & Ogilvy 2014). That focal question 'anchors' the scanning and provides a context within which choices about relevance of information can be made. The primary research question provides that focal question here.

Choo (1999, p. 1) writes: "The external environment may be viewed as a source of information, as a pool of resources, or as an ecological milieu" that "differentially selects certain types of organizations for survival on the basis of the fit between organizational forms and environmental characteristics" (p. 5). He sees the primary task of scanning as identifying relevant sources of external change and exploring how that change may evolve into the future, in order to inform present assessments of the degree of likely impact on organisations

and/or society. Choo notably calls scanning an 'art' (as opposed to a science) and identifies four different types:

- **undirected viewing** – seeks novelty, developing peripheral vision, *sensing* what is 'out there';
- **conditioned viewing** – tracks known trends and emerging issues, *sensemaking* to identify 'topics of interest';
- **informal search** – identifies the detail of a specific issue to *learn* more about it; and
- **formal search** – *retrieves* specific information to allow a decision to be made.

For Choo, good scanning uses all four types iteratively as scanning continues and as new information emerges. Scanning has become an accepted process in organisational strategy processes (Day and Schoemaker, 2005; Schultz, 2006; Rohrbeck and Bade, 2012), but as Slaughter (1999a, p. 4) argued "environmental scanning has been restricted to parts of the external world and has largely overlooked the inner one … For environmental scanning to more adequately comprehend a richer and more complex reality, a broader scanning frame is needed." Voros (2001, p. 534) also discussed the need for scanners to:

> become aware not only how they perceive the world, but also of what types of filtering are likely in their own minds … to become aware more explicitly of some of our different 'ways of knowing'. That is, the inner world of individuals must be considered as well as the outer world, since it is our perspectives on the world – our worldviews – that condition what we see and what we filter out when scanning.

The work of Slaughter (1999) and Voros (2001) on integral scanning is an approach derived from Integral Futures which, in turn, is based on Ken Wilber's *Integral Theory* (Wilber 2001, 2006, 2018). The Four Quadrant Model (4QM) is an important aspect of integral theory, providing a way to integrate human consciousness *and* empirical action and events, and which is structured around interior/exterior and individual/collective domains (Figure 3.1). Each of the four quadrants deals with a specific aspect of existence, a particular perspective on the world, and a different way of knowing about issues being considered. Each quadrant is defined briefly as follows.

- **Upper Left (UL)**: a subjective quadrant that generates the intentional, interior world of the individual. Hopes, joys, dreams, cognitive capacities, consciousness, and intentions reside here and can only be accessed by asking an individual to share. This is the realm of individual ideas and images of the future. 'I' language is used.
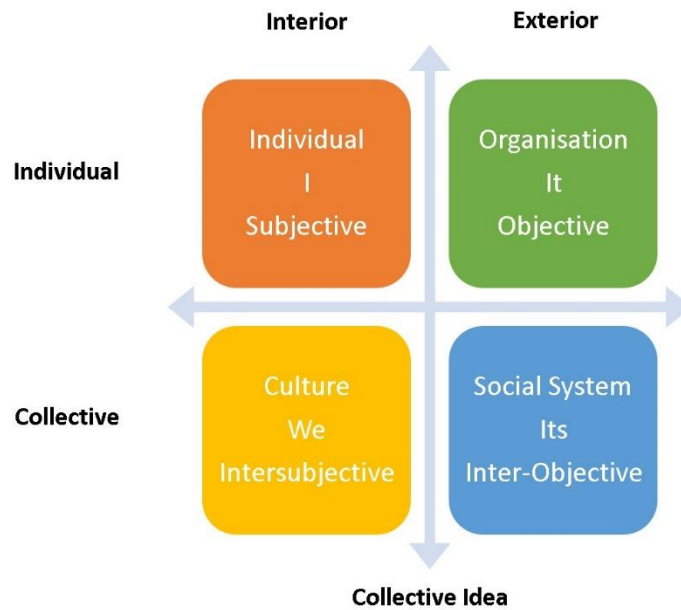
Figure 3.3 Integral Four Quadrants

- **Lower Left (LL)**: the collective cultural world, where individual beliefs and experiences are shared, resulting in collective meanings and worldviews that underpin culture and meaning – the way we do things around here, the rules of the game. 'We' language is used here.

- **Upper Right (UR)**: the empirically observable and measurable aspects of the organisation (its 'behaviour') including processes, infrastructure, and behaviours of individuals as they interact in organisations. 'It' language is used in this quadrant.

- **Lower Right (LR)**: the external social system of the organisation shaped by technological, economic, environmental, social, and political change within which people and the organisation exist. This is the environment in which an organisation's legitimacy is determined by its degree of 'functional fit' in this space. 'Its' language is used here.

These four quadrants are fundamentally interrelated and interdependent – if a quadrant is considered in isolation from the others, so-called 'quadrant absolutism' (Esborjn-Hargens, Reams & Gunnlaugson 2020) results and superficial, partial and potentially flawed understandings of an issue are subsequently generated. One of the primary tenets of the 4QM, therefore, is that every quadrant *must* be considered to the same degree if a holistic understanding of any issue is to be constructed. In a scanning sense, the 4QM is an appropriate

framework to draw on here, precisely because its integrative base allowed the broad categories to structure the initial literature search to be identified, as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Quadrants and Indicative Literature Categories

Quadrant	Literature Focus
UL: Individual Consciousness *Individual values, beliefs, and assumptions about the university*	Individual beliefs about the idea of the university and the type of university derived from *an* idea.
LL: Culture *Cultural worldviews, language, traditions, shared meaning*	Shifts in our understanding of the 'idea of the university' and understanding of academic work and academic culture derived from each idea. Includes how purpose and legitimacy is understood, and articulated views of possible university futures.
LR: Social Systems/ Structures *Change forces at macro, meso and micro levels*	External context in which the university operates and that generates the changes shaping the university as an organisation today and into the future. Also, the source of social legitimacy and articulated definitions of purpose.
UR: Organisation Systems and Processes *Organisational Behaviour/ Interactions*	The evolution of structures, roles, relationships, work, and leadership that provides an analysis of how the university has adapted to change in the past and the present and how those functions are being depicted in existing work on the future university.

3.5.4   Approach to the Literature

The use of the *literature as data* is premised on the assumption that individual texts are tangible artefacts that represent valid sources produced by people who are documenting their views about the university today and into the future. The review of these texts was approached not in the conventional sense of an exercise to generate a separate thesis chapter – one that quarantined a literature set to demonstrate mastery of the field, to justify research design or choice of methods, and/or to identify a gap in the literature (Hart 2018). Rather, the approach drew on Montuori's (2005, p. 375) positioning of literature reviews as a creative exercise in which:

> the knower is an active participant constructing an interpretation of the community and its discourse … Creative inquiry also challenges the … epistemological assumption that it is … possible to present a list of relevant authors and ideas without … leaving the reviewer's imprint on that project. It views the literature review as a *construction* and a *creation* that emerges out of the dialogue between the reviewer and the field (italics added).

Montuori's position is consistent with the positioning of the role of the researcher in the research (Section 2.1). It provided a more appropriate frame as the research was seeking to

interrogate the literature to identify the 'raw data' needed to construct a *new* understanding of the ideas, the university, and its possible futures. The literature was viewed "not merely as containers of content but as active agents in … schemes of social organization" (Prior 2008, p. 824):

> Clearly, documents carry content – words, images, plans, ideas, patterns, and so forth – but the ways in which such material is actually called upon, manipulated, and functions cannot be determined (though it may be constrained) by an analysis of content. Indeed, once a text or document is sent out into the world there is simply no predicting how it is going to circulate and how it is going to be activated in specific social and cultural contexts. For this reason alone, a study of what the author(s) of a given document (text) 'meant' or intended can only ever add up to limited examination of what a document 'is' (Prior 2008, p. 824).

This research is precisely such a 'limited examination' and found a degree of consistency of language and ideas, patterns and images in the literature that is discussed in more detail in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. As Kamler and Thompson point out though: "Writing is a particular representation of reality. Data is produced in writing, not found" (Kamler & Thomson 2006, p. 3) and writing must be interpreted to find meaning. This is important for two reasons:

- **first**, because it is immediately obvious once immersed in this literature that the idea of the university and its embedded future, however defined in and across contexts, was and is *very real* to authors because they have embedded their individual meanings, their interpretations in their words very clearly; and
- **second**, that literature, when considered as a data corpus and as formative of a discourse, can be understood as producing *shared* meaning that not only reflects individual ideas of the university and possible futures, but that also collectively acts as an 'active agent' in the discourse that shapes action and decision making *about* the university, that defines what possible futures are considered plausible, and that potentially ignores emergent, possibly disruptive futures.

An integrative review approach framed the review process described in this section. Integrative reviews are systematic, meta-reviews and meta-syntheses, all of which aim to deepen understanding about a topic by reviewing a range of literature (Jackson 1980; Whittemore & Knafl 2005; Torraco 2016; Jones-Devitt, Austen & Parkin 2017). An integrative review "reviews, critiques, and synthesizes representative literature on a topic in an integrative way such that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic are generated" (Torraco 2005, p. 356). These types of literature reviews seek *different* types of synthesis:

identifying future research, a taxonomy, conceptual frameworks, a meta-analysis or metatheory (Torraco 2016, p. 421). The review process described in this section seeks the third form of synthesis – a conceptual framework that provides *new* ways of thinking that add to our understanding of the university in the present and its possible futures. At the same time, this integrative literature review sought to both identify and do justice to the meaning making of others, while understanding that my limited role as the 'interpreter of their interpretations' (Heracleous 2004) was to seek to find the 'new' across the literature corpus. The sections that follow define the approach used to identify the four literature sets that are referenced throughout this thesis.

3.5.5   Literature Selection and Search Process

3.5.5.1 Overview

The literature about the university in the past, present and futures is substantial, so the selection process started from an initial broad sweep and moved to a more curated approach that ultimately identified four literature sets (Section 3.5.5.3). As described in the following sections, the process for literature selection, analysis and interpretation was cumulative and iterative. By 2016, when the focus shifted to the research question that is discussed in this thesis, the starting point for the review was the integrative stance identified in Section 1.1.2 in Chapter 1, and the integrative review approach described in Section 3.5.3.

Sources identified in this review were both paper and digital, and included both mainstream – for example, government reviews, books and academic journals – and more 'peripheral' sources in terms of conventional research credibility/validity standards (Schultz 2006b) such as blogs, magazines, newspapers and social media (by tracking links in posts that were assessed for relevance). Sources were sought that would provide as many perspectives as possible about the *core issues* for the research – the ideas, the university, its social context and its possible futures – with relevance determined primarily by a subjective interpretation of texts against the following criteria, adapted from Shaping Tomorrow (Jackson 2013):

- Does the source provide information that helps to answer the research questions?
- Is a coherent argument about the ideas and/or the university as organisation and/or its possible futures presented in the source that adds to the literature set?
- Is anything new identified in the source?

- Are current assumptions about the idea, the university and/or its possible futures challenged?
- Are alternatives for the university in the present and/or futures offered?

When an individual text was judged on face value to be relevant to the research questions, these credibility criteria were applied. Texts that met at least the first two criteria were recorded in the Mendeley reference system and categorised with tags – initially the search keywords (Table 3.4) and then, over time, indicators – phrases, terms, images, metaphors, beliefs, assumptions and assertions about the ideas, the university and its possible futures (Table 4.2) – which were progressively refined as searching continued. A complete list of final tags and their focus is provided in Appendix 2. Figure 3.4 shows the three stages and steps in the review process that are discussed in the next sections.
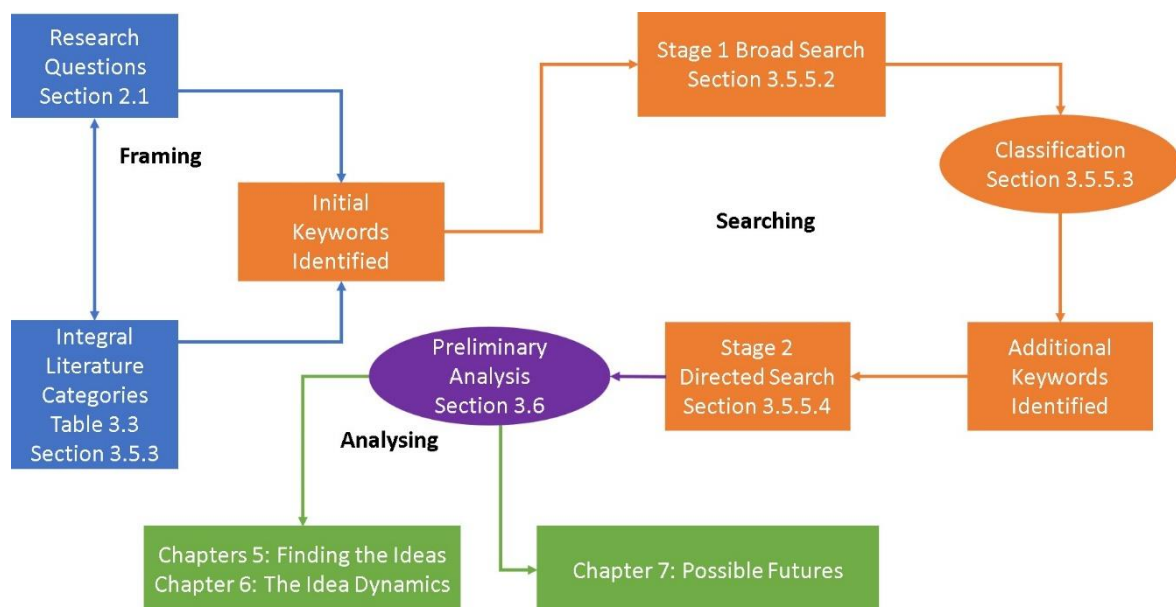
Figure 3.4 Literature Selection Process

The search began with a broad sweep of the literature focused on finding texts considered relevant to the research questions. While there was an existing understanding about the type of literature available to be searched as a result of previous research work, the review was not limited to those sources and explored whatever surfaced during searching that had the potential to provide the range of perspectives sought. Keywords to structure this initial searching were derived from the Research Questions (Section 2.1) and the literature categories (Table 3.3) and are detailed in Table 3.4. When the final thesis topic was decided in 2016 (Section 3.5.1), the first keyword used to search on that topic was 'idea of the university'.

Table 3.4 Initial Keywords for the Literature Search

Literature Focus (from Table 3.3)	Initial Indicative Keywords
Individual beliefs about the idea of the university and the type of university derived from *an* idea.	▪ idea of the university, Newman idea, von Humboldt, ontology of the university, contested ideas
Shifts in our understanding of the 'idea of the university' and understanding of academic work and academic culture derived from each idea. Includes how purpose and legitimacy is understood, and articulated views of the university's future.	▪ origins of the idea, variations of the idea ▪ university purpose, culture, governance, academic work, values, collegiality, autonomy, academic freedom, governance ▪ university futures, scenarios for the future university, images of the future university
External context in which the university operates and that generates the changes shaping the university as an organisation in the past, today and into the future. Also, the source of social legitimacy and articulated definitions of purpose.	▪ history of the university, periods of university development, medieval university, modern university ▪ social change, technology, online learning, artificial intelligence, geopolitics, environmental change, new economic shifts, rise of managerialism, neoliberalism, funding, measurement, culture, performance
The evolution of structures, roles, relationships, work, and leadership that provides an analysis of how the university has adapted to change in the past and the present and how those functions are being depicted in existing work on the future university.	▪ structure, management, leadership, work, relationships, stakeholders, research, teaching, systems, processes

3.5.5.2 Stage 1: Broad Sweep of Literature

This stage aimed to source as many relevant texts as possible – with 'relevant' interpreted broadly at this point – and to include conventional academic publications, particularly because the sources for what is called the Dismissive Idea were primarily non-scholarly in nature. Items selected had to be available in English and date of publication was not restricted, although most relevant literature was published in the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries. To determine relevance to the research questions in individual texts, abstracts, introductions, and conclusions were scanned. If deemed relevant (Section 3.5.5.1), the text was read in full and citations, footnotes, and authors whose work kept appearing in related sources were used to identify additional sources and keywords, and more lateral

searching was undertaken. For example, when a relevant journal article was located, the other articles in that issue were also considered, which often led to other issues of the journal being explored to see if further relevant articles could be identified.

This approach to literature searching is defined by Bates (1989) as 'berrypicking' – a view of online searching that is non-linear and evolutionary, and that sought the most relevant information that adds to understanding of the field being explored, rather than an approach fixed before searching begins that can result in relevant sources being missed. Berrypicking takes a type of 'wandering through the literature' approach, adjusting and adding keywords as needed to identify items of relevance. The exact percentage of the literature that was deemed to be *not* relevant cannot be determined with precision as no record was kept but as indicated above, this relevance judgement was made primarily on the basis of the defined credibility criteria. An estimate is that approximately twenty-five percent of literature identified in the search process was not considered relevant and therefore not recorded or tagged.

Online searches using the Swinburne University and University of Melbourne library databases and Google Scholar identified sources that included journal papers, books, blogs, online publications, reports, monographs, newspaper articles, government reports, doctoral theses, and opinion articles. Searching was multidisciplinary in nature and identified useful literature in fields such as philosophy, organisational theory, critical theory, neo-institutional theory, history, sociology and psychology, as well as opinion pieces, usually published in blogs and publishing platforms on the internet.

Once a significant literature corpus had been collated, the searching switched to what Choo (1999) calls a sensemaking mode (conditioned viewing) around several topics of interest, seeking to deepen understanding of each topic. **First**, literature that was specifically focused on '*the idea of the university*' or '*the idea of a university*' (usually identified by titles) was collated. This search aimed to determine when these terms began to be used and how they are understood in the literature across time. **Second**, a search on the *university's history* was undertaken to identify perspectives on how this organisational type is one of the longest surviving institutions in the world, and the concept termed at this point as 'social relevance' took shape for the first time. Closely related to purpose, relevance was understood to mean whether the university's 'services' were considered relevant and 'fit-for-purpose' by society, including who determined that relevance. This searching identified a range of *types* of university that had emerged in different countries at different times, the range of

interpretations and uses to which the idea has been applied as well as the more philosophical literature around what the idea actually *is*, and how the idea had been used in the literature. It also identified definitional characteristics of the four ideas – first, the Traditional and Managerial Ideas were identified and named early in the search process, and later when the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas were identified.

The concept of the university as a *social institution* was identified in this historical search (for example, Prisching 1993; Neal 2017) and was then explored to assess relevance to the research questions. While a topic indirectly connected to these questions, it was decided to not pursue this thread, mainly because it opened up the broad fields of institutionalism (Powell & DiMaggio 1991; Scott 2014), neo-institutionalism (Greenwood & Hinings 2016) and social institutions (Giddens 1984; Stehr 1998; Zafirovski 2004; Boyer & Petersen 2012). This literature provided insights into how institutions are established and maintained (Zucker 1977; Kingston & Caballero 2008), the institutional field (Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca 2009; Scott 2010), and the evolution of institutions over time (Farrell 2012; Lewis & Steinmo 2012), but this research is not framed by the theory of institutions. What was useful, however, was the identification of the concept of 'legitimacy' which allowed the earlier term of social relevance to be reframed. A **third** search was then undertaken on legitimacy and the role that factor plays in ensuring the longevity of institutions and organisations, and the need for purpose and legitimacy to be aligned to ensure survival (Suchman 1995; Hudson & Wong-MingJi 2001; Johnson, Dowd & Ridgeway 2006; Suddaby, Bitektine & Haack 2017; Stensaker et al. 2019).

The notion of the university as a social institution raised the issue of the university as a specific organisational type, which led to a **fourth** search on organisations, organisational culture and identity (Ashkanasy, Wilderom & Peterson 2000; Kreiner 2011) which provided theoretical insights into how cultural concepts such as the idea are constructed and maintained. The role of stakeholders in determining possible futures for the university also became apparent during this search. While this role was understood in general terms, a **fifth** search was undertaken to identify literature on stakeholders' perceptions of the idea of the university and of its possible futures. This literature set is more limited than others, but there is literature that explores why universities need to build relationships with stakeholders, usually defined as business and industry (Lipman-Bluman 1998; Nerem 2012) and around the general topic of 'engagement' with the societies in which it exists (Hoffman et al. 2015; Strong-Leek & Berry 2016; Ithnin et al. 2018), as well as a significant literature on the

university's 'third mission' (Zomer & Benneworth 2011; Benneworth, de Boer & Jongbloed 2015; Koryakina, Sarrico & Teixeira 2015; Pinheiro, Langa & Pausits 2015), and at least one paper on how foresight can contribute to improving the university's community engagement (Piirainen, Andersen & Andersen 2016). Only one paper (McLennan 2008) that included both 'idea of the university' and 'stakeholders' was found but its focus was on reframing engagement, rather than the idea of the university. As noted in Chapter 1 (Section 1.5.2), this search revealed that there is a quite limited literature about the idea as a concept *outside* the university, and that most literature about the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas has been generated within the university, while the literature about the Dismissive Idea exists mainly outside the university.

Sixth, a search on the university specifically as an organisation from medieval times through to the 21st century was undertaken using mainly secondary sources because there was little accessible literature before the nineteenth century. The aim of this search was to assess consensus around major shifts in the structure and form of universities. There was some consensus about particular historical social shifts that marked the emergence of a new 'type of the university' (Winchell 1873; Scott 2006; Perkin 2007; Rüegg 2011, 2017) which are summarised here:

- medieval universities to early sixteenth century – originally *studia generale* before *universitas* and later university become the accepted term;
- nationalization and the decline of the university from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, and the spread of the European university across the world from the mid-sixteenth century;
- revival of the university following the French Revolution and its increasing role in the Industrial Revolution;
- modern universities – dating from the establishment of the University of Berlin in 1811;
- post-World War II and the transition from elite to mass education; and
- late twentieth century onwards and the emergence of the neoliberal universities.

At this point, a decision was made to focus the research on the period from the nineteenth century and the 'modern university'(Rothblatt 1997; Anderson 2010; Axtell 2016), established by von Humboldt in 1811 with the University of Berlin, which is generally regarded to be the birthplace of the university as an organisation as it is understood today.

During this search, several common defining characteristics about the university as organisation were identified – leadership, structure, work, governance, relationships and culture – as well as evidence of a clear, strong and contested debate about the continuing validity of the idea as a relevant concept in the present (Chapters 5 and 6).

A **seventh** search was undertaken to identify work that had created images of the future university. Two sub-sets of this literature were identified: **one** that was more speculative and personal in nature and based mainly in non-scholarly sources like blogs and newspapers, but sometimes in more scholarly literature (Marginson 2004; Finn, Ratcliffe & Sirr 2007; Blass & Woods 2012; Shin & Teichler 2014; Scharmer 2019); and **two**, a range of work by governments, organisations and universities that developed scenarios for organisational, regional, national and global futures for the university (OECD 2004; Ernst & Young 2012). The latter took a rather formulaic approach, usually using either the Global Business Network 2x2 matrix approach (Scearce & Fulton 2004), discussed in Chapter 7, or a quantitative modelling approach (Kwakkel 2019). This search also identified literature about the evolution of scenario theory and method (Ogilvy 2011; Marchais-Roubelat & Roubelat 2015; Bradfield, Derbyshire & Wright 2016) which is also discussed in Chapter 7.

An **eighth** search was undertaken to ensure the existing literature set relating to futures studies and foresight, derived from previous masters' and doctoral studies and from professional work, was current. This search expanded existing literature by adding more recent publications on the theory of futures studies.

Across these eight sensemaking searches, a number of major external changes shaping the evolution of the university's social context were identified, such as *globalisation* (Zgaga, Teichler & Brennan 2013; Baldwin 2018; Stensaker et al. 2019), *market forces* (Considine 1996; Marginson 1997; Huisman, Boer & Bótas 2012; Robertson 2012) , *technology* (Anon 2014; Carey 2016; Matthews 2018), *demographics* (Staley & Malenfant 2010; Reed 2017), *funding of higher education* (Deem 2002; Gelder 2012; Smith 2012), and the prevailing *political ideology* of the times (Barnett 2003; Abendroth & Porfilio 2015; Shepherd 2018). These changes were generally consistent across the literature and reflect almost exactly the changes identified in Chapter 7 as those shaping scenarios for the university's possible futures.

3.5.5.3 Literature Classification

At this point in the integrative review, it was clear that interest in the university is discipline inclusive – that is, since disciplines are based in universities, how those universities are structured and managed, and the ideas and their possible futures have always been of intrinsic interest to people irrespective of discipline. However, each disciplinary perspective has a particular paradigm that shapes an interpretation of the university as an idea and its organisational form that is both challenging and valuable for this research: challenging in the sense of needing to maintain focus on relevance as determined by the research questions and credibility criteria; and valuable because the extent of literature on the university made it possible to 'sense' and understand the depth of meaning, commitment and value attributed to the university as an organisation in the present, in the way described by Gendlin (1997, p. 1): "*Meaning* is not only *about things* [such as the literature texts] … it also involves *felt* experiencing … Meanings are formed and had through an interaction between experiencing and symbols or things." This interest in the university across disciplines is perhaps the basic reason for the 'vastness' of the literature available to search when researching the university.

A categorisation system was therefore developed with my supervisor, Joseph Voros (personal conversation 2016) to manage the literature identified to this point that was ultimately structured around five categories, created from five analytical questions as shown in Figure 3.5. The five questions define the categories into which the literature could be grouped:

- **Context**: What is the university's context?
- **Purpose**: Why does the university exist?
- **Functions**: What does the university do?
- **Structure and Operations**: How does the university do what it does?
- **Possible Futures**: What is the university's future?

The orange arrow on the left-hand side of Figure 3.5 demonstrates that these five categories are interdependent – that is, understanding the university of the past, present and future requires attention to all five areas.
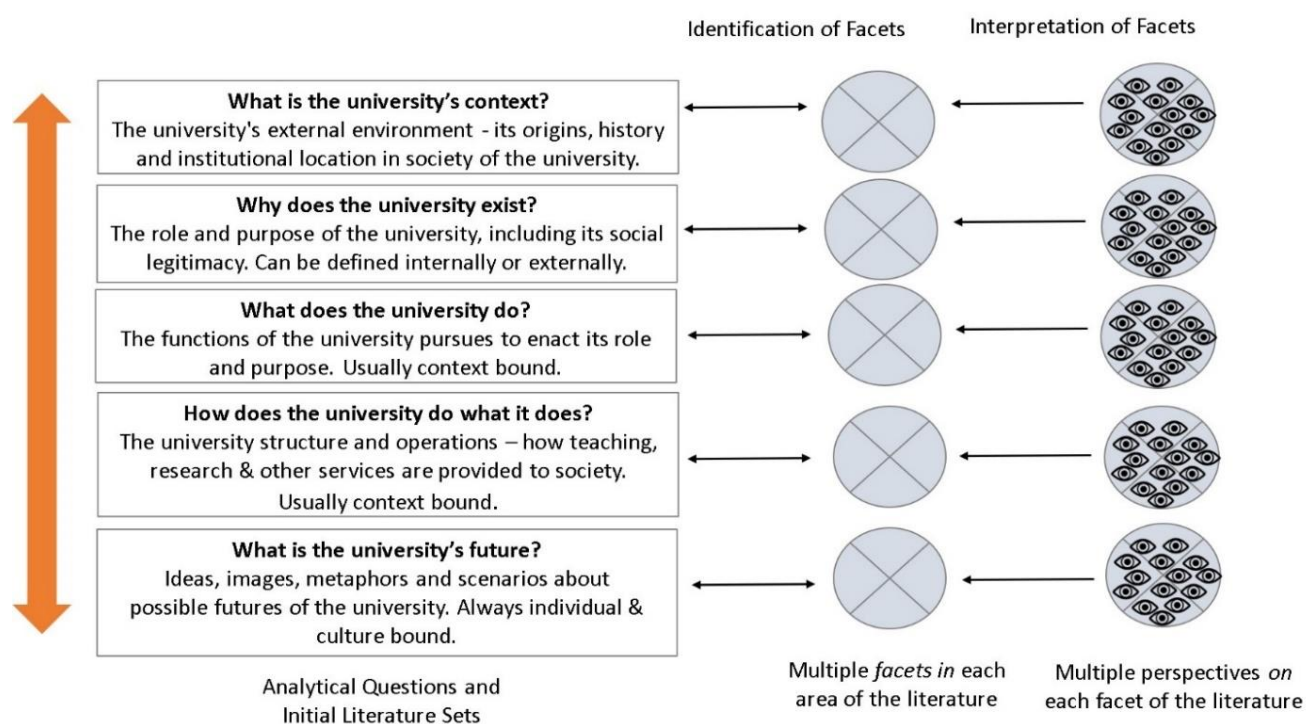
Figure 3.5 Initial Literature Classification

The relationships across the questions are defined as follows.

- **Question 1** identifies facets of the university's external environment in the past and present - the external changes that shape the answers to Questions 2, 3 and 4 and provides the context for the development of answers to Question 5.

- **Question 2** defines the university's purpose, usually related to discussion of the ideas;

- **Question 3** defines the university's broad functions – usually teaching and research – that need to align with social needs to be considered legitimate;

- **Question 4** defines how those functions are carried out and so focuses on the university as an organisation – how it is structured, led, and managed, and how it operates; and

- **Question 5** explores possible futures for the university which depend, to a large extent, on how an author has answered has shaped the answers to Questions 2-4 – those answers are, in turn, shaped by the idea of the university held by that author.

Since any single item of literature usually addressed multiple categories, the primary focus of each item was assessed to allocate it to a category. Here, a second reason for the 'vastness' of

the literature emerged, shown graphically in Figure 3.5 in the column labelled 'Identification of Facets' and detailed in Table 3.4.

Table 3.5 Indicative Facets in the Literature

Question	Facet
Context 1. What is the university's context?	Higher Education – history, industry, institutions, national systems
	Role of state/government
	History of the university
	Changes in the external environment
Purpose 2. Why does the university exist?	Ideas and underpinning assumptions about the university's purpose and reason for being
	Social/public role
	Economic role
	Knowledge role
	University defined role
	Public Perception – positive and negative
Functions 3. What does the university do?	Teaching - types, technology, design etc
	Research
	Management - structures and practices
	Public/community engagement – how, who and when?
	Industry Relationships – teaching and research, community activity
	Critique of the university and society – underpinned by a belief in academic freedom
Structure and Operations 4. How does the university do what it does?	Professional groups – academics and managers
	Structures
	Systems and processes
	Leadership and management – roles and relationships
	Relationships – both internal and external
Possible Futures 5. What is the university's future?	Unarticulated futures – a future that is never defined
	Images of the future – specific images, usually of a 'type' of university
	Scenarios – details narratives about the university's futures, ranging from predicted futures, desired futures, and possible futures.

Each category of literature does not contain a single topic; instead, each consists of work on different aspects or facets of that category. For example, the category defined by the question "What does the university do?" has one facet that includes topics such as teaching and research. For teaching, those topics include exploration of particular facets of teaching such as how the teaching function of the university should be designed (Adkins 2017; Pieprz & Sheth 2017), how technology is changing the fundamental nature of teaching (Oblinger 2012) and the shift from 'sage on stage' to 'guide on the side' and 'student-centred' learning (Shin & Teichler 2014; Alexander et al. 2019).

Each facet is also interpreted differently depending on disciplinary and personal perspectives, beliefs, and assumptions of the authors, and whether they work inside or outside the

university. These perspectives are depicted graphically by the many eyes in Figure 3.5 in the column labelled 'Interpretation of Facets' and detailed in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Indicative Perspectives *on* the Facets

Type	Sub-Type	Description
Origin of Perspective	Government	Government reviews, reports, policies, usually reflect/justify government intent/policy.
	Commercial Company	Usually large and small consulting companies, staking out a 'piece of the higher education territory', usually comes accompanied by a new model or approach
	Public	Broad range of discussion about the university, usually found in newspapers, magazines, and blog posts.
	Academic	Literature produced by academics within universities
	Leader/Manager	Literature produced by leaders and managers within universities
	Social	Comments from outside the university on its purpose and operations, both positive and negative
Focus of Perspective	Analytical	A formal research exercise usually on a specific aspect of the university and its functions
	Polemical	Impassioned pleas for the 'right-ness' of the author's view of the university and its challenges
	Case Study/Country Analysis	Case study of particular functions of the university or particular operational area, or national systems
	Critique	Critique of the university from a specific disciplinary perspective
	Application	Application of a particular approach to the university to define potential improvements to operations.
Time Orientation	Past	Focus on the university's past, usually written as histories or drawn on to justify a position taken in the present.
	Present	Focused on some facet of the university at the time of writing.
	Future	Deliberate focus on the future of the university and development/discussion of distinct alternative futures
	Mixed	Draw on past of the university, or assuming futures for the university, to justify particular arguments about right/wrong aspects of universities in the present
Ideas	Range of ideas defined within the literature	Idea of the university – and multiple variations and interpretations that are assumed to define the university's purpose and/or legitimacy

An example of a perspective might be a combination of an academic (source) writing about a particular function (teaching) as it is implemented in the present and based on assumptions of the Traditional Idea. In this example, some authors believe technology should be kept out of classrooms (Neiterman & Zaza 2019) while others are evangelists for its use (Economist Intelligence Unit 2008; Buckley 2015; Siemens 2015; Downes 2016). In the same way, some people believe the Traditional Idea remains valid while others see it as an unhelpful concept in the present.

3.5.5.4 Stage 2: Directed Searching

The multiplicity of different facets and perspectives across the five categories identified in the previous section generates the enormous complexity and diversity facing anyone seeking a holistic understanding about what the university is and what it does in the present, and what it might be and do in the future. This complexity was reduced a little by combining Questions 3 and 4 – Functions and Structure and Operations – into one literature set focused on the university as an organisation. Searching was now focused on Question 1 (context) Question 2 (idea/purpose), and Question 5 (possible futures), as these were considered most directly relevant to the research questions.

The search took on a more directed form at this point, what Choo (1999) terms "a deliberate or planned effort to obtain specific information or information about a specific issue." This decision resulted in a new search focused on the now four literature sets which, after new SCOPUS and JSTOR searches, generated the identification of additional references on the nineteenth century university and the Traditional Idea. After attending the University Futures Conference in 2016 (Danish School of Education 2016) – where presentations surfaced thinking that ultimately generated the concept of the Reframed Idea as a response to the rejection of the neoliberal university – more directed searching around neoliberalism both as a concept and in the context of the neoliberal university, and critique of that university form was undertaken. Four primary literature sets relevant to the research questions were then finalised:

- **Context**: literature about major changes in the university's external environment that are shaping how the university as organisation is structured and operates and that has an impact of the university's social legitimacy – explored in Chapters 5 and 6;
- **Ideas:** this literature had two subsets:
  - **Philosophical**: literature about the tacit idea largely from a philosophical perspective, often but not always disconnected from the visible university, and including literature on worldviews – explored in Chapter 4;
  - **Ideas Resistance**: literature about the ideas as justification for resistance to the 21st century university, and the desired development of alternative structures for the university – explored in Chapters 4 and 5;

- **University as Organisation**: literature about the visible university in the past and present, focusing on its structure, leadership, management, work, and internal and external relationships; this set included the literature about organisational culture and identity and social legitimacy – explored in Chapter 3 and used in Chapter 5 to develop the scenario archetypes; and

- **University Futures**: literature about possible futures for the university, usually relating the university as an organisation, in the form of scenarios generated by individuals and organisations, but also found as images and metaphors in individual texts – Chapter 6 discusses possible futures for the university.

These four literature sets are viewed as necessarily interdependent and were identified as 'data sets' based on their focus on particular facets of the university as idea and the university as organisation. The four sets became the focus of analysis and interpretation in the remainder of the thesis. At this stage, active searching for new literature stopped, with additional items only added during writing when new connections were 'spotted' in daily scanning, or when new ideas emerged as the thesis was written. The focus moved to working across the four literature sets to identify major concepts about the 'university qua idea' and 'university qua institution' (Barnett 2017) which were analysed and synthesised, as discussed in the next section.

3.6   Preliminary Analysis

Figure 3.6 shows a mapping of the literature, drawing together the four literature sets and showing the concepts and interrelationships between and across those sets. The colour code used in Figure 3.6 is:

- dark blue: the ideas;
- light blue: possible futures for the university;
- yellow: the social system/context of the university; and
- orange: the university as an organisation.

This 'concept map' depicts the nature of the integrated research space discussed in Chapter 1 – it is complex. It shows the visible and observable sides of the university divided by the red dotted line, with three intersection points (the red lines), and is a graphical interpretation of Barnett's (2017) 'university qua idea' and 'university qua institution'.
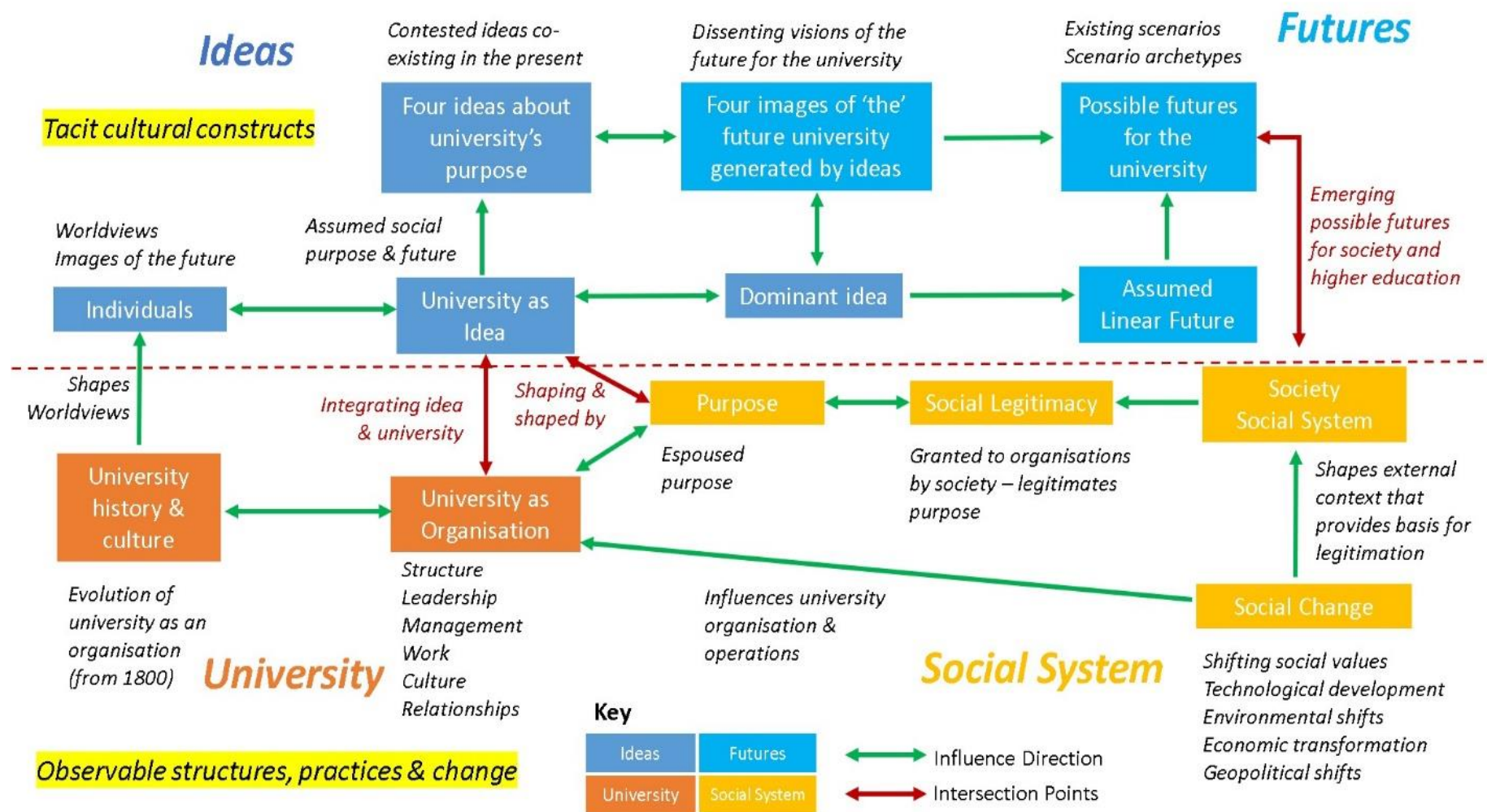
Figure 3.6 Literature Review Map: Two Sides of the University

Above the line are the ideas and their embedded images of possible futures– they are the tacit cultural constructs first created in individual worldviews, and collectively constructed as shared worldviews. Both individual and collective worldviews are influenced by the university's history and culture. If the dominant idea is projected into the future without challenge, the linear 'business as usual' future is assumed, even though other futures are possible, generated both from other ideas and from outside the university by global social change forces. This connection between possible futures and social change represents the second intersection point. *Below the line* shows that this same social change also shapes the university's organisational form – its structure, leadership, management, work, and relationships. Below the line is also the university's history and culture which plays a shaping role in the formation of individual worldviews. The two sides of the university intersect for the third time when purpose and legitimacy is being defined.

The ideas and the university's history and organisational form both shape and are shaped by the university's social system. Purpose is usually articulated in strategic plans that reflect both the university's history, culture and traditions and the requirements of government that must be met to ensure the university's legitimacy is maintained. The nature of those requirements change over time as social changes occur, so it can be expected that the university's purpose will continue to change into the future. Figure 3.6 provides an integrative frame for the research and makes it clear that possible futures for the university are shaped by both its social context and the ideas. The influences and interconnections in Figure 3.6 are explored next in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

3.7   Concluding Comments

This chapter defined both the research design and clarified assumptions underpinning method choice and the literature used as data used here. It discussed the rationale for choosing a Foresight methodology and then identified the Generic Foresight Process Framework as the methodological frame. Specific methods used in the research were defined in Section 3.4.3. A detailed description of the literature review and search process was provided that identified the four literature sets used in this thesis. This literature provides the data that is used, analysed, and interpreted *throughout* the thesis. The chapter finished with a preliminary analysis of the literature that demonstrated the clear and inextricable connections across the ideas, the university and society that are analysed and interpreted in following chapters.

Chapter 4: Framing the Research

4.1   Overview

This research aims to expand the extant discourse about the university's futures which is grounded in a three-way relationship between and across the idea, the university and society in the present. The potential scope of university futures emerges from this relationship, which requires first understanding each of these three domains separately, before making their *interdependent* nature explicit. This is a stance that is less about *critiquing* the detail of this relationship, and more about viewing it holistically through a multi-perspective lens to enable a deeper *interpretation* of how this relationship has emerged and shifted over time and might continue to emerge into the future. Connecting the domains in this way provides the conceptual framework required to understand the three-way relationship in different temporal contexts – that is, this relationship is present at all points of the university's past and present and can be framed in a consistent way over time. This chapter explores three domains – the idea, the university and society – through the lens of four theories: (i) worldview construction; (ii) organisational theory; (ii) social change theory; and (iv) legitimacy theory.

4.1.1   Chapter Structure

Section 4.2 introduces the three domains and their four foundational theoretical perspectives.

Section 4.3 specifies how the four theoretical perspectives are integrated to provide an organising frame for defining the research context.

 Section 4.4 discusses the conceptual nature of the 'university as idea' using Vidal's (2014) worldview construction theory as the organising framework.

Section 4.5 draws on organisational theory to identify the defining facets of the 'university as organisation' and confirm university culture as the locus of the idea.

Section 4.6 explores approaches to understanding the university's social context using the theory of social change to identify major social changes currently shaping the context for the university's possible futures.

Section 4.7 introduces legitimacy theory to frame analysis of the relationship between the university and society. This is a critical relationship in this research, one that helps to define how and why the power to define the university's purpose and legitimacy base has progressively shifted from *within* to *outside* the university.

Section 4.8 concludes the chapter.

4.2   The Three Domains

Connecting the domains provides a conceptual framework that enables understanding of the three-way relationship in a consistent way in different temporal contexts – past, present, and future. That is, the idea-university-society relationship is best understood in an integrated frame, one that enables understanding of their inherent interdependencies to emerge. These three domains – the idea, the university and society – were identified in the literature (Chapter 3, Section 3.5) and are illustrated in Figure 4.1.
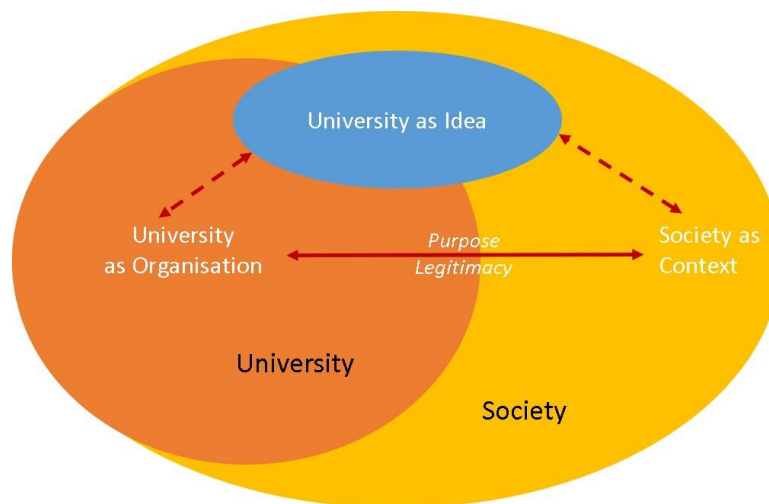
Figure 4.1 The Idea-University-Society Relationship

The three domains and the framing theories used in this research are defined as follows:

- the university as an **idea**, an individual and collective *worldview(s)* that embed(s) understanding of what a university is and what it should do, and that can be located

both inside and outside the university – understood by drawing on Vidal's (2014) worldview construction framework;

- the university's **organisational form** where its *purpose* is defined and enacted – understood by drawing on organisational and institutional theory (Reed & Hughes 1992; Hatch 1997; Fuhs 2012; Scott 2015) to identify the university's empirical organisational facets; and

- the **society** in which the university exists that is shaped by continuing *social change* (Bell & Mau 1973) and which provides the source of the university's *legitimacy* (Ashby 1976; Rees 1976; Miranda et al. 2018; Maassen & Stensaker 2019).

Three connection points (indicated by red lines in Figure 4.1) between the domains are also identified:

- the connection point between worldviews and the university indicates that ideas can form *within* the university where they are made 'real';

- the connection point between worldviews and society indicates that ideas of the university can also form and/or be influenced from *outside* its organisational boundaries; and

- the connection point *between* the university and society indicates the relationship that defines the basis of the university's social legitimacy.

These three domains and their theories hold explanatory power for the research both as individual constructs and as a collective conceptual framework, but it is not the point of this chapter to discuss the evolution or use of the individual theories in the present. Rather, they are a lens to enable understanding of the relationship rather than take a particular paradigmatic stance on a single aspect of the university. As Voros (2008, p. 198) notes, FSF work must:

> be able to move of specific, particularising paradigmatic assumptions and paradigm-based perspectives into what we might call a 'meta-paradigmatic meta-perspective – a perspective which recognises and values the contribution of all paradigm-based perspectives but which is nonetheless free of and outside of their particularlising hold.

The specific theoretical perspectives used to understand the idea-university-society relationship are shown in more detail in Figure 4.2.
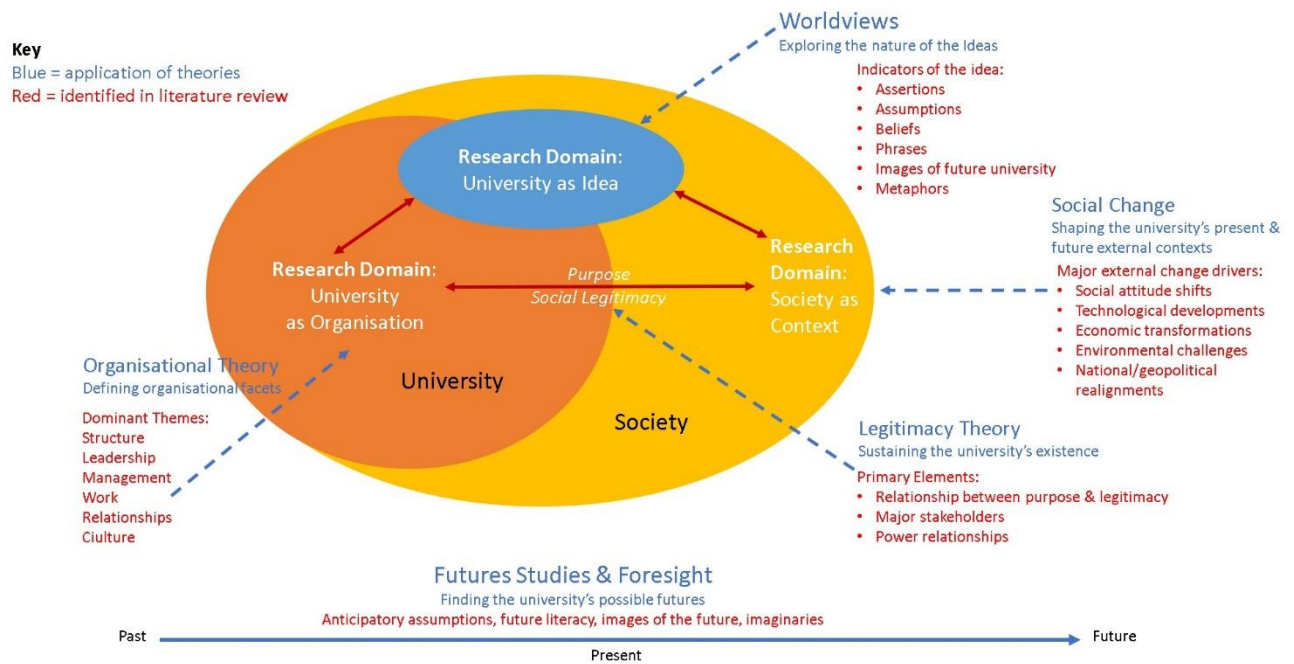
Figure 4.2 Theoretical Perspectives used in the Research

Table 4.1 defines how each theory is applied in the research and the areas that will be explored in Sections 4.4 to 4.7.

Table 4.1 Research Domain Focus

Research Domain	Theory	Rationale
Worldviews 1: Individual (Section 4.4)	Worldview Construction	The idea is generated in the minds of individuals, so understanding how worldviews are constructed is the starting point for understanding the concept of the idea. An idea is usually tacit at this point, articulated only when an individual chooses to make it visible in some way.
Worldviews 2: Collective (Section 4.4)	Worldview Construction	The idea becomes 'real' in the context of organisational culture, where beliefs, assumptions and norms underpinning the idea become taken-for-granted over time. Here, the university's culture is considered to the be the locus of the idea.
The University as an Organisation (Section 4.5)	Organisational Change	The idea manifests as a particular type of observable university, with that manifestation changing over time, yet always recognisable by its structure and operations. Here, these facets of the university as an organisation are identified.
Society as Context 1 (Section 4.6)	Social Change	Universities always exist in a constantly changing social context. These external changes may be incremental or more disruptive, all of which requires some adaptive response by the university, which may also be incremental or in the case of disruptive change, it may involve a reframing of purpose.
Society as Context 2 (Section 4.7)	Legitimacy	The university as an organisation exists in society and receives its legitimacy from that society. The basis for legitimacy can change over time as the university's purpose changes to respond to social change.

These four theories, that are usually applied within specific paradigmatic boundaries and ways of knowing, collectively provide the more wide-ranging perspective and explanatory power required here to do justice to the inherently multidisciplinary nature of FSF *and* to the complexity of the relationship across the idea, the university and society. But, as positioned in Figure 4.2, the domains and their theories are not yet integrated *enough*.

4.3 Integrating the Domains

Figure 4.3 uses the four quadrant model (4QM) from Integral Futures (Slaughter 2001, 2016) that was discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.5.2) to illustrate how the domains and their theories have been integrated, demonstrating that each theory shapes a different dimension of the university's 'reality'. Worldview construction theory informs the two left-hand quadrants which constitute the invisible side of the university, the lower right quadrant is the realm of social change shaping the university, and the upper right quadrant is framed by organisational theory. Placing legitimacy at the core of the quadrants (the central purple circle) defines it as *the* connective element across the four dimensions. All four quadrants *must* be considered in the discourse as equally important drivers of the university's ability to maintain its legitimacy and ensure survival in the face of constant change – and to ultimately ensure it has a future.

Figure 4.3 Integrated Theories

Integral Futures is used as a frame because it "incorporates singular and multiple realities, is practical, takes multiple stances, combines different methodologies and methods, and can take a formal or informal approach depending on the circumstances" (Martin 2008, p. 113) – and as such, facilitates the integration required here. Each of these dimensions, or 'quadrants' in integral terms, holds a *validity* basis (Wilber 2001):

- in the Upper Left (UL) quadrant, a worldview must make sense and be *truthful* to the person who holds it – this is the essential and immutable assumption held by the individual about what a university *is* are formed, *and* are considered to be authentic – the idea itself is reified; it *is* 'true';

- in the Lower Left (LL) quadrant, where the ideas are made real via the collective construction of cultural norms and values and where collective meaning and mutual understanding is generated, the validity claim is *justness* or *fairness* to people in the organisation – this is the where the immutable assumption about *how* the university operates is constructed, the rules of the game, assessed by their impact (fairness and justness) on people in the university – this is the intersubjective space;

- in the Upper Right (UR) quadrant, where rules, regulations, processes and practices are generated by people to ensure organisational survival, the validity claim is *truth and objectiveness* – this is the immutable assumption held in the ideas about the right and proper form and operations of the university, how it should be structured, led and managed, and professional roles– that is, what can be objectively observed.

- in the Lower Right (LR) quadrant, the validity claim is *functional fit*, the university's 'fit-for-purpose' positioning in its social context, as defined by its legitimacy – this is the assumption about the university's purpose in society which, for at least three of the four ideas, is always assumed to be legitimate.

Maintaining the university's legitimacy over time requires attention to both left- and right-hand sides of Figure 4.4, to the 'university qua idea' and the 'university qua institution' and to the validity bases in all quadrants. Legitimacy here is considered as something that is socially constructed, "an outcome of ongoing process of social interactions and negotiations between an (ever changing) variety of actors" (Suddaby, Bitektine & Haack 2017, p. 23), both inside and outside the university. Ultimately, the ways in which people understand the purpose of the university as embedded in their idea and how it shapes certain pathways to the future as

appropriate while rejecting others, rests upon a belief in the university's continuing, enduring legitimacy in society into the future. The next sections define how each theory has been applied to define the context for the research.

4.4   Worldview Construction Theory

The 'theory' of the idea of the university is philosophical in nature since the idea is a cognitive construct used to make sense of a specific phenomenon. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. xi) note: "Ideas don't come out of thin air" but rather are "part of our conceptual systems" and are "fundamentally metaphorical in nature." Berendt (2009, p. 65-66) suggests that "the schema derived from … underlying conceptual metaphors are the genesis for the social construction of reality. They are performed in society and connected to cultural mores, social roles and personal scripts." The cognitive system that constructs and shapes the ideas explored here holds "expectations about the kinds of objects and agents to be found in the world" (Boyer & Petersen 2012, p. 13), and what can be accepted about the university as 'real'.

Understanding the idea as a cognitive construct that produces beliefs, images and metaphors of the university in the present and its futures requires a specific theoretical approach to be able to identify the ideas in the literature and define similarities and differences across them. The theory of worldview construction (Vidal 2014, pp 3-8) – discussed in Chapter 2 – identifies seven philosophical questions that, when answered, allow the essential defining elements that construct both individual and collective worldviews to be identified:

1. What is? (Ontology - model of being);
2. Where does it all come from? (Explanation - model of the past);
3. Where are we going? (Foresight - model of the future);
4. What is good and what is evil? (Axiology – theory of values);
5. How should we act? (Praxeology - theory of actions);
6. What is true and what is false? (Epistemology - theory of knowledge); and
7. Where do we start to answer the previous questions? (The art of debate).

Vidal's theory holds great value for this research because it provides a frame within which the literature can be interrogated – allowing these elements to be recognised in the myriad of writing styles which ultimately led to the identification of the four ideas. Each of Vidal's worldview questions can be applied to the research as detailed below.

- **Ontology**: The ideas can be viewed in an ontological sense as what is considered to be the *reality* of the university in the present as expressed in the literature as a whole, which is answered by Vidal's first question: *what is?*

- **Past**: The university's present context is also shaped by its history and so connects to Vidal's second question – *where does it all come from*? (Chapters 5).

- **Future**: the research seeks to explore the university's possible futures and so connects to the third question – *where are we going?* (Chapter 7).

- **Values and Actions**: The assumptions that underpin beliefs about exactly what a university is in the present and future are shaped by *values,* and the *actions* that flow from those values, which are Vidal's fourth and fifth questions (Chapter 8).

- **Epistemology**: this question – *what is true and what is false*? – is at the core of the contest across the ideas. Answering this question in the research reported here identifies deeply contested positions about the university's purpose and continuing legitimacy – yet individually, each position is believed to be *true* (implicitly not explicitly) by those who hold them, while other responses are believed to be *false* (Chapter 6).

- **Debate:** Vidal's seventh question – *where do we start to answer the previous questions?* – leads to using the literature as data in this research (Chapter 3).

The first six questions can be used in both an individual and collective context, but as indicated above, the tacit idea only becomes visible when an individual shares it in some way, and can only be observed in a cultural sense where 'culture' is not considered to be something to be managed or measured, but rather understood as a factor of organisational life that is "viewed as relatively stable, enduring, and interconnected [and] is rooted in fundamental values and beliefs" (Chatman & O'Reilly 2016, p. 6). As discussed in Section 2.4.2, ideas are first defined in a construct*ivist* process in individual minds that do not become 'real' until a collective worldview emerges over time and, through a process of *social construction*, are recorded in artefacts such as the literature reviewed here.

Since worldviews are also psychological in nature, and the authors of individual texts are not available to clarify their personal beliefs and underpinning assumptions in their artefacts, a number of questions about engaging with the literature emerge:

- exactly *how* can a worldview – a deeply embedded cognitive construct that we usually do not think about at all – be made explicit?
- how can the characteristics of the idea and their embedded images of the future university be made explicit?
- what language is used in the literature that suggests or perhaps even *indicates* an author is writing about their idea of the university and/or which defines images of the future university?

To answer these questions, a set of 'indicators' were developed from Vidal's first six worldview questions (Table 4.2). These indicators were used to identify when an *idea* was being articulated and made visible beyond incidental mentions in the literature. The categories were both broad enough to capture differing perspectives on how the ideas were understood *and* specific enough to maintain separation across those perspectives. That is, they enabled the boundaries of each idea to be identified in terms of both core assumptions and what is considered appropriate, proper and 'right' for the university to do to achieve its purpose and maintain its legitimacy in society (discussed in Section 4.6).

For example, as discussed in Section 3.5, the literature review first identified only the Traditional and Managerial Ideas.[4] As the literature review continued, use of these indicators enabled **first**, the Reframed Idea to be identified – primarily by the use of less 'aggressive' language compared to the literature of the Traditional Idea and a clear focus on seeking an alternative space for the university – and **second**, the Dismissive Idea was identified when it was clear that answers to Question 1 (what is?), Question 3 (where are we going?), and Question 6 (what is true and what is false?) indicated that a discernible part of the discourse had deviated from the unchallenged assumption that the university would always exist to an explicit questioning of its value in the present and the future. Taken holistically, these indicator categories can therefore be considered to provide a purpose-specific framework for analysing the literature in order to identify the four ideas and their underpinning assumptions and characteristics (Chapters 5 and 6).

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[4] These two ideas were intuitively 'known' to me as I started the research – I started working in universities in 1979 and so experienced a university on the cusp of moving from one shaped primarily by the Traditional Idea to one that was well and truly being shaped by the Managerial Idea when I left the university sector in 2007. While at the start of the research, I did not use these labels, they became immediately apparent as the literature review progressed and these indicators allows these two ideas to coalesce in my mind.

Table 4.2 Worldview Indicators (adapted from Vidal 2014, pp 3-8)

Philosophical Question	Philosophical Discipline	Vidal's Definition	Indicator Categories
1. What is?	Ontology (model of reality)	What is the nature of reality? How is it structured and how does it function?	Phrases used to describe what it means to *be* a university' (Barnett), its ontology both in terms of the university as institution and idea.
2. Where does it all come from?	Explanation of the past (model of the past)	Why is the world the way it is and not different? Where does it all come from?	Use of historical events and artefacts to justify a position taken on the university in the present and/or its future. Elements defining the ideas are identified in literature produced by those primarily within universities.
3. Where are we going?	Foresight (model of the future)	What are our possible futures? Which should we promote, and which should we avoid? What values will shape these possible futures?	Images, metaphors, use of 'future' or similar phrases that assert or imply a specific future for the university. Also includes statements about important changes and trends shaping the university's futures in the present.
4. What is good and what is evil?	Axiology (theory of values)	How do we evaluate reality? What is moral and ethical in what we are striving for?	Phrases that indicate assertions, assumptions and beliefs about what is appropriate and 'right' for the university and what is not; what is and is not valued about the university, including its purpose, structure and operations, and who legitimises or holds these values.
5. How should we act?	Praxeology (theory of actions)	What general principles should organise our actions? How can our values inform our actions to address practical challenges today?	Phrases that indicate assertions, assumptions, and beliefs about the correct/right/essential action for a university to take and why, usually in connection with its relationship to the external environment and the role of stakeholders.
6. What is true and what is false?	Epistemology (theory of knowledge)	How can we construct our image of the world to answer Questions 1, 2 and 3? How do we acquire knowledge? What language should we use to acquire that knowledge and what are its limitations?	Language used to justify positions about what frames can or cannot be used for claims or phrases that seek to make 'truth claims' about reality, the past and the future for the university.

4.5   Organisational Theory

Organisational theory is used here in two ways: first to identify the factors or facets that define the university's organisational form; and second, to position organisational culture as the locus of the idea in the university. The university is often termed a social institution (Prisching 1993), but fundamentally it is an organisation to be understood like other organisations. Organisational studies is a 'broad church' though, with a range of theories, disciplines, perspectives and approaches available to explore and analyse both the visible and invisible sides of organisations and the relationships in and between organisations in their environments. Here, the University as Organisation literature set was analysed to identify organisation-related topics that are consistent across the set:

- **structure** – how the university as an organisation might need to be structured to deliver its services (Duryea & Perkins 1973; Awbrey & Awbrey 2001; Jensen 2010) and the elements of that structure – such as faculties and academic boards – that make the university an identifiable organisational type (Keller 1993);

- **culture** – the locus of the idea in the university as a collective understanding of the university's purpose (Chapter 5), the characteristics of which have changed over time, and which provides the taken-for-granted belief in 'how things are done around here' (Baldwin 2009; Gouldner 1957; Smerek 2010);

- **leadership** – how the leadership role in universities has changed over time, and the traits required of university leaders at all levels and in all roles – this shift over time is typically described in the rise of academic managers (Johnson 2002; Ramsden 2006; Winter 2009).

- **management** – the changing nature of management roles, positions and power over time, including the emergence of the 'university manager' and the incursion of managerialism into the university (Lindsay, 1995; Coaldrake and Stedman, 1999; Deem, 2002, 2011; Winter and Sarros, 2002; Kenny, 2009; Marks, 2016);

- **work** – the shifting nature of academic work and the emergence of managers as a separate "competing profession" (Abbott 1988) and a new managerial class in the 1980s and 1990s (Tucker 1984; Anderson, Johnson & Saha 2002; Whitchurch 2008; Szekeres 2011; Joyner 2012; Stoller 2014); and

- **relationships** – this area focuses on two types of relationships;
  - *internal* – primarily between academics and administrators/managers (Bramble 1996; Currie & Vidovich 1997; Dobson 2000; Dutton 1981; Manne 1999; Seyd 2000) but also relating to students (Shils 1983; Campbell 2016; Curson 2016); and
  - *external* – primarily between the university and the state over time (Meek 1995; Cole 2016; Matchett 2017), but also other stakeholders as the notion of 'engagement' becomes more prevalent as a potential strategy to reinforce the university's social role (Davis 2017; Nyland & Davies 2017; Kift 2019)

Like all organisational entities, the university has a structure, operating framework and culture in which people work together to deliver its services – defined broadly here as the creation, maintenance and transmission of knowledge – in various forms into and across the society in which it functions. The university is a complex organisation though, one "increasingly shaped by contradictions" and one that Barcan (cited in Rogler 2016, p. 1) views as:

> at least three different kinds of beast simultaneously: a scholarly society, a bureaucracy and a corporation. *These different institutional forms* do not so much succeed each other as *overlay each other in a kind of palimpsest*. Each paradigm brings with it a particular set of expectations, demands and regimes of academic practice (italics added).

This 'overlaid' mixture of organisational models is reflected in the co-existence of the four ideas, each of which holds assumptions about the 'right and proper' structure for the university that differentiates it from other organisational types – and that specify exactly what it is a university *does* and how it should do it. Because this research considers the university holistically rather than in terms of its constituent parts and functions, however, it is not focused on the university's organisation form in its minute – and complex – detail beyond the delineation of the above categories that the literature identifies as the defining facets of the university as an organisation.

The idea is located in the university's culture. In the context of Vidal's questions (Table 4.2) the ideas have, over time, embedded strong beliefs and assumptions about the right and proper purpose, legitimacy base and its future into what is best termed the university's very fabric – its organisational form – and the orienting dispositions (Peters & Slovic 1996) of the people working in them – the university's culture. The evolution of the university's organisational form cannot therefore be understood in any depth without also understanding

this cultural side of the university. Chapter 5 provides a detailed discussion about how the ideas are understood as cultural constructs and Chapter 6 explores the dynamics across the ideas, including their positioning in the discourse and how their assumed futures constrain the university's possible futures.

4.6   The Social Context 1: Social Change

Giddens & Sutton (2017, p. 1) point out: "social life is never static but is in a constant process of change" and that understanding the nature of society and how it evolves occupies the discipline of sociology full-time – which suggests that the limited discussion in this section cannot possibly do justice to the gamut of theories of social change. The focus is therefore on **first**, identifying how social change is understood broadly, and **second**, defining the most significant social changes – as defined in the literature – shaping the future of the university as an organisation.

Social change is generally regarded as a significant shift in how societies operate, resulting in changes to structures, cultural norms, behaviour, social institutions and organisations (Powell & DiMaggio 1991; Farrell 2012). Change can be incremental, evolutionary or disruptive (Streeck & Thelen 2005; Bhatnagar 2014; Schulz 2016), can cover a range of areas such as demographic, environmental, technological, economic, political or cultural change (Bishop 1998), and can be analysed from a range of disciplinary and paradigmatic perspectives over different time periods. Change is so omnipresent in society and so complex in nature today that, as John McHale (1969, p. 59) reflects:

> Change and choice have become our bywords, and, seemingly, our only constants … the choices carry more alternatives and more positive and negative implications than ever before [and that] this change rate, possibly the most rapid in human history, is barely underway.

Vásquez (1999, p. 335) points out that is "clear that many aspects of the social change theory, like the traditional ways of thinking and the old stereotypes of common sense, have become insufficient to understand such a complexity." For all organisations then, including the university, the present challenge is to identify and respond to disruptions in social contexts by using a long-term frame – to not reject those disruptions as unimportant or irrelevant in the present without first considering the longer term social impact that might well ultimately threaten the very existence of an organisation. As Greenwood & Hinings (2016, p. 1022) note: "the ability to cope with often dramatically altering contextual forces has become a key

determinant of competitive advantage and organizational survival" into the future. For example, now defunct organisations like Kodak, Blockbusters, Borders and Nokia are usually cited as examples of what happens when disruptions are ignored (Bussey, Mei Song & Hsieh 2017; Barabba 2018). These companies considered the potential impact of change only from a 'presentist' perspective – either considering the degree of change to be irrelevant because of a long-term successful 'core business' or believing a prior investment was too important to dismiss – resulting in their demise over a very short period of time. While responses to change can *only* be taken in the present, a foresight perspective mandates that those responses be taken *after* potential long-term impacts have been considered. Bell and Mau's model of social change (1973, p. 19) was perhaps the first to include "a conception of social change based upon images of the future" – that is, to consider potential future impacts *before* decision making and action in the present. This long-term focus permeates FSF work, although just how many years into the future constitutes long-term depends on the type of futures work being undertaken.

The reality for the university – irrespective of idea – is that it exists in a time of radical change and its relationship with society is increasingly complex and precarious. The literature is clear about the "dramatically altering contextual forces" (Greenwood & Hinings 2016, p. 1022) that have a significant impact on the university's structure and operations in the present. The literature reviewed here is remarkably consistent about the nature of these forces which include:

- the continuing impact of globalisation (Gilbert 1997; Deem 2002; McLennan 2008; Robertson 2012) and neoliberalism (Peters 2011; Barkawi 2013; Thornton 2013; Ergül & Co ar 2017; Legge 2017; Sturm 2017; Tight 2019) on the university's structure and culture, and its sphere of operations which has shifted from local to global operations;

- the role of higher education and shifting social expectations and perceptions of its value (Gaita 2000; Boden, Ciancanelli & Wright 2012; Coman 2016; Stensaker 2019; Egron-Polak 2020);

- market influence on universities (Rhoades & Torres-Olave 2015; Kanne Wadsholt 2016; Lewis & Shore 2016), the changing nature of work (Gibbons et al. 1994; Smyth 1995; McCollow & Lingard 1996; McInnis 2000), leadership (Lacy et al. 2017) and

increasing competitiveness (Meek 1995; Nerem 2012; Jessop 2017), including tension between university managers and academics (Warner & Palfreyman 1996; Tahir 2008; Shore & Davidson 2014);

- changing governance structures and processes from the traditional collegial to a more corporate approach (Lindsay 1995; Saunders 2010; Brennan 2012);

- increasing isomorphism of universities globally, something often considered to be a negative development, but as Section 4.6 shows, is a characteristic of the process an organisation employs to establish and maintain legitimacy (Stensaker et al 2019);

- emerging technologies and impact on the work undertaken in universities, usually couched in term of 'digital' (Craig 2014; Bracey 2015; Barnett & Bengtsen 2017; LeBlanc 2018) and more recently 'artificial intelligence' (Maderer 2016; King 2017; Egron-Polak 2020);

- national and global education policy (Marginson 2011; Bollier 2016; Egron-Polak 2020), including the internationalisation of universities (Holubek 2019; Brandenburg et al. 2019) and funding policies (Winter & Sarros 2002; Ramsden 2006);

- shifting values about knowledge and how it is accessed and used (Pantazidou & Nair 2001; Kennie et al. 2012; Ahmad 2015), partnerships in knowledge creation (Tierney 1998; Alexander 2014; Reed 2017), and increasing value placed on personalised experiences (Miller 2004; McCowan 2017);

- increasing diversity in the student population (Sayers & Kubler 2010; Leo 2018); and

- changes to academic work practices – *de*professionalisation (Trow 1994; Kolsaker 2008, 2014), a culture of performativity (Murphy 2011; Curson 2016) and productivity (Curson 2016), audit, measurement and quality (Murphy 2011; Kimber & Ehrich 2015) and the demise of academic freedom (Beloff 1968; Martin 2014; Anon 2018) .

These changes are shaping Western university contexts globally and are described in the literature in terms such as 'transition', 'signals', 'shifts', 'forces', 'turning points', 'impact', 'disruption', 'predictions' and 'forecasts' – all of which indicate that the impact of these changes is accepted as real, although responses to that change – which are shaped by the four

ideas – range from outright resistance by academics to acceptance and support by leaders and managers involved in applying managerial approaches in universities. For universities, whose existence is now mediated by a higher education 'industry' (Koller 2012; Price & Kennie 2012; David & Naidoo 2013) responses to these types of changes have, however, often lacked Bell and Mau's images of the future as the foundation of decision and policy making, instead originating from an 'inside-out' perspective described aptly by Maassen, Gornitzka & Fumasoli (2017, p. 244) in these terms:

> the impact of external factors (both in the form of governmental reforms and expectations from larger sets of environmental actors) is determined first and foremost by processes within the university and is shaped by the internal structures, institutionally defined expectations, ideas and practices.

This type of inside-out response to change is framed by assertions of the right of those within the university to decide how to meet changing social needs, and any demands from 'outside' are dismissed as irrelevant or invalid (discussed further in Chapter 5). Typically, this stance is couched in terms of a *crisis* facing the university (Tierney 1933; Preus 1969; Bioland 1989; Readings 1996; Mac Lane 1997; Barnett 2003; Kress 2009; Anderson 2010), although the reality is that the university has been considered to be in crisis throughout its history (Tierney 1933; Preus 1969; David 2011; Marginson 2016; Robertson 2017). The influence of the dominant external stakeholder to shape the university's existence is recognised in its histories (Moodie 1994; OECD 2007; Pilbeam & Jamieson 2010; Ahmad 2015; Matchett 2017), and the belief that the university should be autonomous remains strong in those histories (Slaughter & Leslie 1997; Anderson 2010; Deeks 2018), even when it is clear that the power to define the university's purpose has increasingly moved outside the university.

Ignoring the 'outside' in decision making inevitably leads to short-term responses to change focused on immediate needs based, a stance shaped by the assumption that today's university will continue to exist into the future. Even the literature that *does* overtly offer long-term perspective on the university and its future (Chapter 7) generally accepts this assumption that the university of today has an assured future – which not only shuts down the possibility of alternative perspectives on change being considered, but also the potential expansion of thinking to accept a university of a very different ilk to that which exists today – or even a future without a university – as valid possible futures. The result is that decisions and actions are based not on a longer-term perspective, but rather on the single projected business-as-usual future (see Figure 2.1, Chapter 2), one that keeps universities trapped in today's

discourse (Trowler 2001). Just how the four ideas generate that discourse trap is discussed further in Chapters 5 and 6.

4.7 The Social Context 2: Organisational Legitimacy

The university's relationship with society is viewed through the lens of *legitimacy theory* here to demonstrate that the significant changes to the university's organisational form throughout history have generally resulted from changes in the basis of legitimacy granted to the university by society – and more critically, by changes in the stakeholder group with the power to define that legitimacy. Legitimacy theory overtly connects purpose and legitimacy and provides a frame to understand the current disconnect between these two concepts *across* the ideas; it also allows the shifting basis of that legitimacy from the university's establishment in medieval times to be mapped (Figure 4.4).

This section explores legitimacy types and the legitimation process but only touches on the significant literature about what constitutes organisational legitimacy, how it is achieved, how it is maintained and how it is lost. This section therefore discusses how legitimacy is defined in the literature, the types of legitimacy that have been identified, and the legitimacy process before exploring how the university's legitimacy has come to be so central in ensuring its survival in the present and into the future. The aim is to provide a frame for understanding how changes in the university's purpose are related to corresponding changes in the social basis of its legitimacy.

4.7.1 Defining Legitimacy

Deephouse and Suchman (2008) suggest that definitions of legitimacy depend on the context being investigated, while Suddaby, Btekine and Haack (2017, p. 451) indicate that multiple meanings attributed to 'legitimacy' have "allowed it be used, and misused, in many ways." As indicated in Chapter 1, Suchman's definition (1995, p. 574) is used here: "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions" – although Deephouse et.al. (2017, p. 3) suggest that the term 'desirable' in this definition should be removed to avoid confusion with evaluations of reputation or status that are now associated with maintaining legitimacy, and provide their own definition (p. 9):

Organizational legitimacy is the perceived appropriateness of an organization to a social system in terms of rules, values, norms and definitions [that] reflect regulatory, moral and cultural-cognitive criteria or dimensions for evaluating legitimacy.

Zelditch (2001, p. 33) suggests that "something is legitimate when it is in accord with the norms, values, beliefs, practices, and procedures adopted by a group," while Meyer and Scott (cited in Scott 2014, p. 72) define legitimacy as "the degree of cultural support for an organization – the extent to which the array of established cultural accounts provide explanations for its existence, functioning, and jurisdiction, and lack or deny alternatives." These definitions highlight two commonalities: **one**, that legitimacy is a product of the relationship between an organisation and its society; and **two**, that cultural factors such as rules, values, norms and beliefs are critical in understanding the nature of that legitimacy. How these two factors are captured by the four ideas in different and often conflicting ways is discussed in Chapter 5 when the different assumptions of each idea (purpose, legitimacy and assumed future) are identified and in Chapter 6 when the dynamics across the ideas are compared and interpreted.

4.7.2   Types of Legitimacy

Multiple types of legitimacy have been identified since the rise of legitimacy theory in the 1970s (Bitektine 2011; Suddaby, Bitektine & Haack 2017; Díez-de-Castro, Peris-Ortiz & Díez-Martín 2018). Scott's work on organisations and legitimacy is often cited (Scott 2014) – he identifies three pillars of organisations and their corresponding legitimacy types: "regulatory, normative and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life." The *regulatory* pillar focuses on rules and legal/regulatory requirements; the *normative* pillar focuses on a moral base where organisations are considered to conform and support social norms, one that is internalized and innate in nature; while the *cultural-cognitive* pillar "focuses on legitimacy that comes from conforming to a common definition, frame of reference (for individuals) or structural template (for organisations)". Notably for this research, cultural-cognitive legitimacy is based on "pre-conscious, taken-for-granted understandings" (p.74), which is posited here to be the fundamental characteristic of an idea. Suchman (1995) identifies three similar types of legitimacy but uses '*pragmatic*' for regulatory legitimacy, '*moral*' for normative legitimacy, and '*cognitive*' for cultural-cognitive. Archibald's (2004) condensed

categorisation classifies regulatory legitimacy as a broader '*sociopolitical legitimacy*' and '*cultural legitimacy*' which he equates to normative and cognitive legitimacy types (p. 177):

> Cultural legitimacy entails constitutive norms and beliefs that enhance comprehensibility because they create the impression of meaningfulness, predictability and trust … Sociopolitical legitimacy entails expedience, and it is conferred by authorities whose self-interest is at the forefront of their consideration of organizational designs and purposes.

Aldrich and Fiol (2007, p. 648) use these same two terms, and highlight how the taken-for-granted nature of organisations that defines cognitive legitimacy leads to copying legitimated organisations because they are successful, and how sociopolitical legitimacy "refers to the process by which key stakeholders …accept a venture as appropriate and right, given existing norms and laws." Another type of legitimacy is *media legitimacy* (Ruef & Scott 1998) – originally identified because of the link between media reporting and public opinion – but, with the decline of mainstream media, now includes social media where, as Deephouse et al. (2017, p. 16) note: "one Facebook post or one tweet on Twitter can lead to a legitimacy challenge for even the most well-established organization." Similarly, Bitektine (2011, pp.155-156) writes that social media "provide an important 'battleground' where delegitimating attacks on institutions and organizations are mounted and disputes around the social norms and regulations are played out." Media legitimacy is important when discussing the emergence of the Dismissive Idea because it has been generated largely by a range of media reporting outside the university.

4.7.3   Legitimacy Process

Legitimacy matters because as Hybels (1995, p. 241) notes "without legitimacy, an institutional pattern of relations could not be sustained" over time and, importantly, indicates that legitimacy is granted by "institutions other than that that being legitimated." How legitimacy arises and is maintained is important here because it is considered to be the basis upon which the university can sustain its existence over time and therefore becomes a core assumption of any idea. This section discusses this process before moving to explore the changing basis of the university's legitimacy.

An organisation is considered legitimate when it "gains a taken-for-granted quality that leads it to be perceived as an objective and natural reality" (Tost 2011, p. 686) – and therefore can continue to exist. Deephouse et al. (2017, p. 22) note that legitimacy is usually granted in a stable environment, so that an organisation can "demonstrate its propriety and fit within pre-

existing regulatory and pragmatic standards, moral values, and cultural-cognitive meaning systems." That is, it can demonstrate it is fit-for-purpose for its times. Johnson, Dowd and Ridgeway (2006, p. 53) bring social psychological approaches to this discussion "that focus on the legitimation of status characteristics, group status structures, organizational authority structures and practices, and stratified orders."

The legitimation process is generally reported across the literature as taking place in stages (Suchman 1995; Deephouse et al. 2017). Johnson, Dowd and Ridgeway's work (2006, pp. 60-61) is used here to define how legitimacy is granted and maintained, primarily because they view legitimacy as a social process which is consistent with the research approach and design of this research. They define four stages that any new organisational form needs to go through in order to be considered legitimate, a process that also can define an existing organisation or part of that organisation as illegitimate (Section 4.6.2):

- **Innovation** – where some form of social organisation is created to address a new need or goal held by people in a specific location; this innovation must be considered by local actors to be "consonant with and linked to the existing widely accepted cultural framework of beliefs, values, and norms";

- **Local validation** – "a new prototype or cultural schema" that actors have linked the innovation explicitly with existing, accepted "beliefs, values and norms"; The result of being accepted at the local level means that the innovation is then deemed the "acceptable way of doing things to meet local needs/goals";

- **Diffusion** – the prototype organisation spreads to other local contexts and "is adopted readily by actors in other local contests as mere fact … The new prototype then becomes a useful and even necessary cultural schema for making sense of how we do things. As the new social object spreads, its adoption in a new situation often needs less explicit justification than it may have needed in the first local context in which it was adopted"; and

- **General Validation** – when the innovation is generally considered to be acceptable. "Once this occurs, the new social object acquires widespread acceptance, becoming part of society's shared culture … once a prototype/cultural schema becomes generally validated, it is not easily replaced compared to objects that only remain locally validated."

In the innovation stage, Dowling and Pfeffer (1975, p. 122; italics added) see organisations as seeking to:

> establish *congruence between the social values associated with or implied by their activities and the norms of acceptable behavior in the larger social system* of which they are a part. Insofar as these two value systems are congruent we can speak of organizational legitimacy. *When an actual or potential disparity exists between the two value systems, there will exist a threat to organizational legitimacy.* These threats take the form of legal, economic, and other social sanctions.

The italicised text is indicative of the process discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 to define how the four ideas and their corresponding university type have evolved to co-exist in the present. Once legitimacy is granted, an organisation needs to address emerging threats – that generate a declining congruence with the social context – to maintain that legitimacy. Maintaining legitimacy then is about reassuring significant stakeholder groups "that the organization continues to adhere to standards of appropriateness" (Deephouse et al. 2017, p. 22) as defined by relevant stakeholders. The critical point here is that legitimacy, once granted, can *always* be challenged – it is always open to negotiation as social change continues.

Deephouse et al. (2017, p. 66) view challenges to an organisation's legitimacy as a "presence of absence of questioning" about its activities, where such an absence at any point in time infers the organisation is legitimate to the degree where its existence has achieved a certain status and is taken-for-granted:

> Once these new social objects (i.e., organizational forms and status beliefs) become generally valid in society, they imply certain practices and actions … that tend to be adopted in organizations and remain relatively stable, even when they are inefficient or unfair.

Challenges to legitimacy can take the form of "either regulatory challenges or challenges from aggravated stakeholders" which "bring to the foreground the existence and point of view of multiple stakeholders … who may question legitimacy on multiple grounds" including "challenges to meanings, which undermine the cultural-cognitive legitimacy of a subject" (Deephouse et al, p. 23). Measuring public/audience/stakeholder attitudes towards an organisation can therefore be considered to be one primary means of measuring whether an organisation is in crisis – that is, when interpretation of organisational value by external stakeholders shifts significantly and is questioned directly, a *legitimacy crisis* emerges (Bitektine 2011; Tost 2011; Deephouse et al. 2017; Miranda et al. 2018). To maintain legitimacy, organisations need to determine "which sources care about which criteria [to

construct] a viable bundle of reassurances that satisfy enough sources on enough criteria enough of the time" (Deephouse et al. 2017, p. 24). Here, this 'bundle of reassurances' is different in each idea *and* only one 'bundle' can assure the university's legitimacy at specific points in time.

4.7.4   Legitimacy and the University

The university has *always* existed in a social context and has *always* had a relationship with some form of external authority as Bleiklie, Laredo and Sorlin (2007, p. 495) write: "Universities have always and everywhere been connected with a thousand threads to the societies that have created, regulated, supported and relied on them for a variety of functions." Even when its reputation as an aloof 'ivory tower' was strong in the nineteenth century when academics assumed they could self-define the university's purpose; the university was never totally disconnected from society. The modern university of the nineteenth century was granted *normative legitimacy* – a judgement made by the state that because this university had been established to address specific social needs, its purpose was assumed, and those who worked in universities could be left alone to decide how the university was structured and operated to meet those needs. The autonomy granted to this university form is part of the reason the Traditional Idea remains strong today, as Fumasoli, Fornitzka and Maasen (2014, p. 6) note: "The university enjoys a special status, because of is traditions, history and the values is represents in society."

With the arrival of the neoliberal university, however, the university's legitimacy base changed to *regulatory legitimacy*, a form of legitimacy that assures the university's existence only if it conforms to specific state requirements – here, the state is not leaving the university alone as before but is now taking the lead in defining what it does and how it does it. Thus, as long as the university's enacted purpose – usually espoused in a mission statement – continues to fulfil social or economic needs defined by the state, the neoliberal university will be assured legitimacy – and is therefore considered to be more 'fit-for-purpose' than the university of the past. The structure and work practices of this past university – once considered to be immutable – are now deemed to be *illegitimate*. Hudson (2008, p. 252) terms this state of affairs as "core-stigma illegitimacy" or a "spoiled image" stigma that "is the result of a negative social evaluation by some audience(s) of an organization because of some organisational attribute, such as core routines, and/or core customers". Hudson also

asserts that an organisation can be simultaneously legitimate and illegitimate because partial illegitimacy can apply to only one part of the organisation.

In the sense of the ideas then, the Traditional Idea and modern university are now considered to be 'illegitimate' in the context of the 'legitimate' neoliberal university. Those who hold the Reframed Idea are using what they perceive to be the *illegitimacy* of the neoliberal university to justify the need for their new type of university. Even though the neoliberal university in the present has undermined the degree of 'fitness-for purpose' of past beliefs, the Traditional Idea remains strong, as exemplified in Meek's (2015) assertion that:

> The modern university (and its derivatives) is not the medieval university. *Nonetheless, the basic idea of the university as a self-governing collective of scholars devoted to the pursuit of truth and transmission of knowledge unfettered by political or religious control, continues to influence how they are managed and organised* (italics added).

The 'basic idea' described by Meek *is* the Traditional Idea which, at the time Meek wrote these words, had been forced into resistance mode by the dominant Managerial Idea (Chapters 5 and 6), suggesting that a clear blind spot exists in the minds of those who still hold the Traditional Idea to be true in the present. That a residual cultural idea (Williams 1997) can be considered as valid and taken-for-granted in the midst of a university that is so clearly *not* the university inspired by the Traditional Idea, demonstrates not only the power of that idea but also provides a clear example of the *inextricable* connection between the idea and beliefs about the appropriate organisational form for the university – no matter to what degree the external environment changes.

It is this power still held by the Traditional Idea that provided the impetus for the emergence of the Reframed Idea and the desire to establish new forms of the university – that will need to seek either regulatory legitimacy (as the cooperative universities have done via their establishment through legislation), or through some new form of social compact (Du Toit 2007; Woodward 2010; Boden, Ciancanelli & Wright 2012; Cole 2016). Notably, as discussed in Chapter 5, the Dismissive Idea is not beholden to any history shared by the Traditional and Reframed Ideas and declares all forms of the university in the present to be *illegitimate*.

Instead, the Dismissive Idea has *media legitimacy* in the present because its origins are in a range of media – such as newspapers, social media, blogs and websites - and it is developing separately to the influence of the other ideas. At this early stage of its development this idea

appears to see little value in the university of the present and is focused more on learning *itself* rather than on the organisational *structures* that supports knowledge generation and learning today (Carey 2015; Bacevic, D'Silva & Guzman-Concha 2018; Pownall 2019). Learning outside today's universities is not new though – see for example, DIY University (Kamenetz 2010), WayFinding Academy (2019), UnCollege (2020). It was only when the cost of attending the neoliberal university and the promised qualifications that would ensure employment failed to materialise that any belief in the value of a university education started to decline, and began to be discussed as a serious topic in the media (Schumpter 2010; Jenkins 2018; Myton 2018a; Tiefenthaler, Barron & Verret 2018; Lambert 2019; Nietzel 2019; Pinkser 2019; Trondsen 2019). The *entire* concept of a university is considered to be illegitimate in this idea, but for learning in society to become a reality, significant social support would be needed to develop alternative social learning processes that did not require the university or similar organisation for delivery.

Using the work of Johnson, Dowd and Ridgeway (2006) (Section 4.6.3) on the main phases of legitimacy acquisition and maintenance, Figure 4.4 shows how the university's legitimacy base has shifted since medieval times, showing that it is not until the present day that the university is potentially confronted with its first fundamental legitimacy crisis. The top half of Figure 4.4 shows the legitimacy process that the university has moved through in its history (red text), starting with the innovation of the medieval university to the present neoliberal university.

The bottom half of the figure defines the legitimacy basis of the university at different points in time (green text). The middle of the figure shows the main evolutionary stages for the university's organisational form as understood in this research, and the dominant university form at different points in the university's history (black text). For the universities in the period covered in this research, the relevant idea is also shown (light blue text). The right-hand side of the figure shows that a potential legitimacy crisis for the neoliberal university is emerging from both within and outside the university (purple text).

University

University

Innovation:
first western
university

Diffusion & local validation:
the prototype university is
established

General Validation: the
university's form is accepted
as the norm

Taken-for-granted: the
modern university is
established

Legitimacy challenge to
modern university:
neoliberal university
established

Reframed Idea

Neoliberal university
still dominant but
legitimacy base
challenged from
within; new university
forms emerge

Medieval Universities   **National Universities**   **Modern University**   **Neoliberal University**

**Emergent Legitimacy
Crisis for Neoliberal
University**

Traditional Idea   *Managerial Idea*

Local universities in Italy provide
a prototype university for
Europe that is flexible enough to
meet a range of local needs

Universities spread across Western
world from mid 16th century –
isomorphic process generates
recognisable university form across
national contexts

Modern university establishes the
benchmark for the Western
university after 1800

Neoliberal university
emerges from 1960s &
regulated from around
1990; new purpose and
legitimacy based
defined

Cognitive
legitimacy still
present but
increasingly
fragile – new social
values/beliefs
about university
emerging from
outside

Dismissive Idea

Legitimacy is originally
regulatory, but fragile & shifting,
moving between *normative* and
regulatory types depending on
which stakeholder group
(royalty/ state/church) has
power at specific times

Legitimacy based on some form of
tacit social acceptance, often
external approval (royalty/state) that
provides *normative* legitimacy;
existence of university sometimes
questioned, but ultimately assured

Legitimacy base is *cognitive* –
shared, tacit understandings
of university, structure,
purpose and role, rarely
questioned, assumed
operational independence
from state

Pre-WW2 modern university
challenged by post-WW2
social disruptions; gradual,
continuing changes see shift
in base from *cognitive* to
regulatory legitimacy in late
20th century

Society

Society

11th century   Mid-1600s-1700s   1800   Mid-20th century   21st century

Colour Key: Legitimacy process
Legitimacy basis
Legitimacy crisis
Current Idea(s)

Figure 4.4 The Shifting Basis of University Legitimacy

Figure 4.4 demonstrates how the university has experienced a number of legitimacy shifts at different points in its history:

- in its early history it first had a fragile legitimacy base that moved between *regulatory* or *normative* – fragile in the sense that at different points during this time, it was the church, royalty or the state which variously granted legitimacy;

- a period where the university was generally accepted by society and had *normative* legitimacy as it was assumed by both the university and society to be the only appropriate means to deliver higher learning;

- the establishment of the modern university saw a shift to *cognitive* legitimacy – its existence became so taken-for-granted that it was rarely subject to any form of challenge until the middle of the twentieth century; and

- post-war demands on the university in the second half of the twentieth century challenged this taken-for-granted cognitive legitimacy, resulting ultimately in a shift from cognitive back to regulatory legitimacy as the neoliberal university became dominant.

Legitimacy bases for the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas are not yet clear, and while some form of regulatory legitimacy is required in the present for the former, ultimately both these ideas might draw their legitimacy from society itself (discussed in Chapter 7). These two ideas also clearly represent a potential legitimacy crisis for the neoliberal university.

Because legitimacy is a product of the interaction of the university and the society in which the university exists, it is, as Stensaker (2019, p. 542) notes:

> a relational concept, and as a result, it cannot be controlled by the focal organization. It is basically controlled by the environment, although the organization may attempt to manipulate or influence the perceptions of key stakeholders.

Any future for the university depends on continuing positive evaluations of its legitimacy by the dominant stakeholder group which is, in turn, shaped by the idea of the university held by that group, and that in turn, depends on the social context at the time. The dominant stakeholder group has changed in the past, is changing in the present, and it is likely to continue to change in the future, as society evolves and beliefs about the university's purpose is required to shift to reflect changing social needs. The neoliberal idea and its sociopolitical

legitimacy base granted by governments today therefore may or may not be relevant as the future emerges. As social needs change, answering the question 'who will determine the university's legitimacy basis?' in those futures will be critical.

4.8   Concluding Comments

This chapter integrated a range of theoretical perspectives that have explanatory power for understanding the relationship across the idea, the university and society. The idea has been positioned as a worldview, the major facets of the university as an organisation have been defined, as has the changing social context in which the university exists. Finally, legitimacy theory provides a way to understand the nature of the link between the university and society, establishing that the maintenance of that legitimacy as essential for the university's survival.

At this point in the thesis, the research context has been set (Chapter 1), the research approach justified (Chapter 2), the methodological frame defined (Chapter 3) and the conceptual frame defined to understand the relationship between the idea, the university and society (this chapter) – which together constitute Part 1 of the thesis. With these foundational chapters now in place, the thesis now moves to focus on the ideas in the present (Part 2: Chapters 5 and 6) and their possible futures (Part 3: Chapter 7).

Part 2: The Ideas in the Present

Chapter 5: Finding the Ideas

5.1   Overview

Demonstrating that multiple ideas of the university co-exist in the present is not new (Kress 2009; Rothblatt 2012), and the 'idea of the university' is one of the most dissected topics in the literature about the university. Barnett (2018, p. 1) describes 200 years of this literature as the Great Tradition, seeing it as providing:

> a steady stream of writings, in which writers have set out not just their individual thoughts but also their hopes and their urgings. They have sought to promote an idea of the university of their own and to change thinking about the practices in the university.

Barnett (2013a, p. 4, italics in original) terms this literature as representing "the contemporary structure of ideas – *the ideational structure* … of the university." At this point, the depth and breadth of Barnett's work on the idea must be recognised (see for example, Barnett 2011a, 2011b, 2012b, 2013a, 2015, 2017, 2018; Peters & Barnett 2016; Barnett & Peters 2018) – it is so deep and broad in fact that it is impossible to do justice to it within this thesis. Three positions that Barnett takes are important for this research: (i) that notions of the idea and the university are not fixed in time but instead are "moving in time and space" (Barnett 2017, p. 81) – that they can be other than what they are today; (ii) that what is termed here the Traditional Idea can still be useful in the present as long as it is "reinterpreted in the context of the University of the Future" (Barnett 2012b, p. 4) – that an idea needs to be relevant for its times; and (iii) that imagining many possible futures for the university is "a first step in the necessary liberation from the confines of the contemporary limited thinking about the university" (Barnett 2013a, p. 24) – that the university has many possible futures waiting to be imagined.

What is notable in this literature that *a* concept of *the idea of the university* has remained strong over that 200 years, even in the face of significant critique, redesign and dismissal (Pelikan 1994; Maskell & Robinson 2002; Kelly 2008; Barnett 2013b). The word 'idea' infers a *concept*, something held in our minds. Bazan (1998, p. 3) writes of the "human

capacity to abstract ideas from their particular manifestations" which, as this chapter argues, has seen the idea abstracted from the university to the degree that it has almost disappeared into the depths of the discourse. When the idea is understood only as a manifestation of the university it becomes derivative in nature rather than being understood as a critical concept that is not only shaped by the university but that also *shapes the university.* As Rothblatt (1989, p. 11, italics added) writes "the emotional appeal of thinking of universities as *embodying* ideas should not be underestimated" and that while defining the idea can be difficult, he continues: "I have suggested that what is truly lasting … is not a particular idea of the university, but the idea of an idea of a university."

Barnett's observation about the idea's conceptual longevity and Rothblatt's identification of 'the idea of the idea' moves attention away from the singular idea and opens up a new perspective, seeing the idea instead as a strong cultural construct that deserves to be considered in its own right and positioned as a fundamental element of the university's culture over time. In this chapter, this cultural construct – the idea of the idea – is reframed as a *meta-concept* rather than viewing the singular idea as dependent for its definition on the ever-changing 'type' of university. The three core assumptions (Section 5.2) can then be considered to be dimensions of the meta-concept which is persistent over time, while 'variations' of the idea emerge at particular times in the university's history and provide a sensemaking frame to understand the nature of the university 'of the present'. That is, there are two levels of idea that need to be understood – the diachronic meta-concept that remains constant over time, and synchronic idea *variations* that are time and space specific (Section 5.4).

The *idea* can then be seen as the powerful cultural construct that it is, with an internal logic that helps to explain its relationships with the university and society since it first emerged in the nineteenth century. Discussion in this chapter shows that the 200 years of belief in the power of *an* idea is at the core of understanding how the university has managed to remain relevant to its societies for so long – and why, in today's world of complex and turbulent change, this influential and robust concept may be constraining how the university is preparing for its future.

5.1.1 Chapter Structure

Section 5.2 defines how the idea's three core assumptions were identified and connected in the literature.

Section 5.3 discusses the evolution of four ideas, starting from the early nineteenth century, locating each idea in its historical context and identifying their respective three core assumptions;

Section 5.4 explores the relationship between the ideas and the university, demonstrating the primacy of the university in the discourse and establishing the idea's definitional relationship with the university;

Section 5.5 discusses the idea as a social construction and positions it as a meta-concept that remains relatively stable over time, while providing a space where an idea variation can capture the many changes universities make to the design and delivery of their functions required to maintain legitimacy at different points in time.

Section 5.6 concludes the chapter.

5.2 The Three Assumptions

Before moving to discuss how the four ideas have evolved since the early nineteenth century, this section discusses the identification and positioning of the three core assumptions of the idea: purpose, legitimacy and assumed future. The assumptions are essentially what Alvesson and Sandberg (2011, p. 254) term *in-house assumptions*: beliefs "shared within a particular school of thought in the sense that they are shared and accepted as unproblematic by its advocates … they refer to a set of ideas held about a specific subject matter." Within each idea, the in-house assumptions are logical and taken-for-granted, but when considered across the ideas (Chapter 6), the dynamics of the contested discourse being explored here becomes apparent.

These assumptions were identified from a cumulative analysis of the literature corpus as the research progressed, using the worldview indicators identified in Table 4.1 as the starting point (Section 4.3, Chapter 4). As the notion of the contested ideas emerged and took shape, so did the realisation that authors were essentially writing about the university's **purpose** when they discussed the idea. That is, their focus was on what a university *is*, why it exists,

what it should do – *and* what it was not. The application of organisational theory and a social change lens (Chapter 4) made it clear that organisations of any ilk have to adapt their purpose when there is a 'pivotal social disruption' that fundamentally changes social structures, norms and needs and the university is no different. Important to note here is that purpose does not change when there is an incremental change to the design of the university's functions and how they are delivered – for example, when digital technologies enabled learning to be delivered online as well as in classrooms, this digital learning did not change the university's fundamental *purpose*; rather it changed *how* it enacted that purpose. This distinction is discussed further in Section 5.4. Purpose alone, however, is not powerful enough to generate the vigorous debate about the university that is expressed in the literature.

As indicated in Chapter 3, the link between purpose and **legitimacy** emerged during the first stage of the literature review, providing the required theoretical connection between both concepts. It is asserted here that it is debate about who has the power to define the university as 'fit for purpose' at any given point in time – *when its purpose is considered <u>legitimate</u> by society* – that is at the heart of the literature, a debate that varies in focus, rationale and positioning depending on the idea held by authors and the temporal context in which the university exists. Ultimately however, purpose is *only* valid *if* it has been granted a form of legitimacy *by* society (Section 4.6). As a result, two clear stances on the university's **future** in the present are generated. The **first** is that the university will always be legitimate because the university will always exist (the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas) and the **second** is that the university has *no* legitimacy, is no longer needed in its current form and therefore has no future (the Dismissive Idea). An unwavering belief in the university's continuing purpose and legitimacy generates the first assumption and, conversely, an *absence* of this belief generates the second assumption. While both are grounded in the relationship between the university's purpose and legitimacy, the former assumes the two factors are aligned, while the latter assumes that since the university's purpose is no longer relevant to society it is illegitimate as an organisation.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the reality is that when the university's legitimacy is challenged to the degree where it *cannot* be defended because its purpose is no longer considered appropriate, it has *no* assured future – unless its purpose is redefined to the degree that the university is again considered fit-for-purpose. The university's often cited chameleon like capacity to change is actually derived from its capacity to have maintained its legitimacy in some form to this point in its history (Figure 4.4), but it may or may not be able to address the

legitimacy challenge posed by the still emergent Reframed and Dismissive Ideas and other yet unsurfaced ideas. With the assumptions defined, the next section explores how the four ideas have evolved since the early nineteenth century.

5.3   The Evolution of the Ideas

5.3.1   Overview

The aim in this section is to identify as clearly as is possible the shifts in assumptions about the university's purpose, legitimacy base and assumed future that followed a series of pivotal social disruptions. These disruptions occur when society takes on new conventions and beliefs that require the university to redefine its purpose in order to maintain its legitimacy. A legitimacy crisis therefore usually accompanies such a disruption, one that *must* be addressed by the university to ensure its survival. That crisis cannot be ignored or dismissed by a particular idea as an 'assault' or 'invasion' simply because it does not make sense within a particular worldview – because as Chapter 4 discussed, a legitimacy crisis represents a threat to an organisation's existence. A legitimacy crisis that results in a reframing of purpose is essentially a paradigm shift then, a different understanding of the university and one which also results in the emergence of a new idea (Section 5.4).

These disruption points for the university explored in this research are defined at the beginning of the following sections that discuss each idea as its emerged in three main phases of the university's history: (i) the nineteenth century modern university through to World War II; (ii) a connecting period covering the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s; and (iii) the university from around 1990. For each idea that existed/exists in these periods, their three core assumptions are also identified: purpose, legitimacy and assumed future. Before discussing the evolution of the four ideas from the nineteenth century to the present however, a short detour into the earlier history of the university is necessary.

5.3.2   A Nod to the Past

Starting the analysis of the ideas at 1800 was a choice made primarily because the Traditional Idea was only given a defining term and form in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, this first idea derives its taken-for-granted assumptions about the university's purpose and legitimacy from its earlier history, and while Section 1.1 indicated that this thesis cannot provide a detailed history of the university, it is important to recognise what is a rich and

complex narrative that begins in the eleventh century – earlier even – and continues now in the twenty-first century.

Organised learning can be traced back to the philosophers of ancient Greece and the Sumerian scribal schools (É-Dub-ba) that existed after 3500 BC (Cobban 1988). The now oldest recognised university in the world is the University of Al Quaraouiyine in Morocco, established in 859 by a Muslim woman, Fatima al-Fihri, and granted university status in 1965 (Crowhurst 2018). Rüegg (1992, p. 8) suggests that it may then be "more plausible to derive the organizational patterns of the medieval universities from the Islamic schools of learning", while Makdisi (1981, p. 128) points out that "the university is a twelfth century product of the Christian West ... not only in its organization but also in the privileges and protection it received from Pope and King." The origins of these medieval universities *can* be tracked from monastic to cathedral schools, a shift that saw the somewhat privileged position in society accorded the monastic schools also transferred to the cathedral schools. The copying of texts in the cathedral schools of Paris, a practice decreed by Charlemagne in 789 in the *Admonitio generalis* (Ourand 2014, p. 44–45), also resulted in the locus of knowledge transmission moving from being in the hands of a few at monasteries to many teachers in the cathedral schools, who transmitted that knowledge to their students, and who had to continuously acquire more knowledge to remain employed in the competitive environment in these schools (Haskins 1923; Cobban 1988; Perkin 2007).

Once the medieval university form began to emerge with the establishment of the University of Bologna in 1088, their focus evolved to focus on training elites to serve the bureaucracies of church and state and the emerging professionals of the clergy, law and medicine (Abeles 2014, p. 101). They were also institutions created in a society disrupted by war and invasions, institutions described by Perkin (2007, p. 159) as "an accidental product of a uniquely fragmented and decentralized civilization" that survived in a society marked by power struggles between royalty and the church at different times where "[i]n the interstices of power, the university could find a modestly secure niche, and play off one authority against another." Universities were challenged though: wars and revolutions saw decreasing and then increasing numbers of universities in Europe (Perkin 1960), resistance to their existence from their towns (Haskins 1923; Gorochov 2018), and student riots and protests were not uncommon in their early years (Janin 2014; Gorochov 2018). Nevertheless, this European university form spread from Europe across the Western world from the mid-sixteenth century:

Designed originally for a cosmopolitan world in which scholars from every part of the Christian West could gather at key centers and communicate in Latin, it outlived that world and adjusted itself to a succession of divergent social and political regimes (Perkin 2007, p. 161).

While the university's structure and form were modified and adapted in response to the changing contexts in which it was established, these structures and operations were still recognisable wherever they were established. Over time, they became the dominant higher education institution with an assumed legitimacy in countries across the Western world. The university form ultimately outlasted the Reformation, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason, the demise of the age of the monarchy and the Romantic Era, all of which shaped and changed the medieval university into a very different university by the eighteenth century. It was in Germany, however, in the early nineteenth century where Humboldt's ideas and the integration of teaching and research at the University of Berlin shaped the model for the modern university, one characterised by "the free association of students and professors in their endless striving for truth" (Ricken 2007, p. 489). At this point, the origins of the Traditional Idea began had begun to take shape.

5.3.3 The Traditional Idea: A University Left Alone

Pivotal Social Disruption: the Traditional Idea emerged in Europe after a period of war and revolutions, followed by a period of nation-building in a society still forming as a result of the continuing impact of the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. The nineteenth century is sometimes considered to be longer than 100 years, marked instead by the French Revolution (1789) and the First World War (1914-1918). The former generated a transition period that is considered here to be a pivotal social disruption, as Salmi (2008, p. 5) notes "Contemporaries felt themselves to be living in an age of transition, a watershed between the past and future: an epoch was changing." While political upheavals and wars continued, with the early decades marked by the Napoleonic War, this century was a time of empires, social change such as the abolition of slavery, increasing scientific discoveries and inventions, increased urbanisation and continuing industrialisation (Blanning 2013, Introduction).

The Idea: the establishment of the University of Berlin in 1810 signalled the emergence of the modern university, the precursor of the university of the present (Shils 1992). At the time this university was established there were around eighty-three universities in Europe (Rüegg 2017, p. 3) and "what distinguished … the University of Berlin was the 'Universitas litterarum' intended to achieve a *unity* of teaching and research and provide students with an

all-round humanist education" (Peters & Barnett 2016, p. xxxii; italics in original). Wilhelm von Humboldt is credited with establishing the University as part of a broader restructuring of the Prussian education system (Grafton 1981); it was an institution "founded and maintained by the State, yet enjoying as its most precious privilege the widest freedom of research and teaching … The State … in the government of the university only interfered as far as was absolutely necessary" (Tierney 1937 p.355). The university trained civil servants and professionals for social roles, but it was to do this "in an apparently purpose-free process of searching for truth" (Gellert, cited in Barnett 1993, p. 180), free of any state interference or control. This university was viewed as:

> the moral soul of society and the source of the nation's culture and survival. To ensure the highest form of knowledge (wissenschaft), absolute freedom of teaching and learning (lehrfreiheit and lernfreiheit) was imperative (Perkin 2007, p. 177).

Von Humboldt is cited most often for his commitment to the need for universities to engage in both teaching and research independent of the state, and as the shaper of the German university model, which influenced not only subsequent German universities, but also later European and American research universities (Grafton 1981; Anderson 2010).

It was only when Newman published the *Idea of a University* in 1852 that the Traditional Idea as a concept was given discernible definition and form in the literature. Newman's idea incorporated some of von Humboldt's organising principles, particularly the pursuit of truth and the university as free from state control (Bahti 1987). Despite the fact that Newman's idea about the meaning of a university education was a construction shaped by a very specific idea for a very specific context at a particular time, however, his *singular* idea has been reified to the extent that Rothblatt (1977 p. 328) suggests "that all modern thinking on university education is a series of footnotes to Newman's lectures and essays". Barnett (2011b, p. 3) notes: "Even now, over 150 years after their writings, the works of von Humboldt and Newman continue to provide part of the language of the contemporary university." The combination of the establishment of the modern university in Berlin by von Humboldt and the publication of Newman's lectures is considered here to be the birthplace of the Traditional Idea. Of note is that the term 'the idea of *a* university' was largely superseded in the twentieth century by the slight but significant adaptation to 'the idea of *the* university', a shift discussed further in Section 5.4.

This idea was shaped by academics from *within* the university of this time who presumed the university's purpose was one they could define. More accurately perhaps, was that the university's value was taken-for-granted by the state, which therefore allowed the university to structure and organise itself without interference. With the university's future assured by the state, academics came to believe they knew best about what a university is and what it should do. Their view saw responsibility for higher learning, knowledge generation and transmission to society as existing solely within the university's domain, generated by academics in quiet reflection and in their own time, without interference or distraction from government or broader societal demand – that is, since the state had essentially given universities the right to define their operations free of interference, academics defined not only the university's purpose but also its legitimacy base. This view of the university projected a future where the organisational form constructed by the academics would simply continue unchanged – this was a university that had an assured future, irrespective of the scope or depth of challenges emerging in its social context.

The Traditional Idea's three core assumptions are:

1. **Purpose**: the university has a critical social role to search for truth and educate the elite;
2. **Legitimacy**: normative legitimacy is granted by the state and self-defined by academics – essentially, the university will always be needed by society;
3. **Assumed Future**: by virtue of its longevity and fundamental purpose, the university obviously has an assured future.

5.3.4   The Post-War Period: A Managerial Idea Emerges

After World War II and broader, global reconstruction efforts by governments across the world (Harvey 2005), society began to impinge on the university's boundaries. This is a critical period for the university – the Traditional Idea is dominant but external challenges to its purpose and legitimacy are emerging, first in the form of incremental changes to the university's functions in the 1960s and 1970s and then in more significant changes to both purpose and structure that ultimately led to the legitimacy crisis that saw the Managerial Idea and neoliberal university become dominant from around 1990.

From about 1950, university enrolments increased to cater for demand in new service and welfare economies and the growing public sector globally (Trow 2006). The structure of the

university did not change significantly because of this expansion, even though it was clear that the once implicit relationship between the university and society in the form of the state was becoming more intrusive. Minogue (2017, p. ix) describes this intrusion as a "barbarian assault" on the university, defined by three major shifts in its relationship with society in the 1960s and 1970s. His term is notable not only because of its antagonistic language but also because it indicates how deeply these emerging 'threats' from outside the university were felt by those who held the Traditional Idea.

The first shift was during the 1960s, a decade marked by social upheaval, revolutions and assassinations. Movements and events such as the anti-war and civil rights movements, second wave feminism, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Cultural Revolution in China, and widespread student protests created a watershed in society, the impact of which universities could not escape. The student protests specifically drew universities directly into this social turmoil (Glazer 1968) where they were criticised for being instruments of the state rather than for their students, who demanded more involvement and participation in their education and university governance (Minogue 2017, p. x). Student demands were dismissed with disdain by many academic writers (for example, Preus 1969) but also embraced by others (for example Dungan 1970; Jarrett 1968). Notably in terms of understanding the nature of the Traditional Idea, Macpherson (1969, p. 435, italics added) comments that:

> the students are beginning to think of the universities as *their* universities. They start from the premise that the universities should be for the students in a way they have not been for many centuries. The question that touches us most dearly is, of course, what this is likely to do to *our* vision of the university. For we, as university professors, have been pressing for years now to make the universities more nearly *ours*, on the apparently reasonable ground that *we* know more about knowledge than do boards of governors or legislators.

Here we see an indicator of the second core assumption of the Traditional Idea (legitimacy) surfacing: that it is the *academics* who decided what the university should do – the university belongs to *them*, not students or society – and that it should therefore continue to be free of interference from the *outside*. This interpretation of the idea that the university is 'controlled' by academics certainly reflects Humboldt's nineteenth century modern university's freedom to teach and learn, and while perhaps taken to the extreme by Macpherson, it is an interpretation that, for academics – the dominant stakeholder at this time – legitimises their idea of the university in the face of the external challenge represented by the student protests.

Government reviews in several countries (for example, the Robbins Report in 1963 in the UK, and the Murray Committee (1957) and the Martin Report (1965) in Australia) marked the beginning of the era of 'massification' and growth in Western universities that sought to open up access to the university, although at this point there was still little significant change to its organisational form (Anderson 2010). In Australia and the UK, these reviews established a secondary organisational form to cope with demand – in Australia, the colleges of advanced education (Abbott & Doucouliagos 2003), which were to have enrolled more students in total than universities by the 1970s (O'Byrne & Bond 2014), and in the UK, the polytechnics (Brosan 1972).

The administration of universities became an issue during the 1960s too, with Rourke and Brooks (1966, p. 155) defining changes to how a university was run as a "managerial revolution", noting with some prescience that these changes:

> may eventually be as significant for education as they have been in the past for industry and government, for in the years since World War II, [and] institutions of higher learning have increasingly engaged in a conscious effort to find ways and means of using their resources with greater efficiency.

As the next section shows, a paradigm shift was emerging, one that saw university's purpose as changing from 'by the elite for the elite' (the Traditional Idea) to being 'by the elite for everyone', the impact of which was only understood by academics when it was too late to adapt (Sections 5.3.6 and 5.3.7). Yet even though the university was clearly being asked to change what it did and how it did it, Jaspers (1960, p.19, italics added) wrote:

> The university is a community of scholars and students *engaged in the task of seeking truth. It is a body which administers its own affairs* regardless of whether it derives its means from endowment, ancient property rights or the state; or whether its original public sanction comes from papal bulls, imperial charters or the acts of provinces and states … it derives its autonomy – respected even by the state – from an *imperishable idea of supranational world-wide character*: academic freedom … a privilege which entails the obligation to reach truth, in defiance of anyone outside or inside the university who wishes to curtail it.

The nineteenth century idea did not define academic freedom as a concept in the terms understood by Jaspers – then it was a particular approach to allow learning to occur free of state interference at a particular time – but by the mid-twentieth century, it had become an immutable assumption underpinning academic work and has been defined as an inalienable right of academics (Smith 1971; Trow 1994; Giroux 2006; Fish 2019), one that could be used

to defend the university and academic work in the face of external challenges posed by the expansion of the higher education sector. The Traditional Idea is still dominant here, and Jaspers' assertion is an example of the *singular* idea being defended in response to external challenges. That is, if society is demanding new things of the university, then *the* idea must be reinforced by new interpretations to maintain its validity – because questioning the validity of the Traditional Idea was unthinkable. As Section 5.4 discusses, however, these attempts to defend the idea in the context of a new, emerging university type (the neoliberal university) was a naive positioning, and ultimately could not be sustained.

Only three years after Jaspers defended the Traditional Idea, Kerr (2001, p. vii) accurately asserted that the university was "at a hinge of history." Kerr pointed out that while connected with their past, "they are swinging in another direction … the university needs a rigorous look at the reality of the world it occupies today". He saw the need to re-conceptualise the university as a *multiversity*, which might be viewed as a university type more fit-for-purpose for its times. The Traditional Idea rejected Kerr's positioning, however, with Preus (1969) describing Kerr's analysis as "good natured despair" and Ashby (1967, p. 427) reaffirming that the university's "inheritance [that is, its past form or longevity] defines the prime purpose of the university." Both positions assume a university will continue – Kerr envisions a *new* organisational form though, while both Jaspers (1960) and Ashby (1969) defend its past form as the university the future will need.

The university's structure and operations still had not changed greatly, apart from adapting its functions to respond to the government's requests to take on additional responsibilities as massification of higher education continued, and to include students more actively in governance processes as a result of the student protests.[5] Academics were able to return to their enclaves in the university as Cohen (1973, p. 275) notes: "A strange peace … had settled over the campus. The pressure to "do something" had lifted, and the sighs of relief were audible". But the university was about to move into an even more disruptive period of its history.

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[5] I was a beneficiary of the student protests and the call for more inclusion for students in university governance. I started my university education at Griffith University in 1975 and was appointed as a student representative to a university committee – at that time, students were members of all university committees.

The **second shift** was marked by the beginning of a reversal of power between the university and government in the 1970s, when the power to define the university's purpose and legitimacy began to move outside its boundaries to the state/government:

> A second barbarian assault was waiting in the wings, ready to exploit the vulnerabilities which had been abundantly revealed by student activism. This assault came from government, which very soon began their own much more serious bid to take over the academic world. That assault took the familiar form of seduction: first subsidize, then control by demanding accountability over the use of the taxpayer's money. Governments found that they could advance their electability by promises to expand universities, and to make them indispensable to success in career employment … the essence of such attacks is that something previously independent and self-moving is made the instrument of some external purpose (Minogue 2017, p. x).

While the university has always had a relationship with the state or external authority in some form (Vogel & Kaghan 2001; Buckner 2017), that relationship moved from one previously described with a "semi-reverential attitude" (Carr-Saunders 1940, p. 137) or by "deference" (Collini 2017, p. l.257) to one of increasingly overt control. The massification of higher education had an impact on the size, governance, funding and operations of the university (Bell et al. 1969; Corson & Perkins 1973), leading to the introduction of bureaucratic structures and management, and the emergence of a new occupational class of university administrators which changed both its structure and work practices (Knowles 1970; Sloper 1975) – a process MacPherson (1969 p.436) called "administrative imperialism." Studies focusing on how the university could respond to these new demands being put upon it began to appear which focused on: its structure and operations (Conway 1970; Knowles 1970; Clark 1972, 1973; Perkins, Sanders & Perkins 1973); shifting power relationships (Baldridge 1971; McConnell 1971; Moodie & Eustace 1974); its now many missions (Hamelman 1970); and the need for planning (Lockwood 1972). The seeds of the Managerial Idea that later manifested as the neoliberal university in the 1990s had been sown.

The **third** shift was a much deeper shift in the relationship between the university and society that began in the 1980s (Rüegg 2011, p. 3). By now, *neoliberalism* had begun to shape economic policy in the UK and USA, fundamentally changing the relationship between public organisations and the state as described by Harvey (2005, p. 2):

> Neoliberalism is … a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can be best advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices.

While the impact of neoliberalism on universities became evident in the 1990s, early signals were apparent in the 1980s, emerging largely as the result of the introduction of managerialism into universities:

- the negative reaction to students being considered as 'consumers' or 'customers' (Reisman 1980);

- changes in academic culture, most often signified by a move away from autonomy and collegiality (Clark 1980; Becher & Clark 1984; Bess 1984; Becher 1989);

- an increasing focus on university management alongside its more usual academic processes (Karol & Ginsburg 1980; Chambers 1981; McCorkle Jr. & Archibald 1982; Wheeler 1988);

- in the context of the last point, the emergence in universities of what was later called managerialism became apparent, and manifested in the corporate university (Paterson 1988; Smyth 1989);

- ideological influences on the governance of the university – the early signs of what was later to be called neoliberalism (Collier 1982);

- shifting power relations in the university (Walford 1987); and

- publications defending the Traditional Idea in the face of emerging changes (Ashworth 1985; Halsey 1985; Heyck 1987).

In Australia, the Dawkins review of higher education marked the origins of the neoliberal university, with universities and colleges of advanced education merged, and the relationship between government and university strengthened (Dawkins 1987, 1988). This merging of the smaller university sector with the larger colleges had the same types of cultural issues associated with any merger, and saw critique based on the Traditional Idea directed at the managerial approaches and vocational focus of the colleges and polytechnics which were viewed as antithetical to the universities (for example, Smyth 1989) – but it was too late to stop the changes. As it became clear that the government's interest in defining the university's purpose was not waning and that the control of academics to self-define that purpose was diminishing rapidly (Davies, Gottsche & Bansel 2006), the literature began to

include texts considering how the university was responding to change and new priorities (Bess 1984; Clark 1984; Lane 1985; Lockwood & Davies 1985) and those expressing recognition that the university 'system' was experiencing fundamental changes (Lobkowicz 1983; Neave 1988). Texts on the idea of the university also continued to appear (Halsey 1985; Habermas & Blazek 1987; Heyck 1987), usually defending the Traditional Idea, but the seeds of the Managerial Idea were now taking hold.

5.3.5   The Managerial Idea: A University that Obeys

Pivotal Social Disruption: the Managerial Idea took shape in the 1970s and 1980s (Anderson 2010) and became visible in universities from around 1990 as neoliberalism was increasingly being adopted as an organising philosophy by governments across the world (Harvey 2005). The broad and deep global social shift generated by neoliberalism fundamentally changed, among many other things, how all public organisations operated, and the university was unable to avoid the resulting significant changes to its structure and operations as it had managed to do in the aftermath of the student protests in the 1960s.

The Idea: the Managerial Idea began to be articulated unambiguously in Western universities as governments sought to reform management in all public-sector organisations via New Public Management (Bleiklie 1998), when the university's purpose was challenged in ways that has seen any vestiges of the modern university all but disappear, to be replaced first by the entrepreneurial university in the late 20th century (Slaughter & Leslie 1997; Clark 1998; Király et al. 2013; Jessop 2017) and then by the neoliberal university in the twenty-first century. There was a swift reaction against managerialism by academics, particularly to developments such as: suggestions that the university and a business were alike (Baldwin 1998); the perceived loss of collegiality (Smyth 1989; Lindsay 1995; McNay 1995); viewing students as customers (Baldwin 1994; Scott 1999; Franz 1998) and to the 'invasion' of business-like language into the operations of the university (Reed 1998; Deem 1998; Manne 1999). This resistance was too late, however, and had little influence on the shaping of the rapidly emerging neoliberal university.

The core elements of the Managerial Idea are applicable to *all* public organisations and were conveyed into universities partly by the administrator turned manager, a new role which began to emerge in the 1970s as administrators sought to 'professionalise' their work, and whose members occupied roles separate from those of academics (Walker 1983; Conway

1994, 2000b, 2006b; Dobson & Conway 2003; Whitchurch 2007, 2008; Gordon & Whitchurch 2010; Szekeres 2011). This period also saw the emergence of academic managers (Moodie 1994; Parker & Jarry 1995; Bramble 1996) – academics who moved from teaching and research to new management and leadership roles. It was clear that management of the university by academics – a positioning derived from the Traditional Idea – was no longer effective, and 'deprofessionalisation' of academic work became evident (Trow 1994; Kolsaker 2008). Together these two groups of academic managers and professional managers (collectively termed 'university managers' in this thesis unless otherwise specified) have come to dominate internal decision and policy making about the university's structure, processes, management and work practices that were necessary to maintain the university's legitimacy at this time.

Simultaneously, a perceived divide and tension between academics and the administrator/ manager appeared in the literature (Warner & Palfreyman 1996; Conway 2000; Dobson 2000; McMillin 2002) as managers began to exert authority over academic activity – Abbott's (1988)'s term 'competing professions' is an apt description of this relationship. The tension in this relationship is directly correlated with the tension between the Traditional and Managerial Ideas. The increased professionalism of managers parallels the rise of neoliberalism in universities, and their growing decision making power at the expense of academics ultimately led to this disconnect (Conway 1998; Szekeres 2004; McMaster 2005; Whitchurch 2006; Bailey & Freedman 2011; Smyth 2017). Those who held the Traditional Idea were then not only defending the university from the *external* incursion of managerialism into the university but also in an *internal* conflict with this new manager class.[6]

It is unlikely that this shift from the academic-led university of the past to the manager-led university of the present could have been prevented in a higher education industry that was continuing to expand rapidly to meet increasing social needs for education and that existed in

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[6] The argument in this paragraph is clearly evident in the literature and, in hindsight, supported by my experience as a manager, someone who, in hindsight, conveyed managerialism into the university in my work. I had served my apprenticeship in a 1970s university and I viewed the university as an academic place, one where academics made the critical decisions. Roles were clear. In the 1980s and 1990s, I experienced the push-back of academics to my role, even though I perceived I was being collaborative and understood what working in an academic organisation meant. I was always perplexed by the sometimes ferocity of this resistance which led to me publishing on the relationship in an attempt to justify the managerial role I was undertaking (referenced in the thesis where appropriate). It also led to my first attempt at a PhD in the 1990s exploring the relationship between academics and managers and now, in this PhD, I am able to resolve the disconnect I felt at the time in the context of the contest between the Traditional and Managerial Ideas.

a world that was adopting managerial approaches in public organisations. The term 'managerialism' has always had negative connotations in universities, however, and with the emergence of neoliberalism, the two terms were inextricably linked. Managerialism came to be seen as "the organisational arm of neoliberalism … the mode of governance designed to realise the neoliberal project through the institutionalising of market principles in the governance of organisations" (Lynch 2014b), and as "a political project, borne out of a radical change in the spirit of neoliberal capitalism" (Sowa & Lynch 2018, p. 203). Mutch and Tatebe (2017, p. 222) describe neoliberalism as "a comprehensive world view where the underpinning assumptions and discourses are portrayed authoritatively yet unquestioningly." While Shepherd (2018) seeks to separate managerialism and neoliberalism, most literature combines the two terms into concepts like 'neoliberal managerialism' (Reed 1999; Manathunga & Bottrell 2019). The Managerial Idea could also have been termed the *Neoliberal Idea* in this research which would give it currency, and the choice of the term *Managerial* was made only because managerialism preceded neoliberalism in the literature reviewed.

The assumed future embedded in the Managerial Idea is one where the university continues to be inextricably connected to national goals, with its structure and operations resembling a business, with a top-down 'command and control' culture (Howes 2018, p. 450). The university is economic, effective, and efficient in what it does, and meets all government requirements. For academics, however, there is an image of the future that sees the university as an instrument of the state that has lost its soul (Alvares & Faruqi 2014; Blackmore 2016) – or perhaps has made a Faustian pact and 'sold' it. The Managerial Idea's three core assumptions are:

Purpose: that the university's role is defined by the state to meet national economic priorities and needs;

Legitimacy: that the university is a public organisation like any other and so has regulatory legitimacy; and

Assumed Future: that the neoliberal university will always be fit for purpose if it continues to respond to the dictates of market capitalism.

5.3.6   The Reframed Idea: A University Redesigned

Pivotal Social Disruption: the Reframed Idea emerged as the perceived negative impact of neoliberalism became real in the first decade of the twenty-first century, causing some

academics to seek a way to escape the neoliberal university, *and* when outside the university, social sentiment began to shift as the impact of neoliberalism's destructive impact on the planet and humanity became apparent. Here, the early stages of a pivotable social disruption are considered to be underway in the present, generated not by the state or society but by individuals and groups within the university seeking to redesign the foundations of the university *in* society (Heffernan 2012; Slaughter 2015; Lombardo 2016; Tufano & Siesfield 2016; Batson 2019; Haque 2019).

The Idea: while managerialism changed the structure, processes and relationships within the university and externally with government in the 1990s, the Traditional Idea still remained strong in the 'resistance' literature. The neoliberal university of the twenty-first century, however, altered the fundamental nature of the university's organisational form, its purpose and legitimacy base. The literature displays outrage at the impact of these changes and at what has been 'done to' the university (Slaughter & Rhoades 2000; Davies, Gottsche & Bansel 2006; Shore 2010; Samier 2010; Hill 2016). It was this outrage, expressed by Reed (1999, p. 9) as "appreciable loss of control" by academics to frame the university's purpose, role and functions, that gave rise to the Reframed Idea which is, essentially, the *absolute* rejection of the Managerial Idea and of the *very concept* of a neoliberal university.

Literature in first two decades of the twenty-first century is marked by "a shift from conceptions of resistance as subversion or opposition to one of resistance as transformation" (Amsler 2011, p. 77). This literature no longer rails against the neoliberal university and instead indicates an acceptance of its reality, its impact and, more notably, a recognition that academics were too late to realise *exactly* what was happening to their university in the 1980s and 1990s (Davies, Gottsche & Bansel 2006; Newfield 2016), *and* that some were actually complicit in enabling the embedding of neoliberal approaches in the university (Barkawi 2013; Kalfa, Wilkinson & Gollan 2018). This realisation continues the outrage that academics no longer control their work or the university that is articulated in the resistance literature, but it has *not* engendered a sense of hopelessness, instead creating a sense of hope and urgency for change, from which the Reframed Idea emerged (Bacevic 2018):

> The main problem is the ecosystem in which universities are [now] embedded. If we want to imagine new communities of knowledge, we must set them up in a new ecosystem, not governed by the same incentives, rewards and penalizations of the performance-based university. We should expand the space of knowledge creation and innovation beyond the borders of universities and explore new modes of organizing.

Those who hold this idea have essentially decided *not to play the neoliberal game*[7] anymore. Drawing on the values of the Traditional Idea, they are very deliberately seeking to establish new forms of the university, *outside* the mainstream higher education sector and theoretically beyond the reach of the Managerial Idea and its manifestation as the neoliberal university (Butcher 2016). They seek "a real alternative, neither private nor public, that undermines … the logic of the capitalist state on which it [the neoliberal university] is premised" (Neary & Winn 2016, p. 3). This idea is driving a search for new structures and ways of operating (Bacevic, D'Silva & Guzman-Concha 2018; Facer 2018). They seek to reframe the values of the Traditional Idea, not in the form of the elite university of the past; rather, they are seeking a university that maintains the academic control of the university but with a stronger focus on students and social issues.

These new universities seek to take back the right to define their legitimacy base, but because they still require some form of regulatory legitimacy for their establishment – for example, they are currently established using legislation for co-operative organisations (Altuna 2016; Glaser 2017) – their relationship with the state remains, albeit not as strong or as invasive as the more direct government-neoliberal university relationship. What is different here is that while the reframed universities may need to meet legislative requirements, they may also have freedom to design their structure, operations and work practices that "place scholars rather than managers at the heart of higher education policy" (Boden, Ciancanelli & Wright 2012, p. 22). Because the Reframed Idea is *emergent*, it is not certain whether the new universities will take their legitimacy from acceptance *by* society (in the form of a social compact for example), or by the legislative arrangements used to establish their physical forms. If it is the former – acceptance by society – then the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas (see below) will *both* exist entirely outside the university.

The Reframed Idea is based on the following core assumptions:

1. **Purpose**: the university has a necessary and foundational social role to generate knowledge *for* society;
2. **Legitimacy**: the university draws it legitimacy from this social role; and
3. **Assumed Future**: by virtue of its longevity *and* its social role, the university has an assured future.

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[7] A phase used at the University Futures Conference I attended in 2016 (Danish School of Education 2016).

5.3.7   The Dismissive Idea: A University no More

Pivotal Social Disruption: the Dismissive Idea is emerging as the result of a social shift affecting universities that probably began in the late 2000s, when Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) made their appearance, providing a technological solution to democratising knowledge and thereby moving it outside the walls of the university (Downes 2012; Webley 2012; Losh 2017). In the second decade, public confidence in the university's value had declined significantly as the result of the intersection of factors such as:

- the university being implored to disrupt itself to be innovative (Christensen & Eyring 2011);

- increasing costs of a university education with little perceived return in the form of employment (Pearlstein 2015; Moran & Powell 2018; Myton 2018a);

- growing perceptions about the university's inability to change (Kirschner 2010);

- increasing student debt (Kirschner 2012; Tiefenthaler, Barron & Verret 2018); and

- the real possibility of designing one's own university education (Kamenetz 2010; Pownall 2019).

In this idea, the university's purpose *and* legitimacy is being questioned (Brewer 2017), and futures without a university are being envisioned (Bacevic, D'Silva & Guzman-Concha 2018).

The Idea: in contrast to the three other ideas, this literature is found largely in sources such as blogs, social media, and newspapers rather than in conventional academic publications. It focuses on issues perceived through a social rather than a university lens, and challenges the university's positioning in a society faced with issues such as:

- the post-truth society (Wilber 2017; Lewandowsky, Ecker & Cook 2017; Peters 2018);
- surveillance capitalism as a new reality (Zuboff 2019);
- declining trust in public institutions (Newton & Norris 2018);
- increasing access to knowledge that is open to all via the internet (Williams 2011);
- concern with the impact of climate change (Klein 2014; Monibot 2018) and
- the rise of individualism and declining social belief in the public good (Simmel 2007).

Now, new forms of learning, research and knowledge generation are accessible for free or low cost for students and the public. Personalisation of learning experiences, 'just in time' delivery and micro-credentials are becoming more common as mainstream learning options are delivered online or outside the university (Moodie 2016; McCowan 2017; Marshall 2018; Morris 2018).

While the three other ideas have been constructed largely from different beliefs about the university's *purpose*, this idea focuses primarily on the university's *legitimacy* – its rapidly declining value and impact in society and its perceived inability to not only provide affordable access to learning but also to address major social, environmental and global challenges lie at the heart of this idea. While the university's purpose, structure or operations have been challenged in the past, that criticism has rarely, if at all, challenged its legitimacy in the sense of its authority to *even* exist. Brewer (2017; bold in original) exhibits the frustration that is typical of the Dismissive Idea:

> But do any of these organizations take a fully integrative approach to the coupling of human and ecological systems capable of designing and implementing policy solutions … to avoid planetary-scale systemic collapse? Do they train people to intervene in ways that can save us from running ourselves off a civilizational cliff? … **Are universities really failing humanity? I'm afraid the answer currently is yes. Will they continue to do so? That is a matter of culture design**—only if we choose to remain on our current course knowing systemic collapse will arise somewhere down the road.

The university's relevance is diminished within society, and its continued existence is no longer assured. Many suggest that the university's value is so limited that it is no longer *needed* and therefore needs to be 'destroyed' (Bacevic 2017; Jenkins 2018; Deuze 2018). The university has been *dismissed* – its legitimacy withdrawn by society.

Because the Dismissive Idea is also emergent, its exact form and potential power to disrupt the Managerial Idea and/or the Reframed Idea and their assumed futures is not yet apparent. What is clear, however, is that this idea generates a future image that does not include the university of the present. Whether the university survives in another form – as was the case when the neoliberal university emerged – or whether the university ceases to exist is something yet to be determined. Nevertheless, the three core assumptions of the Dismissive Idea at this point in its development can be identified:

1. **Purpose**: the university has no valid purpose; it has passed its 'use by date';

2. **Legitimacy**: the university is no longer needed for access to knowledge and credentials by individuals and society; and therefore

3. **Assumed Future**: the university in its current organisational form does not have a future.

5.4   The Ideas and the University

5.4.1   Understanding the Relationship

With the ideas and their assumptions defined, this section moves to explore the relationship between the ideas, the university and society. There is clear acceptance in the literature that *an* idea of the university exists. Barnett (2011a, p. 109) writes: "the university cannot be understood independently of the ideas it embodies", and Rothblatt (1977, p. 44) suggests that "the idea of the idea of the university is talismanic." Magical qualities or not, this distinction between *the idea* and *the idea of the idea* is important. The idea as a *singular* concept has led to the view that any temporal 'type' of university *always* embodies a corresponding idea that share the same label. The shift from Newman's *The Idea of **a** University* to the more generic *the idea of **the** university* in the twentieth century reflects this shift from an idea designed for a specific university at a specific time to one that views the idea as a 'one-size-fits-all concept', one that now appears to be used to *define* the university in multiple – and confusing – ways. As Peters and Barnett (2018, p. xxix) write:

> In the contemporary literature, one finds *ideas* around the university of wisdom, the public university, the open university (in a digital age), the civic university (anew), the creative university and the ecological university … The contemporary landscape of the idea of the university is not just awash with ideas, but it is a site of conflicting ideas."

Peters and Barnett (2018, p. xxix) argue the concept of the idea still has value though, with the proliferation of ideas in the present actually indicating that "the conceptual base of the idea of the university is being widened." This widening of the conceptual base of ideas in the present is viewed from a different perspective in this chapter.

Section 5.4 demonstrates that the emergence of a new university type in response to social change has come to mean that there must also be a corresponding idea – hence Peters and Barnett's 'ideas around the university' and the proliferation of ideas. This perspective sees

the conceptual idea taking on a different identity depending on the university type that exists at different points in time. Since the idea and the university are considered to share the same defining label, the idea's visibility in the discourse fades over time, its influence *always* assumed but never considered overtly. The result is what Peters and Barnett (2016, p. xiii) note: that most literature about "the university qua institution takes little heed of the university qua idea." From this perspective, even though the idea as a cultural concept might have a literature that "has an integrity of its own" (Peters and Barnett 2018, p. xiv), it *has* lost integrity as the powerful cultural construct that it is considered to be in this research, as suggested by Barnett (2012a, p. 3):

> talk of "the idea of the university" may seem to be redundant at best and pretentiousness at worst. The "idea of the university" seems to have had meaning in an age in which universities were largely undifferentiated and serving a small (actually an "elite") section of society. In an age in which the meaning of "university" simply cannot be either stable or uniform, engaging in an inquiry into the future idea of the university becomes redundant. It can have no purchase. It is also pretentious in that it pretends to a unity that is now lost from view. And it pretends that there could be ways of talking of the university that have a universal connotation, above and beyond the particularities of institutional forms and fluidities.

This interpretation of the idea as having 'no purchase' is asserted because the idea is still fundamentally understood as the singular, universal concept of the past. If, as Peters and Barnett suggest, there is a proliferation of ideas in the present, the singular concept of the past will lose validity. Continuing to view the idea as this singular concept – and complicitly defined by the Traditional Idea – has trapped the discourse about the idea in a circular argument. That is, while the reality that the Traditional Idea is now *not* 'fit-for-purpose' for its times is recognised, its power as the only articulated idea remains so strong that attempts are still made to justify its 'rightness' in the literature by giving it a multitude of new conceptual labels seemingly to keep it 'alive' – even though the resulting proliferation of ideas only confuses that discourse and reduces the perceived validity of the idea.

The perspective taken in this chapter is that while the idea only has validity in the context of the university, that relationship *is* always two-way – in a strictly constructionist sense, they are considered to shape and be shaped by each other in an incontrovertible and interdependent relationship. This means that each construct has an integrity and value of its own that needs to be first understood independently before the relationship *between* the two can be considered. The next section discusses how the four ideas have come to co-exist over

time as a precursor for reframing the existing relationship between the idea and the university that is defined by the literature.

5.4.2   A Reframed Present

This research focuses on how the idea as a *cultural construct* can be understood in its own right – to demonstrate that the idea is not fixed forever as the Traditional Idea, and that it too can evolve as a concept and sustain new versions of the university as they emerge. The idea can then be understood not as a meaningless proliferation of labels for new university *types* but as a conceptual manifestation of what is described variously in the literature as the university's *essence* (Phillips 1994; Bengtsen & Barnett 2018) or its *soul* (Blackmore 2016; Deboick 2018), concepts that are not tied to a particular historical period or a particular university type. At the core of the discourse as understood in this research is the *meaning* attached to the university – as defined by the ideas. That is, as the university's organisation form changes over time, the *idea* remains as a conceptual scaffold for understanding the university's assumed inherent value to society at different points in time for three of the four ideas, and why that value is dismissed in the fourth idea.

The idea can only be *understood* in the context of the university *but* seeking this understanding does *not* mean the idea can *only be defined* by the current university type. It has its own inherent value. Figure 5.1 draws on discussion in Section 5.3 to visualise the evolution of the four ideas over time to make clear this relationship between the idea and the university in their social contexts in the past and present.

The left-hand side of Figure 5.1 positions the Traditional Idea as emerging from the modern university in Germany – signified by the dotted orange arrow going *from* the university to the idea – a period when academic freedom and autonomy, combined with the search for truth and a purpose to educate the elite, constructed a deep, strong and enduring cultural base for understanding what a university *is*. In this period, the purpose and legitimacy base assumed in the idea and enacted in the university were aligned. Then, as shown in the middle of Figure 5.1, following the pivotal social disruption that occurred following World War II and the eventual rise of neoliberalism, this alignment failed – indicated by the green dotted line disconnect between the neoliberal university and the Traditional Idea. Instead, the alignment of purpose and legitimacy now exists between the Managerial Idea and neoliberal university, indicated by the two-way green dotted arrow.
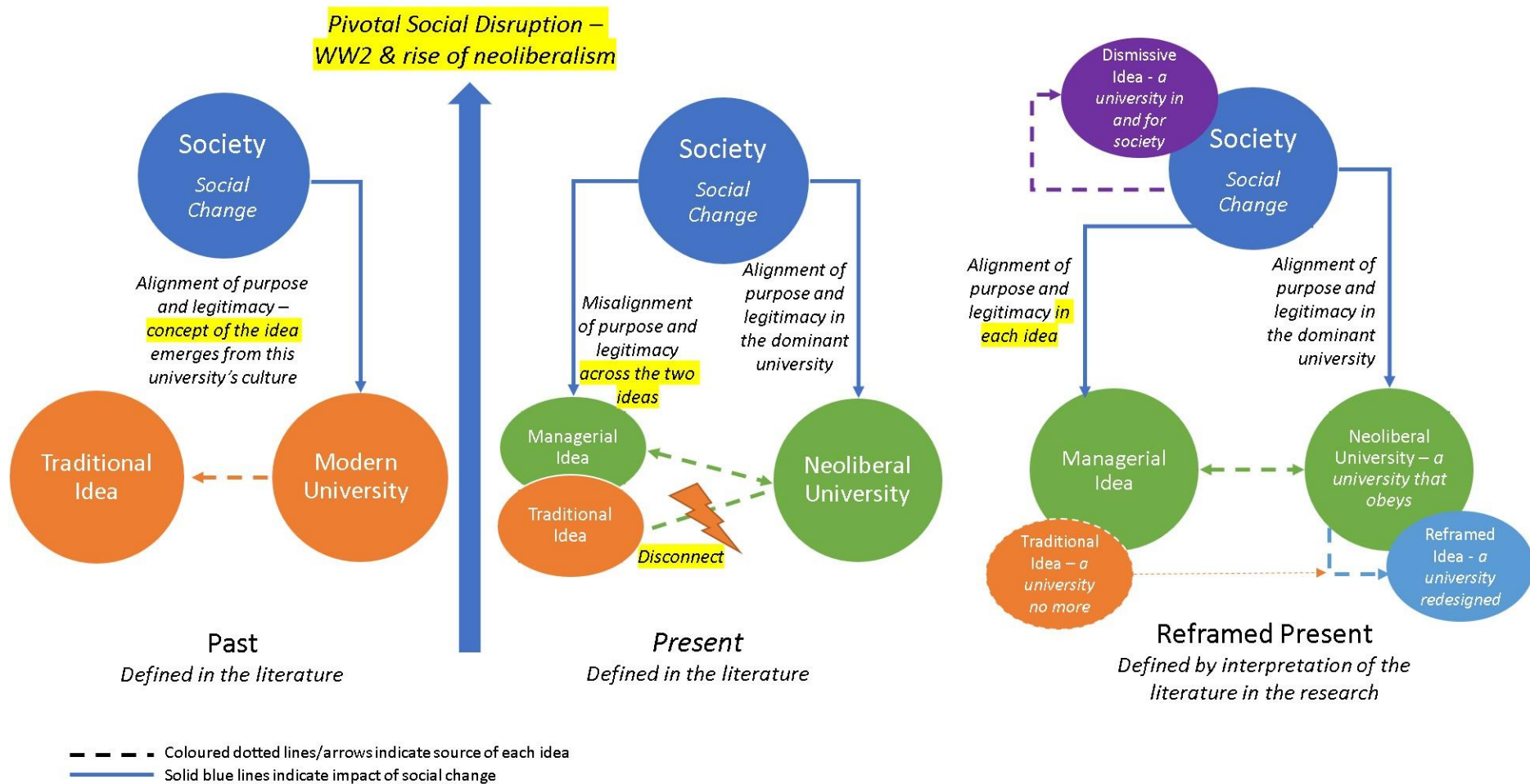
Figure 5.1 Evolution of the Ideas in Relationship to the University and Society

In what is called 'the reframed present' on the right-hand side of Figure 5.1, the neoliberal university and its Managerial Idea are dominant and there is a two-way connection (green dotted line) as purpose and legitimacy remain aligned. The Traditional Idea continues to lose relevance in its contest with the neoliberal university (indicated by the lack of any line connecting the two). There is, however, a connection between the Traditional and Reframed Ideas (light orange dotted line), indicating its influence on the emergence of the Reframed Idea which is moving away from *within* the neoliberal university (indicated by the one-way blue dotted line). Similarly, the Dismissive Idea which also rejects the neoliberal university has emerged from within society – *outside* the university – indicated by the one-way purple dotted line. The three assumptions are valid for each idea in the present but only one idea is dominant in the present, reflecting the university that is fit-for-purpose for its times.

Figure 5.1 shows that all four ideas not only co-exist in the present. It also demonstrates that moving beyond the Traditional Idea as the source of understanding what a university *is* what will allow Peters and Barnett's (2018) desired widening of the idea's the conceptual base to become a possibility in the discourse – but *not* in the form of a proliferation of ideas. This more evolutionary frame positions the idea as a construct fit-for-purpose for its times, not one that must be defended even when it is clear it is losing its legitimacy in a changing social context.

This positioning does two things: **one**, as the next section defines, it allows a proliferation of university types to exist without doing damage to the conceptual idea; and **two**, it explains how the four ideas are able to co-exist in the present without doing damage to the validity of the still strong belief in the Traditional Idea.

5.4.3   A Reframed Relationship

Assuming that a new university type automatically means that there is a corresponding idea does the idea as a powerful and collective cultural construct a disservice. Figure 5.2 provides a 'flipped' perspective to demonstrate how a range of university types can by clustered *by* the four ideas – instead of having the 'forced' one-to-one relationship generated by the continuing strong belief in the idea of the past.

Traditional Idea	Managerial Idea	Reframed Idea	Dismissive Idea
Modern University	*Neoliberal University*	*Co-operative University*	*??*
■ German university ■ English university ■ French university ■ American university ■ Australian university ■ The Multiversity	■ Managerial university ■ Corporate university ■ Bureaucratic university ■ Entrepreneurial University ■ Digital university ■ Virtual university	■ Academic community ■ Ecological university ■ ??	■ No university (as understood today)

Figure 5.2 Indicative Types of University in Each Idea

The dominant type of university for each idea is defined underneath the title of the specific idea, and the question marks for the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas indicate that there will likely be more university types emerging in the future.

- The dominant university form for the Traditional Idea was the modern university, capturing the national universities as they were established in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries until World War II. As Section 5.3 discussed, this idea underpinned a range of university types during this period.

- Post-World War II, when the university's relationship with the state began to change and managerialism began to emerge, the influence of the Traditional Idea waned, and the modern university became an historical artefact. The Managerial Idea also underpins a range of university types, all of which are designed around what is understood today to be neoliberal principles.

- The Reframed Idea, with its search for a new version of the university's organisational form, is currently manifested as the co-operative university – one managed cooperatively by academics and students – but this could and probably will change if this idea strengthens.

- The Dismissive Idea, of course, has no university as it is understood in the present, and exactly how it will evolve *in* society is not yet known.

The conceptual power of the idea then moves beyond the one-to-one relationship with the university assumed in much of the literature and becomes worthy of the depth of belief in its continuing value also found in that literature. To do justice to this belief in the idea, the next section discusses how a new positioning of the idea as a *meta-concept* not only facilitates the

required inclusion of the four ideas in the discourse today but also ensures that its critical role when the university's possible futures are imagined is made visible in that discourse.

5.5   The Idea as a Meta-Concept

Accepting that the university *type* does not define the *idea* first requires further exploration of the literature. The integrated stance of this research and its interpretive approach *have* allowed the four ideas and their assumptions to be identified in the literature, even though the literature around the idea and the future of the university in that literature largely describes a different perspective to that posited in this chapter. For example, Rothblatt (2012, p. 25) writes:

> that "no single idea prevails, but many exist. The extent to which they are actually operable … is impossible to determine apart from their rhetorical use … Can all of these exist simultaneously as a single and unified commitment? No, because they lead in different directions, depending upon circumstances. Can they exist if knowledge domains are disaggregated and free to establish their own priorities and connections within untidy boundaries? Yes … the multiversity is a collection of niches, for disciplines for individuals.

Rothblatt perhaps exhibits the confusion generated by assuming the idea and the university are necessarily equivalent – that if there are many universities, there must be many ideas. The literature demonstrates that, in their attempts to validate the singular Traditional Idea in a university where it is not relevant, authors have in fact demonstrated that it is the construct itself that matters. That is, they wanted *an* idea to be valid, but with only the Traditional Idea as their reference point, they had to reinterpret that idea to fit every new university type that emerged, which is essentially pointless as Rothblatt describes clearly. Rothblatt's interpretation of the idea and the university means that the idea loses validity because of attempts to make it "operable" – able to be used when discussing the university. The singular idea has little value in this context but that does not mean that its conceptual significance is diminished. Barnett (2012, p. 3) asks a question based on Rothblatt's beliefs – "does the very "idea of the university" retain any substance?" It is argued here that the idea does indeed retain significant substance, but *only* if viewed through a different lens that reframes the symbiotic relationship between the idea and the university.

As discussed in Section 5.2, the university is able to *maintain* its legitimacy by making incremental functional changes until a new idea emerges when a pivotal social disruption requires a fundamental change to *both* purpose and legitimacy. The four ideas can then be

understood as being fit-for-purpose in specific times and contexts that *can and do* lose relevance as those times and contexts change. But, critically, 'old' ideas do not disappear from the university's culture (the power of the Traditional Ideas demonstrates this), nor do they lose influence in the discourse, as is discussed in Chapter 6.

This new positioning sees old ideas that have lost their legitimacy as part of a 'history of the ideas', a stance that leads to the idea being considered as a *meta-concept* that enables ideas of the past, present and future to be valued in the discourse. The meta-concept – the idea of the ideas – provides an overarching, more inclusive scaffold for the four ideas, and yet to emerge ideas, allowing them all to be unique to their historical contexts *and* understood as collectively constructing the deeper, persistent cultural milieu of the university. This construct transcends the search for the universal singular idea that has lost validity over time and is "impoverished" (Barnett 2011a, p. 154), and instead gives depth to our understanding of the conceptual idea. It is a social construct, one that provides a language of interpretation and a set of assumptions to generate and support shared understandings about the university that allows people to make their ideas 'real' (Lincoln & Guba 2013).

The three assumptions are dimensions of the meta-concept, and while these assumptions change as society changes and new ideas emerge (Section 5.3), the overarching *construct –* the meta-concept – remains valid. The idea as meta-concept can then be viewed as somewhat pliable and permeable to change, ensuring both that no idea is privileged over another and that the dominant idea is the one that is relevant for social conditions at any given time. Figure 5.3 shows how this meta-concept might be understood.
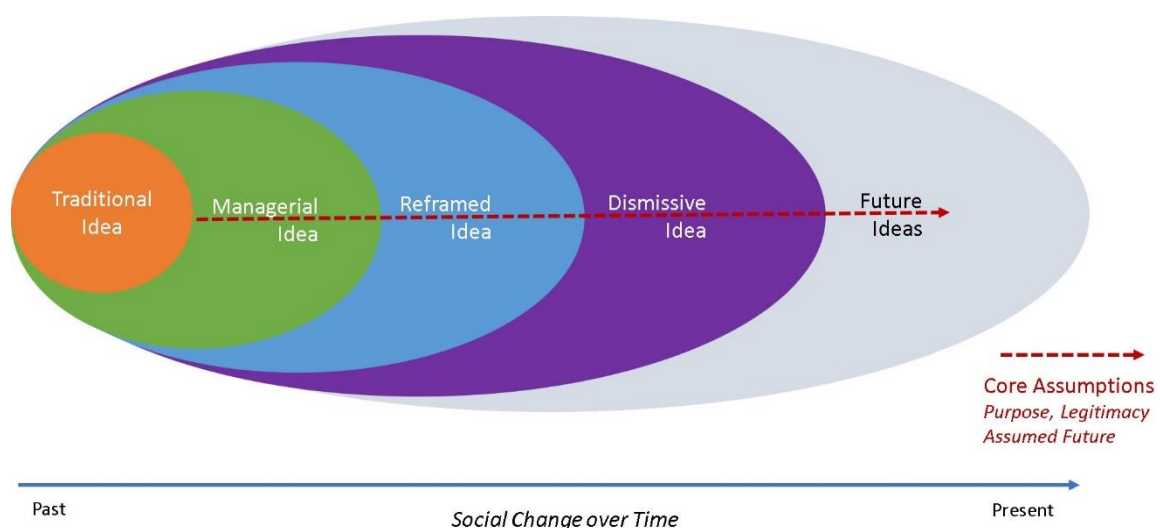
Figure 5.3 The Idea as a Meta-Concept

The idea exists in two states. **First**, in a diachronic state as the meta-concept that explains the evolutionary power of the idea over time. **Second**, it exists in a synchronic state, as an *idea variation*. In its *synchronic* form, the idea manifests as *variations* specific to particular times and contexts, with only one idea dominant at any given time. The Traditional Idea, in hindsight, can now be considered to be the first variation which lost validity with the emergence of the Managerial Idea, the second variation. As discussed in Section 5.3, the rejection of the Managerial Idea has led to the emergence of the Reframed Idea – the third variation. Finally, rejection of *any* idea and *any* university has seen the Dismissive Idea emerge as a fourth variation.

The existence of these four ideas can then be understood as collectively generating this 'history of the ideas', one that enables all four ideas to now be made visible in the discourse. The diachronic layer of the meta-concept provides a 'container' or template (defined by the three assumptions) for the synchronic expression of the idea variations in different contexts and times. Importantly, 'the idea' continues to be embodied in the university, embedded in its culture, its symbolic meaning assured over time. No longer defined only by the Traditional Idea of the past, the idea is repositioned for the present, and reclaims its conceptual validity, power and visibility in the discourse that were lost in the confusion caused by the proliferation of ideas.

A new narrative, a new way of 'seeing' the university is constructed when an idea variation emerges, one that allows the university to re-position itself in its *new* societal context to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose and considered legitimate. When the university's purpose and its legitimacy base have realigned in the new context, a new assumed future that reflects the dominant idea takes shape. Because the meta-concept allows all ideas to co-exist, their four possible futures also co-exist in the discourse, demonstrating that today's university is no longer the single assumed future. Figure 5.4 shows this positioning of the idea as a meta-concept in relation to the four idea variations and the many university types that manifest in each idea.
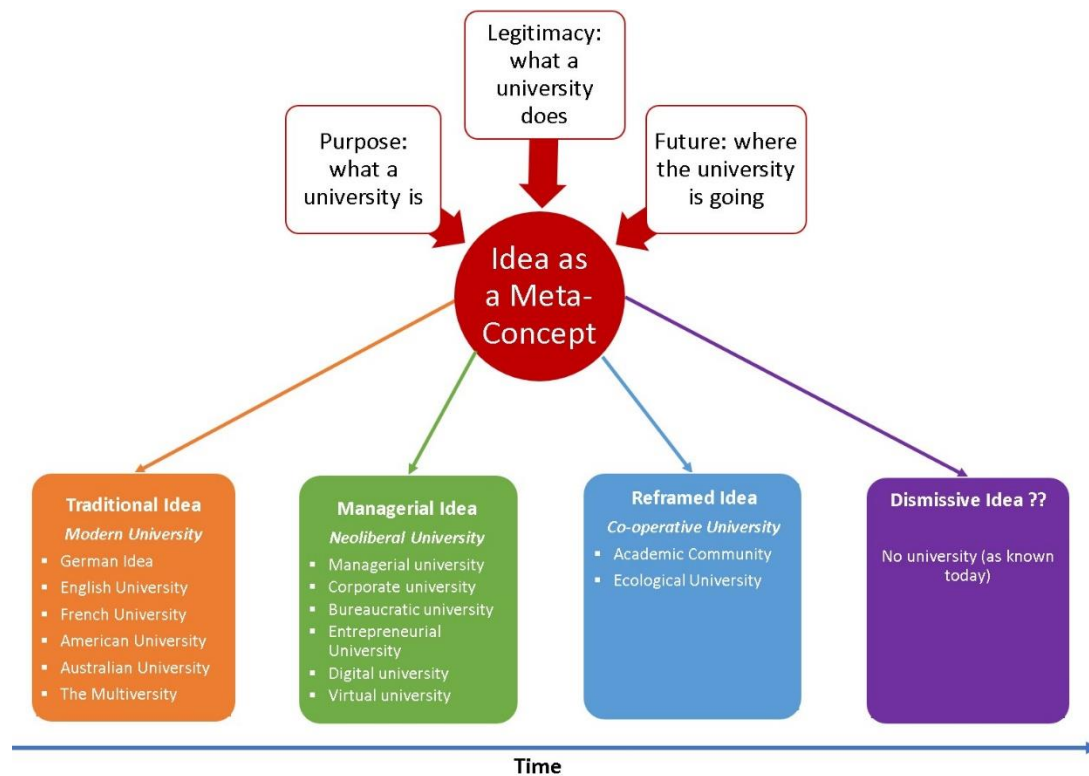
Figure 5.4 The Idea as a Meta-Concept and University Types

As already discussed, the idea and the university are ultimately symbiotic – they *do* need each other to survive. If the idea is considered to be always changing, however, one that needs to be constantly reimagined, it becomes a *fragile* concept that loses its meaning over time – and hence, becomes invisible in the discourse as Peters and Barnett (2018) asserted (Section 5.4.1). Here, it is posited to be a robust and enduring cultural construct, one essential to understanding how the university has evolved, is evolving *and* its future possibilities. Most importantly, the validity of *the idea* now does not have to be dismissed because there are a multiplicity of university types existing in the present.

Rather, the idea as a meta-concept can expand to let in new university types (Figure 5.3) and can *integrate* them under the current idea variation's umbrella (Barnett, 2012, p. 3). This meta-concept positioning has the potential to open up the discourse to not only value *all* ideas but to seek to find the *right* idea for the university at *any* particular point in its evolution, and to ensure that the future gets the university it needs, one that is fit-for-purpose for whatever future might ultimately take shape – including one where the university of today no longer exists.

5.6   Concluding Comments

This chapter asserted that the idea is more than an adjective to be attached to the word *university* (Figure 5.2) – a practice that occurs only because the idea's value is invisible in the extant discourse. The idea was instead positioned as an enduring *meta-concept* worthy of exploration in its own right and articulated clearly so that its impact on today's discourse surfaces into collective consciousness. Only then can the depth of feeling about the university that is *so* clear in the literature be honoured, the collective understandings of the university's purpose, legitimacy and assumed future be recognised and explored for relevance and validity, and the idea's power to shape the discourse about the university's possible futures be truly – and deeply – comprehended. Chapter 6 shifts the focus from the more static analysis here to an integrative stance, seeking a holistic perspective that enables a discussion about how the ideas co-exist in the present, how they shape the extant discourse and how they constrain the emergence of the university's possible futures.

Chapter 6: The Dynamics of the Ideas

6.1 Overview

This chapter moves from exploring individual ideas in Chapter 5 to a more integrated stance that seeks to understand the 'ideas ecosystem' that the ideas have collectively constructed in the present. The historical evolution of the ideas defined in Chapter 5 is essentially linear but their co-existence in the present has become entangled and interdependent – understanding the nature of this interdependence is the focus of this chapter. Drawing on the discussion in Chapter 5, a comparison of the three assumptions first shows the differences and similarities across the ideas, enabling the contest between them to be made clear. Three different perspectives are then applied to the discourse, providing distinct interpretations to define how the ideas co-exist in the present. **First**, drawing on Williams (1997), the ideas are positioned in the discourse (Section 6.3), and the nature of their co-existence is demonstrated. **Second**, the Three Horizons frame (Section 6.4) is used to define the relationship of the ideas in the present and their evolution into the future. **Third**, drawing on the Three Horizons, a new 'futures mindsets' perspective is derived from the arguments made by each idea to justify and defend its assumed future in the discourse to demonstrate that by integrating these mindsets, five futures for the university become possible.

6.1.1 Chapter Structure

Section 6.2 continues where Chapter 5 finished by overtly connecting the four ideas, **first** by integrating the university's three assumptions in each idea, and **second**, by positioning the ideas in terms of their relationship with the university.

Section 6.3 continues to shift the focus from individual ideas to the ideas ecosystem by defining the position of each idea in the extant discourse by using Raymond William's (1997) work on culture.

Section 6.4 maps the co-existence of the four ideas in the present using the Three Horizons frame which demonstrates how each idea holds different perspectives of the university's

future in the present, essentially defining the coexistence of and contested nature of the relationship across the ideas.

Section 6.5 analyses the intersection of possible futures in the ideas via 'Futures Mindsets' to indicate how each idea argues for, and defends, its assumed future at the expense of futures assumed by other ideas.

Section 6.6 concludes the chapter.

6.2   Connecting the Ideas

6.2.1   Comparing the Three Assumptions

Table 6.1 summarises the three core assumptions of each idea and identifies the stakeholder group which has shaped each, showing how the nature of the assumptions underpinning the ideas have changed over time.

Table 6.1 The Ideas of the University in the Present

Idea	Purpose	Legitimacy Basis	Assumed Future	Stakeholder Group
Traditional Idea *Circa 1800 to 1950*	*Essential*: the university has a critical social role to search for truth and educate the elite	*Normative Legitimacy:* granted by the state but self-defined by academics – the university will always be needed by society	By virtue of its longevity and fundamental purpose, the university has an assured future	Academics
Managerial Idea *Circa 1950 to present*	*Directed*: the university's purpose & role is defined by the state	*Regulatory Legitimacy*: the university is a public organisation like any other	The neoliberal university will always be fit for purpose, so its future is assured	Government & Managers
Reframed Idea *Circa 2000 to present*	*Refound*: the university has a necessary foundational social/public role in society	*Regulatory or Normative Legitimacy:* The university exists *in* and *for* society	By virtue of its longevity, the university has an assured future, but in a new form	Academics & Society
Dismissive Idea *Circa 2010 to present*	*None*: the university as such has passed its 'use by date'	*Media Legitimacy:* The university is no longer needed for access to knowledge & learning	The university of the present does not have a future, learning will move into society	Individuals and/or groups in Society

Purpose has shifted from being defined within the university (Traditional Idea) to being defined outside the university by governments (Managerial Idea) and focuses on meeting national priorities and audit requirements – the state here is one that 'owns' the sector, compared to the state regulation of the modern university in the nineteenth century when the state essentially 'trusted' the university to meet society's needs. The Reframed Idea is seeking a purpose that recaptures the values of the Traditional Idea – one that reframes the social and public role of the university from the past, seeking learning *for* society. The purpose of the Dismissive Idea cannot yet be defined precisely and is best understood now as learning *in and for* society.

The university's original normative **legitimacy** base – where its *internally* self-defined purpose was accepted by society – has been replaced by regulatory legitimacy in the present, requiring universities to meet *externally* defined roles to maintain its legitimacy. The Reframed Idea, regarding the neoliberal university as illegitimate, is seeking to re-establish the university's normative legitimacy, but it will likely need a combination of both regulatory legitimacy (to authorise operation as a university in the present) and normative legitimacy (some form of social compact with society that reflects the values of Traditional Idea). The Dismissive Idea currently has media legitimacy, its position on the university's purpose and legitimacy justified by popular opinion, but ultimately it will also require at least some form of normative legitimacy to be accepted as relevant by society.

Assumptions about the university's **future** held by the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas are different in nature, but share a common belief that while the university's purpose and legitimacy base has changed since 1800, the university of some ilk will always exist. The Dismissive Idea assumes a future without a university in its current form, an assumption that actually has the most potential to open up the extant discourse beyond the confines of the ideas, as is discussed in Chapters 9 and 10.

Table 6.1 also shows the dominant **stakeholder** group which defines the university's legitimacy, and which influences policy and decision making in the present. That legitimacy base has swung like a pendulum between normative and regulatory states over the university's past and present. The idea of the university's value for society has remained strong until the present, even when universities were destroyed in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A challenge to the university itself now exists in the Dismissive Idea with its media legitimacy that is underpinned by a stance that seeks to undermine the

very idea of the university. While it is critical to understand which stakeholder group holds the power to define legitimacy, defining the exact nature of that power relationship is not the primary focus of this research (see discussion in Chapters 1 and 10). Here, the aim is to show that each idea is framed by a different stakeholder group or groups which are all committed to the validity of their particular idea, whether that idea is articulated or even whether it in fact has power to define the university's legitimacy in the present. A more in-depth analysis of the relationships across the stakeholders identified here needs to be undertaken, but given the scope of this thesis, it is a topic for future research.

6.2.2 Positioning the Ideas in the Present

Figure 6.1 shows the relationship, strength and direction of development of the ideas with reference to the present university.
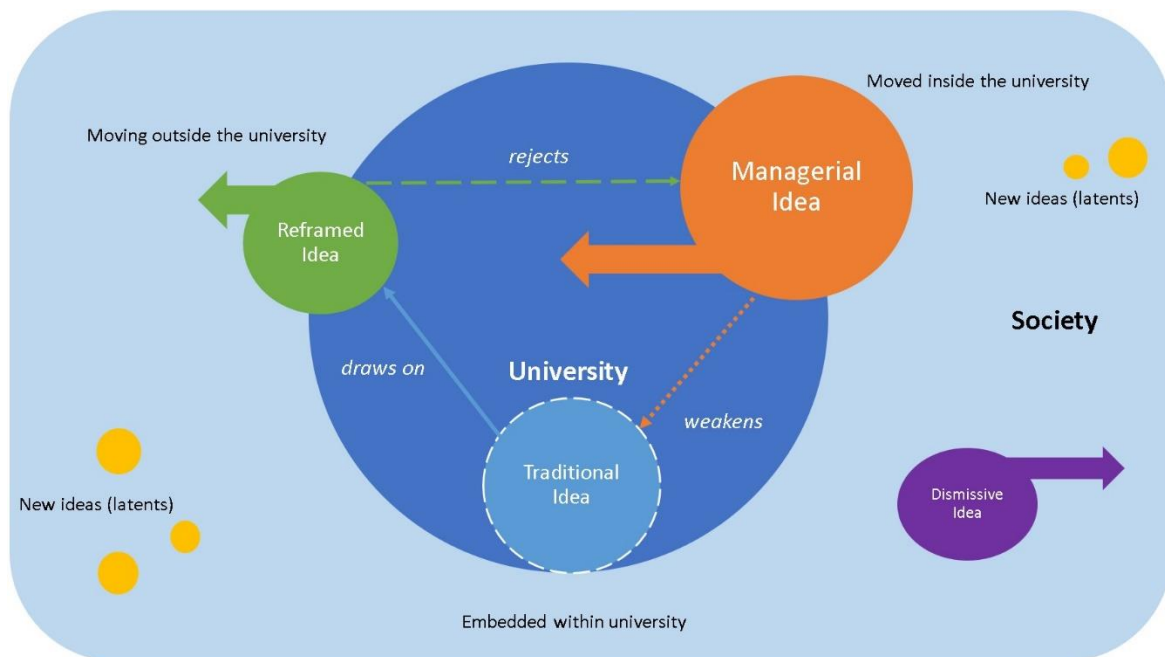
Figure 6.1 Four Contested Ideas in Relationship to the University

The Traditional Idea is located wholly *within* the university but is porous in the sense that it is under challenge in two ways (indicated by the broken circle surrounding it). The Managerial Idea *spans the boundary* between the university and society, having the impact of *weakening* the Traditional Idea (the orange dotted arrow). The Reframed Idea is also *on this boundary*, but it rejects the Managerial Idea (dotted green arrow), and instead draws its *strength* from the Traditional Idea (the solid blue arrow) to enable it to move outside the neoliberal university. The Dismissive Idea is *outside* the university entirely and tending to move away

from it, seeking out alternative structures that are perceived to be more fit-for-purpose in the present. New ideas, different to the four discussed here, will continue to emerge over time, indicated in Figure 6.1 as weak signals or latents (yellow circles) on the periphery of the university's broader social environment.

The size of circles in Figure 6.1 schematically indicates impact in the present. The impact of the Managerial Idea is significant in terms of university structure, operations, and culture. In the case of the Reframed Idea, the impact is less obvious but there is a direct relationship between the emergence of the neoliberal university and the strong desire of some authors to create an alternative university outside its influence, one grounded in the values of the Traditional Idea. The Dismissive Idea, in contrast, exists entirely outside the university's scope, and its impact on the university might be significant – potentially challenging its legitimacy. Figure 6.1 shows clearly why the focus in the literature on the idea as a singular concept is not relevant in the present. Instead, the idea as a meta-concept as discussed in Chapter 5 allows *different*, *equally valid* ways of knowing the university to be made visible and to *co-exist*, an essential perspective if the university's possible futures are also to be made 'real' in the present in the form of actions and decisions.

6.3   The Ideas in the Discourse

Since the aim of the research is to expand the discourse about the university's possible futures, we first need to understand how that discourse is structured in the present – that is, how the ideas connect and intersect. Raymond Williams' work on culture is drawn on here to position the four ideas in this discourse. Williams (1997, p. 11) notes that:

> At the very centre of a major area of modern thought and practice … is a concept, 'culture', which in itself, through variation and complication, *embodies not only the issues but the contradictions through which it has developed.* The concept at once fuses and confuses the radically different experiences and tendencies of its formation. It is then impossible to carry through any serious cultural analysis *without reaching towards a consciousness of the concept itself: a consciousness that be, as we shall see, historical* (italics added).

This quote is applicable to the idea: it is a cultural, conceptual construct that has variations that complicate and confuse the discourse in the present. Here too, the focus is on this concept of the idea that has taken shape over the past 200 years. As Barnett (2017, p. 83) writes: "Each of these ideas is thwart with difficulty and acts as a carrier for rival views, and so the conceptual hinterland of the university becomes rivalrous and fuzzy and even

inchoate." An idea might lose relevance or become fuzzy, but it is demonstrated in this section that it has a relationship with the idea that it replaces and with the one that follows it – primarily because each idea provides the reference point that seeds the logic for the emergence of the new idea.

Williams (1997, p. 121) sees culture as being understood through processes such as traditions and institutions, and also in its "dynamic interrelations, at every point of the process, of historically varied and variable elements" that are sometimes:

> seized as a cultural system, with determinate dominant features … This emphasis on dominant and definitive lineaments and features is important and often, in practice, effective. But it then often happens that its methodology is preserved for the very different function of historical analysis, in which a sense of movement within what is ordinarily abstracted as a system is crucially necessary, *especially if it is to connect with the future as well as with the past* (italics added).

The risk of this 'seizure', Williams asserts, is that the dominant culture "can exert its pressure as a static type against which all real cultural process is measured, either to show 'stages' or 'variations' of the type (which is still historical analysis) or, at its worst, to select supporting and exclude 'marginal' or 'incidental' or 'secondary' evidence" (p.121).

This positioning of the hegemonic culture in society has immediate relevance for the idea, since it is claimed here that the dominant idea at any given time will operate in a way that blinds people to other ideas, dismissing them as 'marginal', incidental' or irrelevant or worse, not 'seeing' them at all. Here, the *dominant* culture is clearly that generated by the Managerial Idea, yet the Traditional Idea continues to argue *against* the neoliberal university and its negative impacts on the university. This parallel existence is explained by Williams (p.121) with the terms 'residual' and the 'emergent':

> We have certainly still to speak of the 'dominant' and the 'effective', and in these senses of the hegemonic. But we find that we have also to speak, and indeed with further differentiation of each, of the 'residual' and the 'emergent', which in any real process, and at any moment in the process, are significant both in themselves and in what they reveal of the characteristics of the 'dominant'.

This is a fundamental argument in this research – that if the discourse about possible futures for the university is to expand and deepen, it must value all ideas and all futures – that is, dominant ideas do not exist in a vacuum – they co-exist with both residual and emergent ideas. Williams' words (p. 122) best define residual as having been:

effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present. Thus certain experiences, meanings, and values which cannot be expressed or substantially verified in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practised on the basis of the residue – cultural as well as social – of some previous social and cultural institution or formation.

Here, the Traditional Idea is immediately recognisable as the *residual* idea, so much so that its continued presence in resistance mode can be considered a reaffirmation as a necessary part of cultural processes shaping the university in the present. Indeed, Williams (p. 123) sees this resistance as essential not only because "a specifically dominant social order neglects, excludes, represses, or simply fails to recognize" elements of the past that it does not need or wants to suppress. Resistance then ensures that "against the pressures of incorporation, actively residual meanings and values are sustained". This is why the power of the Traditional Idea remains in the present, even though its relevance and influence is low.

The concept of emergent change, and its relationship to the residual, is defined by Williams (p.123) as:

> By 'emergent' I mean, first, that new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationship are continually being created … it is exceptionally difficult to distinguish between those which are really elements of some new phase of the dominant culture … and those which are substantially alternative or oppositional to it: emergent in the strict sense, rather than merely novel. Since we are always considering relations within a cultural process, definitions of the emergent, as of the residual, can be made only in relation to a full sense of the dominant. Yet the social location of the residual is always easier to understand, since a large part of it … relates to earlier social formations and phases of the cultural process, in which certain real meanings and values were generated. In the subsequent default of a particular phase of a dominant culture there is then a reaching back to those meanings and values which were created … in the past, and which still seem to have significance because they represent areas of human experience, aspiration, and achievement which the dominant culture neglects, undervalues, opposes, represses, or even cannot recognize.

The Reframed Idea is *emergent*; it draws its positioning from the dominant Traditional Idea and the modern university – the "early social formations" that people who write about the Reframed Idea believe the Managerial Idea "neglects, undervalues, opposes, represses, or even cannot recognise." There is a clear sense that this neglect is felt very deeply (Bailey & Freedman 2011; Heath & Burdon 2013; Abendroth & Porfilio 2015; Manathunga & Bottrell 2019) to the point where they are seeking to establish new forms of the university within which these past meanings can be valued again and reframed as new practices. Here, the

Reframed Idea is considered to be "substantially alternative or oppositional" to the Managerial Idea.

Finally, Williams (pp.126-127) introduces the 'pre-emergent'. The emergent culture does not just appear; its depends on finding "new forms or adaptions of forms …active and pressing but not yet fully articulated, rather than the evident emergence which could be more confidently named". The Dismissive Idea is *pre-emergent* – it is present in the literature, a loud voice critiquing the Managerial Idea, but is so unformed, so latent, that it cannot yet be articulated in a definitive way – although based on discussion in Chapters 5 and 7, it is possible that more than one learning 'structure' in society will emerge if this idea does ultimately become 'real'. Williams (p. 132) asserts that for both emergent and pre-emergent ideas, "they do not have to await definition, classification or rationalization before they exert palpable pressures and set effective limits on experience and on action," which is exactly the context for the Dismissive Idea.

Figure 6.2 shows the distinct nature of each idea and its positioning in the current discourse. Each column represents a single idea in its context and uses discussion in Chapter 5 to establish its context. The top two rows describe the timing and key events in historical periods relevant for each idea. The coloured boxes on the third row summarise the three core assumptions of each idea. The phrases at the bottom of each coloured box captures the essence of the ideas as defined in Chapter 5 – it is an interpretation of the meaning of each idea in the literature articulated as a metaphor. The bottom row defines the positioning of each idea in the present discourse, according to Williams' framing of dominant, residual, emergent, and pre-emergent. The terms in brackets reflects the primary stance of each idea in the discourse.

Timing (approx.)	1800s - WW2	1950s – present: 2 phases - 1950-1990 (transition) & 1990 to present	2000 to present	2010 to present
Events	1810: University of Berlin 1852: Newman's Idea University is elite, secluded, accepted; academics in 'control' of definition of purpose	Post WW2: more *direct* government policy – expansion of HE sector; significant social change; early signs of managerialism apparent in 1970s; neoliberalism takes visible form in 1990s	Universities change structure; new work roles emerge; technology takes hold; measured, audited, "toxic" workplace, need for alternative university emerges	Search for an alternative university becomes 'real' - but criticism grows from outside, challenging neoliberal university's purpose & legitimacy

Traditional Idea

Purpose: educate elite/seek knowledge

Legitimacy: normative, self-defined by academics

Future: continuation of "our university"

A university left alone

Managerial Idea

Purpose: government defined – contribute to national good

Legitimacy: regulatory granted by government

Future: business as usual

A university that obeys

Reframed Idea

Purpose: in & for society

Legitimacy: regulatory and/or normative

Future: social impact but fringe or mainstream?

A university redesigned

Dismissive Idea

Purpose: learning in society

Legitimacy: regulatory and/or normative?

Future: without a university?

A university no more

| Positioning in Discourse* | Residual (resisting) | Dominant (complacent) | Emergent (hopeful) | Pre-Emergent (embryonic) |

*Adapted from Raymond Williams, 1997

Figure 6.2 The Structure of the Discourse

People take stances, not ideas, but since the ideas are considered here to be a collective cultural construct, it is possible to summarise how William's categories can be applied to the discourse:

- the **Traditional Idea** is residual in the discourse since its power is still strong in the minds of people who hold this idea, but its *resistance* to the Managerial Idea is ultimately futile;

- the **Managerial Idea** is dominant since it has regulatory legitimacy; it is *complacent*, seemingly secure in its positioning;

- the **Reframed Idea** recognises it is still emergent, yet is starting to feel secure in its positioning as a valid alternative to the Managerial Idea, and as, for example, Amsler (2011), Strum and Turner (2011), Newfield (2016) and Manathunga and Bottrell (2019) assert, this stance is *hopeful*, and gives new impetus to those who hold this idea that a different future, one other than the neoliberal university – and indeed, even other than the accepted present university structure – is possible; and

- the **Dismissive Idea** is pre-emergent; it is *embryonic*, still forming, still yet to be fully defined. It is latent in nature and if it continues to increase in strength, it will – like the Reframed Idea – have the capacity to become visible in the discourse in influential ways. The value of the university has been challenged in this way in the past without challenging its very existence, but the Dismissive Idea takes a more radical stance that sees the university as 'behind-the-times' and hence no longer relevant.

The overarching value of William's work for this research is that it positions the analysis of the discourse in an integrative way which demonstrates that even though the Managerial Idea is dominant, the three other ideas still all have the power to shape the discourse in different ways, and therefore need to be considered in the present. All four ideas have a degree of validity and influence, and all four ideas shape the acceptance or rejection of images of the future university.

Figure 6.3 shows how each idea variation has been able to continue to exist when a new idea emerges, with consequent changes in their positioning in the discourse. The ideas should then be viewed as being at different stages of their evolution in the present and together they

create the *ideas ecosystem* where each idea is ideally considered as valuable in its own right – albeit in particular 'niches' – and worthy of overt inclusion in the discourse.
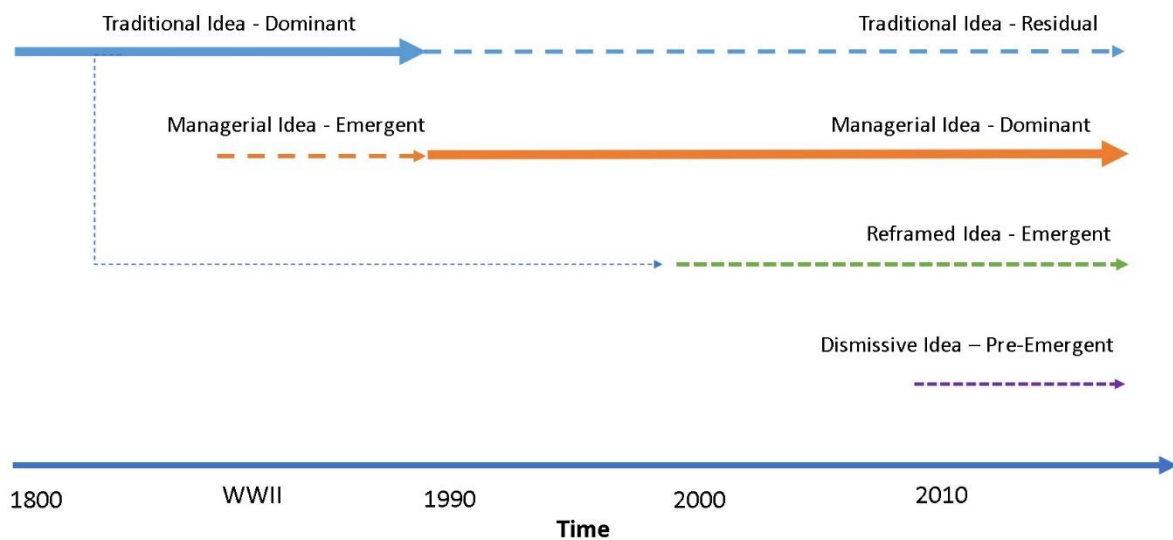
Figure 6.3 Evolution and Co-Existence of the Ideas in the Present

The thickness of the lines in Figure 6.3 indicates how strong that idea is in the discourse at different points in time. The Traditional Idea was dominant but has now weakened, indicated by the thick solid line changing to the thin dotted line. The Managerial idea emerged while the Traditional Idea was dominant (the thin orange dotted line) and became dominant in the discourse around 1990 (the thick orange line). The Reframed Idea is indicated by the green dotted line since it is still evolving. The Dismissive idea is the thin purple dotted line, indicating its pre-emergent status. The thin blue line connecting the Traditional and Reframed Ideas indicates that the Traditional Idea is shaping the evolution of the Reframed Idea. The next section uses the Three Horizons framework to demonstrate another perspective on how the four ideas co-exist in the present – and their potential future evolution.

6.4   The Three Horizons of the Ideas

6.4.1   Identifying the Horizons

The previous section identified *how* the four ideas co-exist in the discourse. The Three Horizons framework is used to map how the four ideas *relate* to each other in the present and their potential evolution into the future. The Three Horizons (3H) framework (Figure 6.4) was developed in its current form by Sharpe and Hodgson (2006) in work undertaken for the UK Government's Foresight Project on Intelligent Infrastructure Systems. It has been

developed further by Curry and Schultz (2009); Sharpe (2013, 2015); Hodgson and Midgley (2014); Sharpe et al. (2016); and Curry (2018). Each horizon holds a particular view about the future. The horizontal axis represents time, moving from the left to right – from today into the future. The vertical axis indicates the degree of occurrence of each pattern at a given point in time.
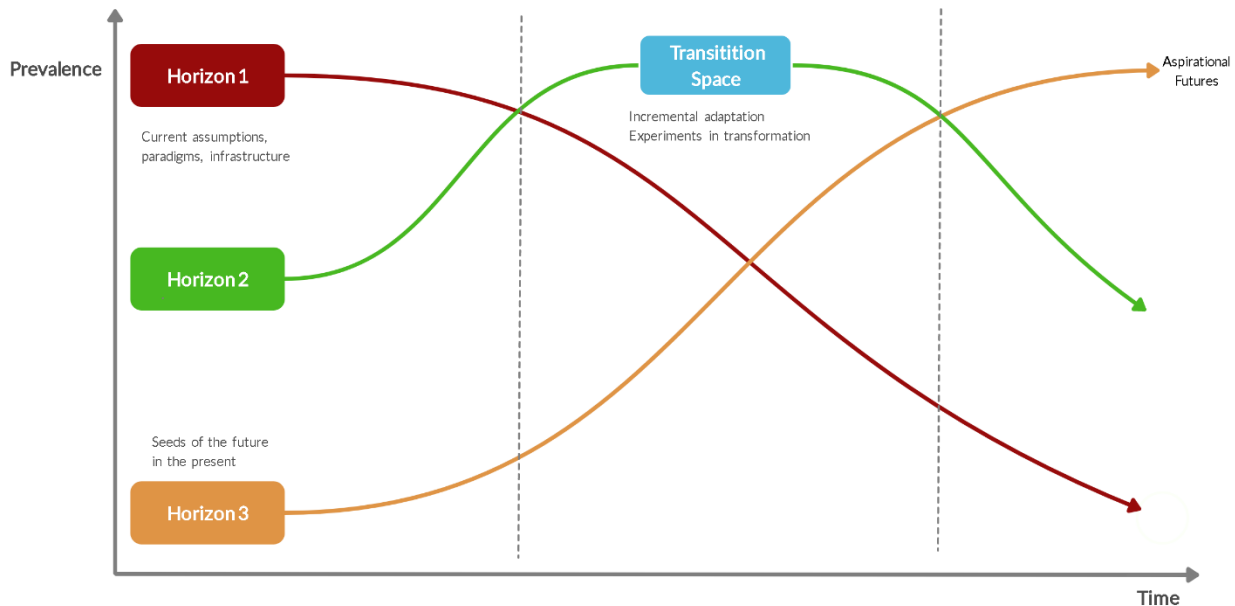
Figure 6.4 Three Horizons Framework (Source: Curry & Hodgson, 2008)

Horizon 1 (H1) is the dominant pattern in the present, in which all organisations and institutions, including the university, operate. This is the business-as-usual space, with activity focused on maintaining present operations. H1 is always superseded by a new pattern as the conditions of change in the external environment shift over time when the legitimacy base of existing organisations is challenged.

Horizon 2 (H2) is an intermediate space of transition (Curry and Hodgson 2008, pp. 2-3), the short to medium term future where limitations of the first horizon are recognised, but where constraints exist on our ability to respond to those limitations. It is an unstable and turbulent space because it is where clashes of values arising from competing images of the future become apparent. This is the space where 'innovation' and 'creativity' are the prevalent pattern. Some innovations are designed to bolster H1's survival and business-as-usual activity (termed H2 minus or H2-), while other innovations establish the groundwork for radical innovation (termed H2 plus or H2+). For clarity, only H2 is used here in this thesis.

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Horizon 3 (H3) exists on the fringe in the present and is where the seeds of possible futures and latent futures are located – this is where the ideas, beliefs and arguments that have the potential to disrupt and displace the H1 world exist. This new thinking is likely to generate effective responses to emergent changes in an organisation's environment and generate new visions of the future (Chapter 7). This horizon has a worldview that is more fit-for-purpose but it takes time to emerge so it is "not culturally feasible in real world business environments … to jump straight to Horizon 3 early on, when the strategic fit appears low" (Hodgson & Midgley 2014, p. 7).

There are three *spaces* created by the intersections of the horizons: present, contested and futures (Figure 6.5), each of which holds a different type of activity and conversation. Each horizon intersects with each of the other horizons once.
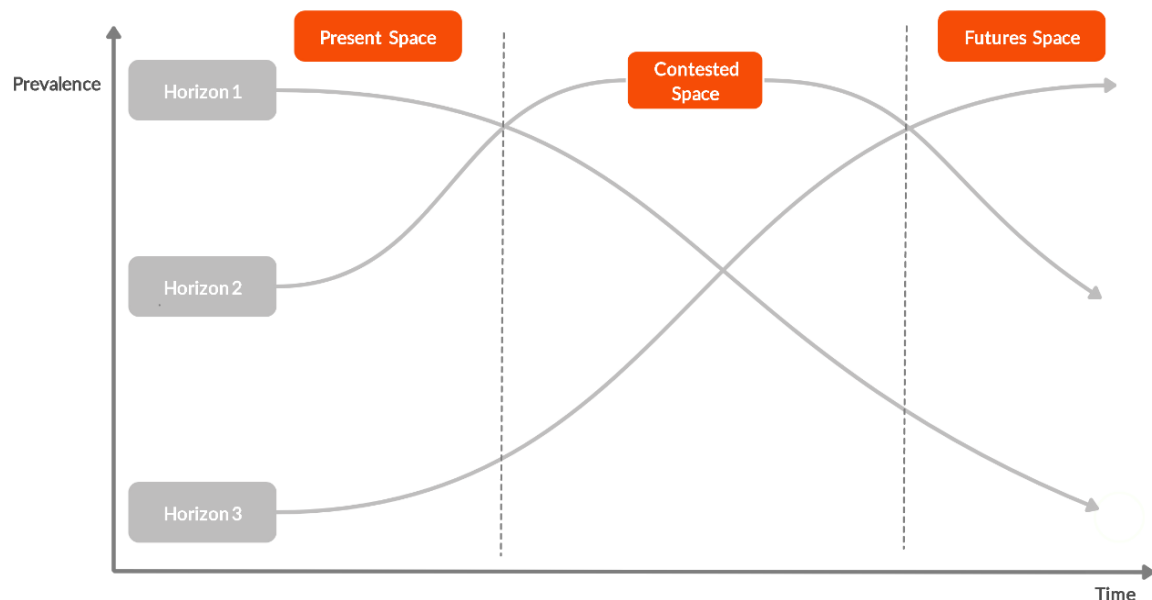
Figure 6.5 Three Horizons Intersecting Spaces

The left-hand side of the figure represents the present and the middle space where all three horizons intersect creates a contested space. The futures space emerges at the point where H2 and H3 cross while H1 continues its descent. Importantly, Sharpe and Hodgson (2019, p. 7) write:

> By developing awareness of all three horizon views and their own default position within them, people can work with them as flexible future perspectives on the situation and see that each view contributes to a more complete understanding. It is this step from one-dimensional to three-dimensional understanding that we call the step into future consciousness.

Futures consciousness is discussed further in Chapter 8. The 3H framework can be used to examine an area of interest – for example, organisations, values or even social change. It provides a comprehensive approach for understanding how the business-as-usual present intersects with change that is generating a new range of possible futures, both visible and latent in nature. Critically, all three horizons co-exist in the present as Figure 6.5 shows. The next section shows how the ideas have mapped against the 3H frame.

6.4.2   The Ideas and the Horizons

Figure 6.6 applies the 3H frame to the ideas as they are understood in the present. For the purposes of this research, the frame has been extended to five horizons to capture the four ideas and latent ideas, because the ideas precede each other in a temporal sense, indicated in Figure 6.6 by the coloured dotted arrows between the ideas. The contested space is defined by three intersection points – the red A, B and C circles – which represent points at which the trajectory of the evolution of the ideas intersect.

In Figure 6.6, the **Traditional Idea** is in the past at H0 and represents the original idea in the sense discussed in this research, once located at H1 in the pre-World War II era and now existing as the precursor of the H1 university as a *residual* idea. The **Managerial Idea** at H1 is *maintaining* business-as-usual activities of the university. It is 'fit-for purpose' and its manifestation as the neoliberal university is global. The **Reframed Idea,** the emerging idea at H2 is seeking to design a new university form and so represents an innovation – it draws on the accepted 'university' form and label but has reframed them in new ways. The **Dismissive Idea** is forming at H3, and with its assumption the university has no future value, it is seeking to create a new, aspirational and visionary future where learning occurs *in* society, an approach that no longer requires the university of the present. **Latent ideas** exist at H4 – these are the yet to emerge ideas, that may or may not include a university as it is understood today.
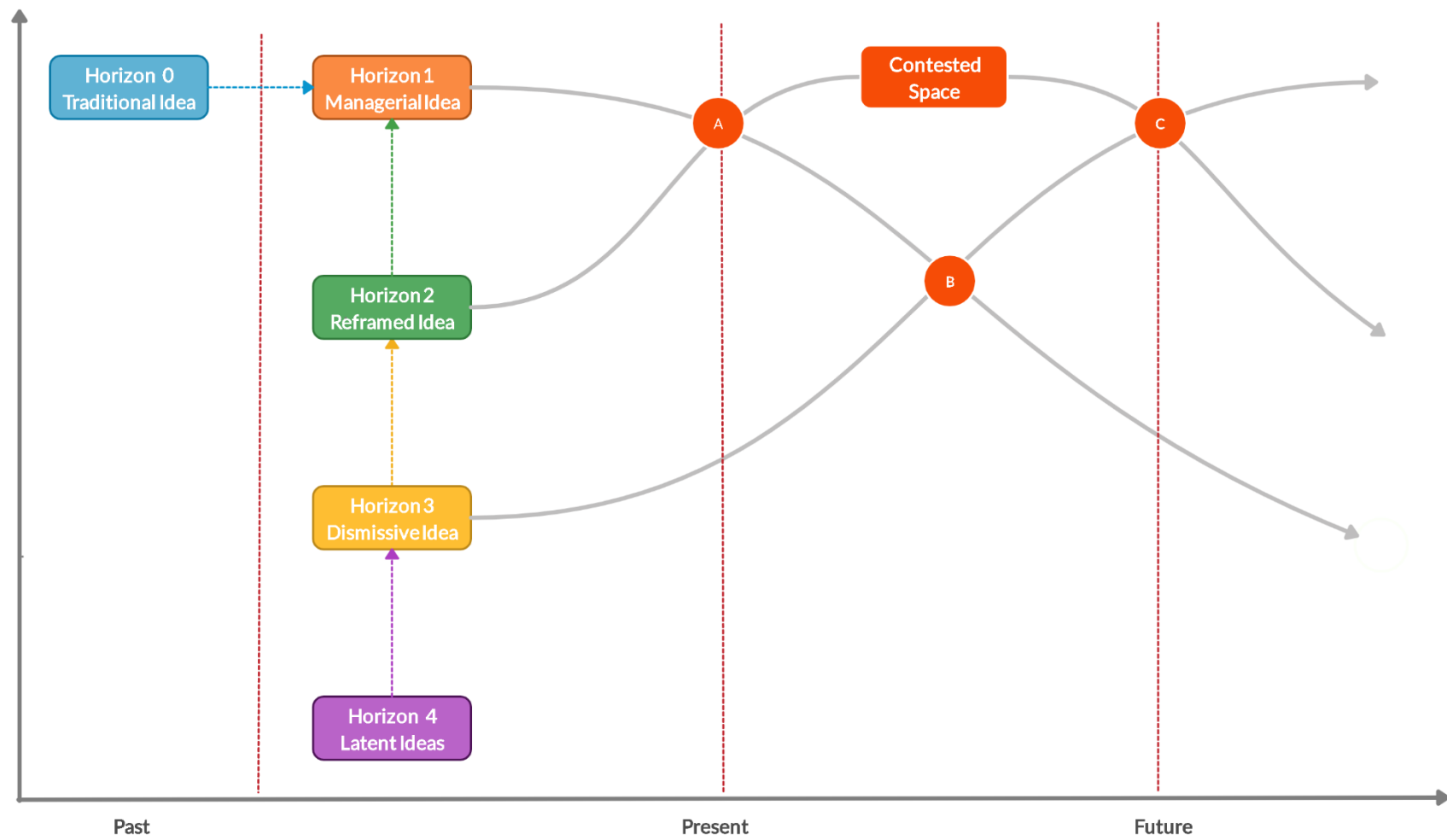
Figure 6.6 The Five Horizons of the Ideas in the Present

The ideas intersect at different points. The Managerial Idea intersects with the Reframed Idea at intersection point A in Figure 6.6 – here, if the Reframed Idea is indeed gaining strength (indicated by its progression along the H2 curve), the Managerial Idea will be losing validity and moving down the H1 curve. Because the Managerial and Reframed Ideas are oppositional, only one can continue to increase in strength after this intersection point.

Assuming that the Managerial Idea continues to decline in relevance, it will intersect with the Dismissive Idea at point B – and pass each other without any interaction. The Dismissive Idea also intersects with the Reframed Idea at point C. At this intersection, there is a branch point for both the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas. Only one can continue to strengthen and move into a future H1 position, while the other begins to lose validity. If the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas merged at this point, however, a 'hybrid' idea would emerge and move to the future H1 point. The latter outcome is feasible because the Idea Mindsets (Section 6.5) indicate potential for alliances and collaborations across these ideas. This 3H framing shows both that the four ideas co-exist in the present and that the relationship is not fixed – the present H1 pattern *will* decline over time and new university forms will emerge into dominance over time.

6.4.3   Horizon Mindsets

Sharpe and Hodgson (2017, p. 6) assert that the three horizons not only clarify how different perspectives of the future can co-exist in the present; they can also "be experienced as three qualities of the future in the present" or orientations towards the future. They describe these orientations in everyday use as "managerial (H1), entrepreneurial (H2), and visionary (H3)" which collectively construct "horizon mindsets". They note that people are generally "embedded in one … horizon view of the future and view the other horizon views negatively: the third horizon visionary finds the first horizon manager obstructive, the manager thinks the visionary is impractical, and so on. We call these attitudes horizon mindsets" (p. 7).

Here, the terms used for each orientation are *maintainer* (Curry 2020) which more accurately describes the focus of H1 and *innovator* which may be more relevant than 'entrepreneurial' given that the university has largely moved on from its 'entrepreneurial' type in the 1990s (Chapter 5). *Visionary* is an apt term for imagining new futures for the university; *aspirational* is another commonly used term for H3. Table 6.2 defines Sharpe and Hodgson's horizon mindsets on contested views of the future.

Table 6.2 Horizon Mindsets (adapted from Sharpe and Hodgson 2017, p. 7)

Looking *from* this horizon	Looking *at* this horizon	Negative (mindset)	Positive (perspective)
Horizon 1 *Maintainer*	H1	Competitor. Beat or take over.	Useful infrastructure. Potential allies in lobbying for shared interests etc.
	H2	Parasite of potential investment. Watch and monitor.	Hope for the future. Possibility of renewal. Not challenging H1 role; relates more to my life than H1.
	H3	Fanciful and irrelevant. Ignore or kill to prevent momentum that would challenge H1 dominance.	Inspirational. Source of ideas and visibility.
Horizon 2 *Innovator*	H1	Slow-moving dinosaurs. Obstructive; should get out of the way.	Holding the 'innovator's dilemma.' Destination for innovation, an arena for action. Source of support and ways to scale up.
	H2	Competitor for resources.	Allies in creating momentum.
	H3	Impractical.	Inspirational. Source of ideas and visibility. Sense of direction.
Horizon 3 *Visionary*	H1	Massive error and liability, barrier to progress.	Potential resource when unlocked. Skills that can be redeployed – to scale. Valuable heritage and gains to be protected.
	H2	Obstructive compromise. They are misusing our vision.	Potential allies. Promising practice. Stepping stone.
	H3	Vision competitors – debate vigorously.	Extends the debate beyond the present; brings deeper issues of value into play.

Sharpe and Hodgson (2017, p. 7) also note that once people realise this more three-dimensional view of reality, their futures consciousness begins to emerge. The "more complete understanding" sought by Sharpe and Hodgson is what is also being sought here to demonstrate how the four ideas co-exist in the present and to define the nature of that co-existence. Applying the Horizon Mindsets to the ideas can then identify new perspectives, derived particularly from the notion that the ideas can hold *both* positive and negative perceptions of each other. The dual 3H mindsets for the ideas are defined in Table 6.3 and applied at each of the five horizons identified in Figure 6.6.

Table 6.3 Horizon Mindsets for Each Idea (adapted from Sharpe and Hodgson 2017, p. 7)

Looking *from* this horizon	Looking *at* this horizon	Negative (mindset)	Positive (perspective)
Horizon 0 ***Traditional Idea***	H1	A nightmare outcome for the university – the exact opposite of what a university should be.	There are no positives. This is a destructive idea.
	H2	This type of thinking still sees a future where the university is not completely free of the state.	A university emerging here may sustain our values, so we should support its development.
	H3	A future without a university is unthinkable. This is a ridiculous position.	A future without a university is unthinkable so action must be taken to mitigate and/or prevent this future.
Horizon 1 ***Managerial Idea***	H1	Competitor. Beat or take over at all costs.	Useful infrastructure. Potential research partners.
	H2	Innovation is too costly to sustain in current cost-driven environment. Watch and monitor.	Hope for the future with possibility of renewal of the university. Does not challenge H1. Incorporate innovations if useful.
	H3	Fanciful and irrelevant. Ignore or kill to prevent momentum that would challenge H1 dominance.	Source of ideas but too extreme a future to ever be viable.
Horizon 2 ***Reframed Idea***	H1	Obstructive to innovation; slow to change. They need to catch up with the times.	The traditions of the university are still alive in the neoliberal university & can be used to design our new university.
	H2	Could be competitors if universities are in the same location. Watch and monitor.	Potential collaborators and allies.
	H3	A possible future we are working hard to prevent because our university might cease to exist.	Not the future we want right now but learning in society could be our ultimate vision.
Horizon 3 ***Dismissive Idea***	H1	The university of today holds no value in its present form.	Heritage may be useful when designing learning systems in society.
	H2	Attempts to compromise with redesigned processes & structures beyond the neoliberal university but it will not work.	There may potentially be some work generated here that proves useful in the future.
	H3	Vision collaborators – a vigorous and open debate is needed to ensure all options are considered.*	Refocuses visions for the future on deeper values that shape our idea of learning.

* The H3-H3 negative mindset is not positioned as negative in the Dismissive Idea – it is posited that this idea would welcome collaboration with other groups seeking the same aim of learning in and for society, as is already visible in the present in social movements which exist outside the constraints of government and institutional boundaries.

Table 6.3 demonstrates that considering that each idea has both positive and negative aspects has the potential to move the discourse away from the negative overtones that currently characterise it, which is further discussed in Chapter 7. One element Table 6.3 does not consider is latent ideas which exist at H4 (shown in Figure 6.6). These ideas are, by their very definition, not yet visible in the discourse and so cannot be defined by the horizon mindsets.

6.5   Future Mindsets of the Ideas

This section moves to the 3H futures space (Figures 6.5 and 6.6) and draws on the horizons mindset frame to establish how, by arguing for their assumed future, the ideas constrain the emergence of other possible futures. The orientation here is not the horizons mindsets per se, but rather the future assumed by each idea, and how they argue for that future at the expense of other futures. Table 6.4 shows the futures mindsets in both each idea *and* when an idea is considering the other three ideas.

Table 6.4 The Futures Mindsets of the Ideas

Looking *from* this horizon	Traditional Idea	Managerial Idea	Reframed Idea	Dismissive Idea
A: Traditional Idea **(academic perspective)**	A1: We have no future, but we will keep resisting the neoliberal university.	A2: The neoliberal university spawned by this idea is evil – it must not have a future.	A3: This emerging university may be our only hope for a future.	A4: These people do not understand the university's role and value and their future will never eventuate.
B: Managerial Idea **(manager perspective)**	B1: This university is no longer fit-for-purpose. It has no future.	B2: Our university is fit-for-purpose. If we maintain that status, our future is assured.	B3: This development is not a threat – they are outside our market. They will never reach critical mass.	B4: We will keep an eye on these people, but they will settle down soon and disappear.
C: Reframed Idea **(academic perspective)**	C1: The university of the past is gone and has no future no matter how much we try to save it. We can redesign it though.	C2: The neoliberal university must never have a future – but it is a powerful enemy.	C3: Our university is social in orientation; we care about knowledge for the public good; our work is underpinned by the values of the Traditional Idea.	C4: This is an interesting idea – at least learning is outside the clutches of the neoliberal university.
D: Dismissive Idea **(social perspective)**	D1: This university is a dinosaur – dead and buried.	D2: This university holds no value for us – it is not keeping up with the times. We know better.	D3: This university may be a potential collaborator if it focuses on learning in society.	D4: We know our future is still emerging, but it is the only possible future for learning now.

These futures are interpretations from the literature and are positioned as the views of someone who holds a specific idea, shown in the first column: the Traditional Idea is

articulated from an *academic* perspective; the Managerial Idea from the perspective of a *manager*; the Reframed Idea from an *academic* perspective; and the Dismissive Idea from the perspective of *society*. In the first column too, each content box in the table is given a label (A, B, C, D) to assist with the discussion below. The yellow boxes highlight possible futures across the four ideas:

- the Traditional Idea has no future in its past form – this is the perspective held by all four ideas (A1-D1) but as discussed in Chapter 5, the Reframed Idea draws on the values of the Traditional Idea (A3) to inform its futures, providing a link to the future for this idea;

- the Managerial Idea assumes it has a future (B2) but see no future for the other ideas. No other idea sees a future for it (A2, C2, D2) which is not surprising since these three other ideas are working actively to see the demise of the Managerial Idea;

- the Reframed Idea draws on the values of the Traditional Idea (C1) to redesign a new university in its assumed future (C3). It sees no future for the Managerial Idea (C2) although it sees some potential alignment with the Dismissive Idea (C4); and

- the Dismissive Idea sees its future (D4) as one without a university, so essentially for it, no other possible future matters (D1, D2) – although it also might consider a collaboration with the Reframed Idea (D3).

Given that three ideas assume there will be a future university, it is not surprising that two of these ideas dismiss the likelihood of a future without the university in the Dismissive Idea (A4, B4) while one idea perceives this future as unlikely but holds it in the background (C4). The Dismissive Idea *may* in fact wane in strength over time, so its future without a university might be irrelevant. But it might also grow stronger and would then represent a clear legitimacy crisis for the university and its assumed continuing existence.

Table 6.5 compares the perspectives of assumed futures *across* the futures in Figure 6.4 identifying five possible futures.

Table 6.5 Possible Futures in the Ideas (derived from Table 6.4)

Futures Mindsets	Ideas	Possible Future
A3/ C1	Traditional/Reframed Reframed/Traditional	The Reframed Idea seeks to maintain the values of the Traditional Idea in the present in a new university form
B2	Managerial/Managerial	The neoliberal university continues
C3	Reframed/Reframed	The Reframed Idea's future where a university is cooperative in nature and operation, existing in society
C4/ D3	Reframed/Dismissive Dismissive/Reframed	A future outside the university marked by potential collaborations between the Dismissive and Reframed Ideas
D4	Dismissive/Dismissive	The Dismissive Idea's future without a university

The combination of futures in Table 6.5 shows that the Traditional and Reframed Ideas have clear intersecting futures, as do the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas:

- the Traditional Idea merges with the Reframed Idea to develop a new form of university (A3/C1) beyond the reach of the neoliberal university, one that maintains the values of the Traditional Idea; or

- the Managerial Idea (the neoliberal university) (B2) continues for an unspecified period; or

- the Reframed Idea is successful at establishing new university form in society and obtains legitimacy to ensure its continuation (C3); or

- the Reframed Idea could also collaborate with the Dismissive Idea on the development of a new university form located within society, which may be a stepping-stone to the latter's ultimate goal of learning outside the university and in society (C4/D3); or

- the Dismissive Idea grows in strength and has two branch points: one is that it merges with the Reframed Idea to collaborate on moving learning outside their university (C4/D3); and two, it overwhelms the Managerial and Reframed Ideas completely.

The reality is, of course, not as clear as suggested here. The ideas are social constructions and will never create or overwhelm universities in the way discussed here. Because ideas are worldviews, however, they can shape the thinking and actions of those who *do* shape responses to pivotal social disruptions and how the university adapts to that change. If those

worldviews hold a presentist and superficial approach to the future (Chapter 7), their thinking and actions will ultimately generate unchallenged, linear and inherently constrained futures as is assumed by the Managerial Idea (B2 in Table 6.4). Essentially then, the ideas, when considered individually *or* collectively, do constrain the emergence of the university's possible futures.

6.6   Concluding Comments

Assuming that the university of today will always exist in its current form is a precarious assumption. The opposite may in fact be far more helpful if we are to expand and deepen the discourse about the university's possible futures – that is, by overtly considering that the university might *not* exist actually has the potential to open up the discourse to alternative futures beyond the official future, allowing people to think what is now unthinkable. This *one* assumption – that the university will always exist – *must* then be challenged if the discourse is to value all ideas and all possible futures.

When the extant discourse fails to consider the four ideas in an integrated way as discussed in this chapter, an opportunity is missed to shape the university's future to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose – that is, to be the university the future needs – rather than an incremental adaptation of the dominant idea and its university form in the present. By moving beyond the boundaries of individual ideas and opening up our assumptions that can identify the new and novel in the present, new understandings of the future will emerge that enable integration of the different ways of knowing the future that are held across the ideas. The real risk faced by those who hold the Traditional, Managerial, and Reframed Ideas in the present is that by ignoring the possible future without a university, and by continuing to assume the university will always exist, they may face the fate of the university that existed before 1990 – one so overwhelmed by the emergence into dominance of the Managerial Idea, an idea that saw *absolutely* no value in the deeply held beliefs and values embedded in the Traditional Idea, that all remnants of the modern university disappeared, changing in very fundamental ways the meaning attached to the university and academic work.

If the discourse – and the people who generate it – are able to integrate their contested ideas and assumed futures in order to seek what might be positive and valuable within them, then new futures *can* emerge, a positioning that is further explored in Chapter 7. If the four ideas can be merged to *any* degree, a new, more inclusive idea might be defined, one that must be

more useful for the university in the present as it seeks to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose in a rapidly changing and complex environment. And, if society is indeed currently on the cusp of a pivotal social disruption (Donovan 2015; Brewer 2016; Buckup 2017; Scharmer 2017) the time is now for the purpose and legitimacy of the university to be revisited, in its collectively merged form, to ensure its future *can* continue to be assured, and more importantly, that the university being imagined now is the one the future needs. Chapter 8 explores this imperative through the use of the futures conversation framework.

Part Three: The Ideas in Their Futures

Chapter 7: Exploring Possible Futures for the University

7.1　Overview

At this point in the thesis, the focus moves from the present to the future. Before exploring university futures, however, this chapter first discusses the most popular method to imagine possible futures – scenario planning/thinking/learning (hereafter called *scenario development*) – and archetypal futures, the frame used to analyse the scenarios for university futures explored here. The chapter then focuses on possible futures for the university as they are understood in the present discourse, before using the archetype frame to explore new futures for the university.

Imagining the future is a common theme in text titles in the University Futures literature set reviewed in this chapter, so is clearly of interest to many people, but exactly *what* futures is less clear. The term 'future' is, for example, applied a range of topics related to education, learning and the university:

- the university as an organisation (Peters 2010; Barnett 2013a; Mayo 2014; Haggans 2016; Thrift 2016);
- the higher education industry (Alexander 2011, 2018; Mintz 2014; Rath 2014);
- specific groups such as academics (Rhoades et al. 2004; Bothwell 2016) and managers (McNicol 1991; Veles & Carter 2016);
- specific academic disciplines (Bussey 2016);
- specific functions, predominantly teaching and research (Kelly 2016; Bussey et al. 2018); and
- learning itself (Miller 2004, 2014; Miller et al. 2008; Thomas & Brown 2011)

This chapter demonstrates that discussion about 'the future' generally focuses on how changes in the present might shape the future university without actually imagining a new future. This is not surprising because the assumption that the university will always exist is strong in the literature, and a future without a university as envisaged by the Dismissive Idea is *simply not discussed* by most writers.

The university explored in this literature can then be viewed as existing in what Slaughter (2004, p. 122) describes as a 'flatland':

> The dominant tradition of futures work is actively complicit in re-inscribing aspects of the past and present upon the emerging future. Since it was born in 'flatland', i.e., the taken-for-granted world of post-war modernity, it was imbued with interests typical of that time from the beginning; interests in forecasting, prediction and control. These fitted well with the ideology of economic growth, the pursuit of technical power and the push for global hegemony.

While Slaughter is referring specifically to FSF and the need to adopt Integral Futures to open up that particular discourse, his stance has value for this research. The same taken-for-granted post-war modernity that constructed Western FSF also constructed the neoliberal university and its Managerial Idea, and shapes how the university's possible futures are constructed today. That is, the unquestioned assumption that the university of the present will continue into the future leads to futures in the literature that are essentially "re-inscribing aspects of the past and the present on [its] emerging future" (p.121) and thus, constraining the extant discourse from 'seeing' other novel futures that also exist in the present. This chapter examines images of the future university in existing scenarios to identify how the ideas shape these possible futures and demonstrates that there are more futures available to the university than the 'official future' of the dominant Managerial Idea, and the assumed futures for the university of the three other ideas.

7.1.1   Chapter Structure

Section 7.2 identifies and explores the literature on scenario development which is the most frequently used method in organisations, business, and government when 'thinking about the future' becomes an imperative.

Section 7.3 discusses scenario archetypes, a meta-scenario approach that uses four archetypal scenarios to define types of possible futures. These four archetypes capture all scenarios developed by individuals or in scenario projects and are used here to identify different types of university futures existing in the present, challenging the assumption that the official future for the university is fixed.

Section 7.4 refines the University Futures literature set to define a set of existing scenarios for the university's future by identifying specific criteria that determines whether a scenario is used for analysis. This process identifies ninety-one scenarios from twenty-seven sources.

Section 7.5 first categorises the ninety-one scenarios that first by idea, and then by archetype. The former demonstrates that the ninety-one futures *can* be allocated across the four ideas, while the latter indicates that some futures are incommensurate with particular ideas.

Sections 7.6 to 7.9 discuss the range of possible futures identified in the scenarios for the future university in each idea, identifying how the scenarios can be clustered into four archetypes.

Section 7.10 explores how the archetypal futures co-exist *across* the ideas, demonstrating that there are at least ten possible futures for the university generated by the ideas – more than the five identified in Chapter 6.

Section 7.11 takes an archetypal lens and integrates the archetypal futures to explore how a new discourse space might emerge if the boundaries between and across these futures – and the ideas that underpin them – are broken down.

Section 7.12 concludes the chapter.

7.2   Scenario Theory and Practice

7.2.1   The Origins of Scenario Development

The origin of scenario development as it is understood today is commonly attributed to the work of Pierre Wack and his colleagues at Royal Dutch Shell (Shell) in the early 1970s when they began to experiment with scenario development. The RAND Corporation and General Electric (Bradfield et al. 2005) were also using scenario development, and the work of Herman Kahn on forecasting and storytelling at RAND was drawn on by Wack in the development of Shell's scenario approach (Wack, 1984). The history of how scenarios came to be used at Shell is covered well by van der Heijden et al. (2002) and more recently, by Wilkinson and Kupers (2013); that history includes luminaries such as de Geus (1988) Kees van der Heijden (1999; 2002) and Peter Schwartz (1996) who, with Napier Collyns and Jay Oglivy from the Stanford Research institute (SRI) and later established the Global Business Network (GBN) in 1987, where the popular 2x2 scenario matrix method was developed (Scearce & Fulton 2004).

Wack's internal Shell paper, *Scenarios: The Gentle Art of Reperceiving: One or Two Things Learned While Developing Planning Scenarios for Royal Dutch Shell* (1984) provides a

detailed account of how Shell came to use scenario planning as a process "focused less on outcomes and more on understanding of the forces that would compel the outcome" (p.86). How that process helped Shell anticipate the 1973 Oil Crisis, an event triggered by an embargo on Western governments in response to their support for the Yom-Kippur War, could perhaps be best described as folklore in the FSF world – and continues to be referenced today to establish the validity of scenario development. Wack's identification of the need to accept uncertainty and consider it as a "basic structural feature of the business environment" (p. 55) and to seek out less obvious uncertainties, ones that are not well understood or even recognised, are approaches still at the heart of scenario work in the twenty-first century. He also writes that while the Shell approach seeks to understand "facts out there … [it also aims] at perceptions inside the heads of critical decision makers" (p.118), requiring mental models to be challenged in the process. Two types of mental models – or perceptions of reality – that influence acceptance of scenario outcomes are identified: those held by individuals *and* the corporate mental model. Both frame and constrain understanding of the external environment and Wack notes that unless both models change during scenario development, "no change in behaviour will occur; the internal compass must be recalibrated" (p. 87), or a "crisis of perception – inability to see" will be the outcome, leading to organisational failure:

> In our times of rapid change and discontinuity, these crises of perception – the inability to see a novel reality emerging by being locked inside obsolete assumptions – have become the main cause of strategic failure, particularly for large and internally well-managed companies … This inner model never mirrors reality: it is always a construct (pp.125-126).

The aim of scenarios then, Wack asserts (p. 118) "is to gather and transform information of potential strategic significance into fresh perceptions which then lead to strategic insights that were previously beyond the mind's reach – those that would not ever have been considered." As de Geus (1988) later notes, however, "institutional learning is much more difficult than individual learning ... which is the process whereby management teams change their shared mental models of their company, their markets, and their competitors." De Jouvenel's (2000, p. 39) guide to scenarios defines factors constraining individual and institutional learning in scenario processes: (i) "means of observations" and "sources of information"; (ii) "means of measurement or quantification"; (iii) "weight of theories used to explain phenomena"; and (iv) "influence of ideologies … dominant schools of thought that often hide reality" or which are used as "an avoidance strategy." The latter factor is considered here to relate to worldviews, to unchallenged assumptions about the future which lead to views that reality is

what we *see*. In fact, reality is layered (Slaughter 1997a, 1998; Inayatullah 1998; Voros 2005; Poli 2011), and practitioners and participants must therefore be acutely aware of deeper assumptions they use to understand their reality.

The seeking of new insights in scenario processes discussed here reflects the argument being pursued in this thesis – that reality (and the ideas) cannot be understood by considering empirical facts, data and structures alone. Understanding the mental models of those who both develop scenarios *and* those who determine the value of their output for decision and policy making is then a critical element in FSF process design in order to, as Burt and Van der Heijden (2003, p. 1013) write, give participants "something very precious: the ability to re-perceive reality."

7.2.2   Scenario Practice in the Present

Developing scenarios is, according to Bell (2009, p. 317) "by far the most widely shared methodological tool of the futures field." Since the Shell and GBN methodologies were published, numerous adaptations have been documented as guides for practitioners (see for example, Godet 2006; Ogilvy 2002, 2011; Van der Heijden 1999; Van Der Heijden et al. 2002; Schwartz 1996; Ringland 2002; Wilson & Ralston 2006; Fahey & Randall 1998; Cairns & Wright 2019; Lindgren & Bandhold 2009; Wilkinson 2009). Consistent with the observation made of every literature set reviewed in this research, Bradfield et. al. (2005) describe the scenario development literature as beset by:

> an abundance of different and at times contradictory definitions, characteristics, principles and methodological ideas about scenarios. It has been suggested that a pressing need for the future of scenarios is amongst other things, to resolve the confusion over 'the definitions and methods of scenarios.'

The scenario development literature corpus is substantial – useful reviews of the field include Amer et. al. (2013) and Gordon et.al. (2020). More generally, this literature covers theory (Sarpong 2011; Ehresmann 2013; Spaniol & Rowland 2018; Derbyshire 2019), methodology (de Jouvenel 2000; Kahane 2012; Sapio & Nicolò 2013; Millett 2017), methods (Amer, Daim & Jetter 2013), scenario typologies (van Notten et al. 2003; Bradfield et al. 2005; Crawford 2019), and evaluating scenarios (Carlopio 2011; Oteros-Rozas et al. 2015).

The reality is that not all scenario work in the present pursue Wacks' aim of integrating mental models into scenario processes to generate new perspectives on change. Most work focuses instead on the scenario narrative as the valuable outcome. The need to pay attention

to mental models is mentioned in literature reviews as part of the context or describe processes in generic terms rather than defining how mental models are actually challenged in scenario processes (Chermack & van der Merwe 2003; Sarpong 2011), or they define processes that do not include any overt steps to tap into sub-conscious assumptions or beliefs about the future. A good example of the latter is de Brabandere and Iny from the Boston Consulting Group (2010, p. 1509) who describe a process they call the "expressway" (that is, perfect for busy executives with little time), an accelerated approach to scenario development that "truly enables transformational change" – even though exactly how that transformation occurs is not specified. Brainstorming is perhaps the closest they come to thinking about shifting mental models which they design to develop "colourful and contrasting hypothesis for each variable". Approaches like this that neglect to include time for strategic conversations (Van der Heijden 1999) and instead focus on outcomes are flawed, as Molitor (2009, p. 81) comments when he suggests that most scenario approaches are "an interesting and engaging but sometimes idle exercise … Such efforts may amount to little more than a time-consuming "parlor game" in my estimation."

The result of a process that does not overtly challenge mental models is one that produces superficial and familiar images of the future, ones that are well within the 'comfort zones' of participants, and ones which are easily dismissed as unhelpful for considering current strategic issues. Slaughter (2002, p. 28) critiques popular scenario processes because of both the acceptance of present reality as a given, rather than problematising it to challenge underpinning assumptions, and its focus only on external tracking of possible events at the expense of understanding global dynamics. He states (p. 29): "personal, organisational and cultural worldviews, or "ways of knowing" [the world in here] give rise to the humanly constructed external world [the world out there] which, in turn, exists in a dynamic and ambiguous relationship with the world of nature."

The popularity of scenario planning as a method may also be its downfall, because its most popular form – the GBN 2x2 matrix – appears deceptively straightforward to deploy (see, for example, Scearce & Fulton 2004). Ramirez and Wilkson (2014, p. 254) provide a useful critique of the 2x2 method, pointing out that "by clarifying the [hidden] choices that the method offers, we contribute to make it more rigorous, debunking some of the purported ease it advertises for the unwary." With so many books and articles on how to 'do' scenarios using this method, however, it is assumed to be 'good practice' for scenario development (Amorim

Varum & Melo 2010), one that *will* ensure a useful outcome, as Masini and Vasquez (2000, p. 49) note when they write that it has:

> become a sort of Swiss pocket knife of multiple uses, or a magic wand that supposedly makes it possible to rapidly visualize the future, like a soup to be served up quickly at table. Consultants and professionals with 1 or 2 years' experience behind them embark on carrying out exercises, very often without distinguishing the terminology or fully understanding futures studies.

Without an explicit focus on identifying the specific assumptions being used and shifting mental models, the scenario development process is unlikely to be useful in terms of generating wiser action in the present. Effective scenario processes instead generate moments that Curry (2009, p. 119) describes well: "I mean those moments when a different insight emerges in the room, or a new way of interpreting the world." That is, a person's mental model shifts as a result of carefully designed processes that include specific activities to challenge individual and collective mental models.[8] Here, an effective scenario process draws on Ogilvy's interpretation of scenario development as "facing the fold", a "new stance towards time, a scenaric stance" (2011, p. 1), one in which "multiple futures are held simultaneously and constantly in view," one that requires both positive and negative scenarios to co-exist in the mind, and one that:

> "can turn abstract thoughts toward profound emotion. We're talking about hopes and fears here … your nervous system is interpreting and re-interpreting … signals first in one way and then another, back and forth, very rapidly … alternative scenarios give you a kind of stereoscopic vision that lends emotional depth to your experience" (p.9).

That is, 'felt' experiences are critical in scenario development not only to make the experience more enduring (Schacter, Addis & Buckner 2007) but because scenarios are most often used in organisational strategy development, where Liedtka (2010, p. 155, italics added) writes: "Strategies must be *felt* to be vivid, personally meaningful, and compelling by the members of the organization who must adopt new behaviours in order to execute them. And thinking won't get you there". That is, to act in meaningful – and transformative – ways in the present as a result of using scenario processes requires some form of emotional as well as intellectual engagement to underpin the process design.

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[8] This statement also reflects my belief that scenario development only has value in terms of action and decision making if the process includes an overt step to surface subconscious assumptions about the future, ones that allow novelty into individual and collective thinking about the future.

7.2.3   Scenario Theory

As indicated in Chapter 2, the popularity of scenario development as a process has dominated the field to the extent that its theoretical basis has been neglected. Rowland and Spaniol (2019, p. 103) suggest that:

> Managers utilizing scenario planning for strategy development may be surprised to learn that scholars in futures studies, an area responsible for research on foresight techniques, generally do not know why scenarios work. For more than a decade, scholars have prefaced their scientific communications by conspicuously bemoaning the lack of theory to support scenario methodology … [this] insufficient theory … acts as a ready made justification for adopting theory from outside of futures studies.

Chermack (2007, p. 1) argues that the construction of scenarios is a form of theory building, since both use "disciplined imagination" but he also notes that evidence is lacking to support its effectiveness. Wilkinson (2009, p. 111) provides an example of theory in practice when she describes the University of Oxford's scenario approach that draws on two specific theories: "causal textures theory … and sensemaking" noting that "this undertaking to reveal and clarify theory in scenario practices is rare, but it is a necessary step if the field is to secure the quality control and intellectual rigour required for it to be more fully recognised." The need for scenario development to have a more clearly defined theory is often asserted, but that theory appears to remain elusive, and is not only beyond the scope of this research to explore – it would also likely add little to the literature that already exists.

Instead, a question emerges that is worth considering at this point: is it the search for a theory to underpin the methodology shaping the design of scenario processes that will help explain why scenarios work (Rowland & Spaniol 2017), or is it that this theory search is better focused on understanding the ways in which mental models can shift to enable us to re-perceive reality? No answer to that question is provided here, although the literature reviewed for this research suggests that understanding how mental models change is a more critical imperative than finding a theoretical basis for the process. The only assertion made here is that the search for scenario theory to justify its value as a method may be searching in the wrong place. The more appropriate place to search for this theory may be the developing FSF theoretical base discussed in Chapter 2 and by Yeoman and Curry (2019). Scenario development *is* a primary FSF method, and as such, perhaps *should* draw on the precepts defined in the FSF literature, rather than seeking to build new theory. As Curry writes (2020 in press), "The history of scenarios and scenario planning is a myopic one. As written, it

often detaches itself from the wider body of futures practice and futures thinking". Indeed, it does appear that this history has been written to position scenario development as inherently valuable, and that may, in fact, not be the case.

7.3   Scenario Archetypes

This section discusses a particular type of scenario construction, one that allows the clustering of a range of similar scenarios into archetypes. This approach is used in Sections 7.10 and 7.11 to identify and integrate archetypal futures generated by scenarios discussed in the University Futures literature set (Section 7.4). In the way used here, archetypes originated in psychology in Jung's *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconsciousness* (1968, p. 4) where he justified the term archetype as:

> For our purposes this term is apposite and helpful, because it tells us that so far as the collective unconscious contents are concerned we are dealing with archaic or—I would say—primordial types, that is, with universal images that have existed since the remotest times … Another well-known expression of the archetypes is myth and fairytale. But here too we are dealing with forms that have received a specific stamp and have been handed down through long periods of time.

Archetypal constructions survive over time and embody an image that is immediately and subconsciously recognisable. More recently, archetypes have attracted the interest of brain researchers (for example, Alcaro, Carta & Panksepp 2017) to identify those parts of the brain that generate the 'self'. In the social sciences, Boschetti, Price and Walker (2016) explore commonalities between archetypes developed by futures practitioners through the lens of social cognition and cultural theory. Their creation of four "myths of the future" is derived from a survey of Australian citizens, but notably their myths – social crisis, eco-crisis, power and inequality, and social transformation – equate closely to Dator's archetypes of Collapse, Discipline, Continuation and Transformation respectively, which are discussed below. Hunt et. al. (2012, p. 3), drawing on work by the Global Scenario Group (Gallopín et al. 1997) on global scenarios and human choice, discuss in detail the development of the Great Transition scenarios, and their "archetypal social visions" that address choices humanity faces as it moves through the 'grand transition' to the next stage of human evolution and which were later published in Raskin (2002, 2016).

In FSF, scenario archetypes are based on the principle that it is possible to identify broadly similar foci and narratives across disparate scenarios that allow them to be 'clustered' into

four categories. This approach differs from the GBN 2x2 matrix discussed in Section 7.2 that is based on two critical changes affecting the future of the organisation, and which results in four scenarios that, when considered together, represent a range of possible futures that can inform strategy development and decision making. Each time this method is used, however, different critical changes are usually used to define the 2x2 matrix and they, in turn, create a different set of four alternative futures – that are applicable to, and making sense, only in the context in which they were generated. In contrast, archetypal futures are relevant across different contexts.

The scenario archetype approach in FSF is generally tracked to the work of Dator in the 1970s (2009, p. 6) when he reviewed "as many images of the future as I could … [and] eventually decided that all of the many images of the future that exist in the world can be grouped into one of four generic piles – four alternative futures." These alternative futures are archetypal patterns that recur over time, with each archetype having both positives and negatives and with no *likely* scenario, since each has an equal possibility of actually becoming a reality – "thus all need to be considered in equal measure and sincerity" (p. 5). Bezold (2009) provides a useful history about how four archetypes were chosen from an original ten, which Dator first articulated in 1977. The archetypes are:

- **Continuation**: present trends and forces continue without major disruptions or surprises. The system continues its current trajectory.

- **Discipline** (now also termed *Equilibrium*): the system is confronted with a major challenge to how it has been operating and is forced to adapt and compromise in order to 'save itself' and keep the basic structure of the current system intact.

- **Collapse** (now also termed *Descent*): the system 'breaks' or falls into a state of dysfunction. The established way of doing things no longer works, and there is decline in the 'health 'of the system. Usually not apocalyptical in nature but can be.

- **Transformation**: entails fundamental change to the system. The existing rules of the game are scrapped and totally new ways of doing things emerge.

A more detailed description of the archetypes is provided in Appendix 3. These archetypes are considered to remain valid in the present – for example, Wack (1985) developed archetypes of national governments to help Shell understand different paths those

governments might take in response to a changing oil market, and Schwartz (1996) in his time at GBN pursued a similar approach, seeking recurring historical themes to frame change in the present. More recently, Schultz, Crews and Lum (2012) used Jungian archetypes in scenario development to identify specific roles stakeholders can play in imagined future worlds, the Australian Academy of Science (S. Cork et al. 2015) used archetypes to structure its exploration of scenarios for Australia's futures in 2050 and Fergnani and Jackson (2019, p. 1) designed an algorithm to extract "archetype-specific information" from a futures focused literature database. Inayatullah (2008) uses a different type of archetype set – the used future, the disowned future, the alternative future, and the preferred future which has most functionality when his Six Pillars process is being used.

Curry and Schultz (2009, p. 50–53) suggest that archetypes "provide useful sorting and construction scaffolds for organising a large variety of drivers and insights about change" while remarking that "in order to use the archetype frameworks, participants must understand them thoroughly … to grasp the gestalt of each." That is, because participants did not develop the archetypes, more time will first need to be spent ensuring they understand the context and detail of narratives. Whatever categorisation or labelling is used, archetypes are designed to allow people to engage with possible futures in the present – the aim is not to decide which future they like best, but to recognise the multiple possible futures available to them in the present, all of which are shaping action and decision making today.

Curry and Schultz (2009) also point out, however, that "there is widespread scepticism in the futures community of the value of using archetypes as a frame for scenario development", but they also regard archetypes as having the same capacity to challenge thinking about the present as conventional scenario development processes. Their value lies in being able to "get people into constructive dialogues about the future faster by providing them with scenario outlines and asking them to consider how those general patterns of future development … might come about" (Australian Academy of Science 2013). The four archetypes should be applied collectively to the strategic issue being considered to ensure the reason for creating alternative futures can be understood – and in that process, move thinking beyond the linear future. Importantly, the archetypes are distinct futures, but it can be a subtle distinction – for example, in a Discipline future, where a system is challenged, initial responses to that challenge could fail over time, and the system could then move towards a Descent scenario. Equally, the challenges being addressed in the Discipline scenario might be recognised as more significant than first realised, and to avoid collapse, action could be taken to move the

system towards Transformation. Dator's four archetypes are used for scenario analysis in this chapter.

7.4   The Future University in the Present

7.4.1   The Literature

The first paper in the University Futures literature set discussed in this section was published in 1987 and the last in 2019. A distinction was made between those texts that describe *specific* images of the future university and those which simply discuss 'the future' of the university. The latter set of texts is larger than the former, mainly because the review showed that they addressed the future from the perspective of the present university– which is easier to do than imagine a totally new future, primarily because this presentist focus does not require mental models to be challenged. For example, the futures projects of the Georgia State University system (Rath 2014), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2014), Georgetown University (Blass 2014) and the University of California (Davis) (University of California Davis 2016) all seek to understand what changes need to be made to their existing functions in order for their university to be sustainable in the future – without considering whether the university will actually be the appropriate structure to enact those functions in the future. Their focus was on change shaping their *present* university over time, as opposed to changing or adapting to potential new future realities.

This literature also produced several texts where preferred types of future university were discussed irrespective of context. That is, a scenario world was not developed but rather a treatise on why a particular type of university was appropriate for 'the future' was theorised. For example, the *pragmatic* university (Badley 2016, p. 637), "an imaginative university rather than one dominated by the current neoliberal economic, political and social discourse" and informed by Barnett's work on the ecological university (Barnett 2011b). Or, the *perfect* university (Cole 2016), or the hermeneutic university (Mackler 2010), where the university returned its focus to matters of meaning, the university as the "cradle of world citizens" (Ikeda 2010), or the *intentional* university – the story of Minerva University (Kosslyn & Nelson 2017), the *world* university (Allen 2011), the *sustainable* university (Weenen 2000), a university of the *common* (Pusey 2017), the *uber* university (Hall 2016; Avenell 2016), or Scharmer's (2019) university that is "a unity of research, teaching, and the praxis of transforming society and self." Exploring the potential richness of this literature set in a

broader sense is a useful topic for future research since this research is focused specifically on scenarios that construct *possible* futures for the university.

This scenario literature sub-set that did hold such possible futures was defined by the following criteria – each text had to:

(i)   discuss scenarios for the university's possible futures positioned more than 10 years into the future that emerged from a structured scenario project or process, noting that while some texts referred to higher education in titles, the scenarios refer to the future of the university;

(ii)   focus on the university as an organisation rather than a function such as research (Rip 2011), a particular facet such as learning (Izak, Kostera & Zawadski 2017), or campus design (Magnini, Butler & Morrell 2018), a department such as the library (Staley & Malenfant 2010; Jaggars 2014), or a focus on the impact of a particular change such as technology (Marshall 2018);

(iii)   focus on deeper, longer term and more global change such as the impact of social attitude shifts about universities (Huang 2019), technological innovation (Surrey 2010; Cost et al. 2013; Johnson et al. 2016) and environmental challenges (Lukman & Glavič 2007), rather than secondary changes like financial challenges in local contexts;[9] and

(iv)   explicitly identify a defined future for the university obviously different to the university of the present.

This created a literature set of twenty-seven items produced by thirty-nine authors (both individual and institutional) that generated ninety-one unique scenarios. Appendix 2 provides the details of these individual scenarios that are discussed in this section. Each text in this literature set was analysed to identify common facets:

- **Context** – the university type used as the reference for the development of the scenarios;
- **Time Horizon** – the boundary year for the scenarios (if provided);

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[9] For example, current financial challenges faced by universities as government funding has declined are real and their impact is one of the most often quoted issues facing universities today. These challenges, however, are most often generated at the local level by shifts in a government's economic policies which are, in turn, shaped by the broader, global adoption of neoliberalism as an economic philosophy.

- **Change Drivers** – major external change forces shaping the university's futures (either provided or interpreted from a text);
- **Scenario Titles** – that generally provided an image of the future university; and
- **Future University** – summary of the type of university existing in the future scenario (or its alternative if no university existed).

Because the analysis that follows focuses on scenarios for possible futures for the Western university, the limitation on the research defined in Section 1.5 applies to that analysis. That is, it derives from a Western worldview about the university and the Western higher education system which, as Stein and de Andreotti (2016, p. 4–5) indicate:

> continue[s] to reproduce an epistemological hierarchy wherein Western knowledges are presumed to be universally relevant and valuable, while non-Western knowledges are either patronizingly celebrated as "local culture," commodified or appropriated for Western gain, or else not recognized as knowledge at all.

The images of the future university in the scenarios reviewed must therefore be understood as referencing a system generated by a specific worldview,[10] one which inherently excludes many possible futures, one which remains powerful today, and one which leads Stein and de Andreotti (p.3) to ask: "to what extent can these institutions be transformed without larger social transformations?" Notably, they continue (p. 5):

> Because current crises of the university are linked to the longue durée of modernity and its racial and colonial conditions of possibility, ultimately it is thought that reform [of the university] is not possible and what is needed is to *imagine and create radically different, unknown futures for higher education and beyond* (italics added).

Scenarios such as those discussed in the next sections certainly describe different futures for society and the university, but the degree to which most are 'radically different' is debatable (Section 7.6.1).

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[10] My worldview, too, is inherently Western, certainly open to difference and plurality of ways of knowing and experience, but inevitably constrained by my upbringing, my experience, and the boundaries of my knowledge of the world. My bests efforts to escape the constraints of my worldview to create the archetypes discussed in this chapter are unlikely to truly, if at all, reflect the challenges felt by those who have been on the receiving end of Western colonial action, or to create images of the future university that truly do justice to their experience.

7.4.2   The Scenarios

That ninety-one scenarios were found in twenty-seven texts is not unusual, since the point of scenario development is to create alternative futures rather than a single preferred future. The focus of each scenario was summarised from individual texts, and an assessment was made using the indicator keywords (Table 4.1, Section 4.3.2) to identify both its underpinning *idea* and *archetype category* (the type of future being imagined in the scenario), which are also defined in Appendix 2. Scenario summaries ranged from paragraphs to several pages, however, so the descriptions provided in Appendix 2 focused on capturing enough detail to make the futures being described understandable.

Most scenarios assumed a university of some ilk would continue to exist, and all used similar change drivers to frame images of the future university being described. This is not unusual because there are no global changes that are specific to a single university or national university system, but what this similarity across scenarios does reinforce is the criticality of the interpretive stage of FSF processes (Chapter 3). That is, the differentiating factor in the scenarios is not the specific combination of changes per se, but how those global changes were interpreted in context – and this interpretive process is fundamentally and necessarily shaped by the idea held by the authors.

The first three criteria identified in Section 7.4.1 – context, time horizon and changes – are discussed below.

Context

This factor related to the type of university that was the focal point for the scenario development. *One* scenario set was developed for Europe; *two* sets related to research universities (defined as such by the authors); *three* focused on specific universities (Bemidji, BRAC and Swinburne universities); *eight* were developed at the national level (Australia, Britain, Ireland, Malaysia (2), The Netherlands, and the USA (2)); *twelve* were university neutral, treating the university as a concept rather than as applicable in a specific context; and one was deemed a *unique* type – the women's university.

Time Horizon

Some scenarios defined no time horizon and instead used the more generic phrase 'the future university' (Tjeldvoll 1998; Manicas 2000; OECD; Inayatullah 2006; Drucker 2014; and Staley 2019). All other scenarios explored futures with a future beyond 10 years, one of

which (Inayatullah 2012) explored a future 38 years ahead to 2050. Apart from some terminology references – such as the changing terms used to describe technology as it evolved over time – the time horizon did not appear to affect the types of futures being imagined for the university. That is, common issues and challenges were identified, although the majority of scenarios for the Reframed and Dismissive ideas were identified in the twenty-first century and have specific differences that are explored in Section 7.5.

Change Drivers

Changes in the external environment used in the GBN 2x2 matrix scenario development process (Scearce & Fulton 2004) typically refers to global changes as 'change drivers' or 'change forces' and are defined as longer term in nature (more than 10 years), relatively stable for long periods of time and that shape the prevalence and/or demise of trends – defined for the purposes of this research as changes that generally have a shorter-term impact (less than 10 years). Change drivers were identified in the texts in two main ways. The **first** was from overt references in a list or paragraph as part of a specified scenario development process. The **second** was more indirect, with changes interpreted from the text as the rationale and context for the scenarios was discussed and indicative terms about the types and impact of changes were used.

The change drivers used to frame each scenario are also defined in Appendix 2, and a basic count of the consolidated list of changes identified *four* that were most frequently cited across the literature set (more than ten references) which are summarised below. While the category of 'issues relating to higher education' had 12 mentions, it is not referenced specifically below because, as indicated in Section 7.4.1, these issues (such as funding) are considered here to be secondary in nature – that is, they are not *primary* drivers of change and are instead considered to be outcomes of the impact of the external, global context in which universities exist.

Globalisation and Markets (cited 19 times)
That the world is now global was the most frequently referenced change in the scenarios (7 times), with specific references to the growth of markets (4) and competition (4), and single mentions of increasing mobility, increasing cooperation and trade liberalisation. There was one scenario context where there was a backlash against globalisation and an associated rise of terrorism, war, immigration movements and threats to national identities.

Knowledge (cited 16 times)

Generating, preserving and transmitting knowledge was once the fundamental business of universities and is a strong issue of concern in the scenarios reviewed here. General terms such as 'knowledge shifts', changes to 'knowledge production', and the 'knowledge economy' were used. Other references were to the shift in *who* generates knowledge and how access to knowledge is achieved, the changing view of value of academic expertise as knowledge is democratised; and the changing nature of research, including a growing trend towards partnerships with external groups and external research funding.

Technology (cited 14 times)

This was the only change that was discussed to some degree in all texts reviewed but it was not always designated as a change driver for scenario purposes. Early scenarios focused on the potential impact of Information Communication and Technology on the university – at this time it was recognised as a shift that was going to influence how universities operated, but the exact shape of that impact was unclear. More recent scenarios discuss the impact and use of digital and virtual technologies and are oriented clearly towards how technology can be used in teaching, research, and operations. Its potential impact as a trigger for 'unbundling the university' following the introduction of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in 2007 (Downes 2012) appears in some later scenarios.

Other changes referenced were:

- issues relating to **higher education** (12 times – funding/costs, access, diversity, partnerships and curriculum as student or academic led);
- **demographics** (6 times) – the aging population, migration and general demographic shifts;
- **social issues** (5 times) – the need for lifelong learning, multiculturalism, and shifts in social values;
- **economic issues** (3 times) – increasing public debt, global economy and shifts from capitalist to humanist framework;
- **political issues** (3 times) – government policy in general, different political positionings, and politicalisation; and
- **sustainability and climate change** (2 times) – used specifically in these two cases as drivers of change, while other scenarios included reference to climate change, but did not reference it as a specific driver of change.

Most of these changes, variously combined, provided context for specific issues and arguments in these texts. Some consider changes in more detail – for example, Marshall (2018) with a detailed focus on technology impact, or more specific changes such as Zemsky (2013, p. 15) who identified the implications of higher education's "inability to control costs, provide broad access, and place teaching and learning at the centre of the enterprise", or Universities UK (2012) which identified the broad themes of growth and investment, global demand, innovation, and redefining the institution as the major areas of change to be addressed in the twenty-first century.

It is the *intersection* of these change drivers as they connect, collide, and evolve that will shape the university's futures. These more global changes shape the environment in which universities exist and operate, and it is their interrelationship that increases both uncertainty and risk (Király & Géring 2019). It is also these global changes that generate what has been called in this research a pivotal social disruption (Chapter 5). The most recent of these disruptions was the rise of globalisation followed by the adoption of neoliberalism as an organising philosophy by governments. In the present, signals of the emergence of a new shift is apparent – for example, in the form of an increase in environmental consciousness about climate change (Carson 1962; McCamish 2007; Donovan 2015; Monibot 2018), the backlash against both globalisation (Moyo 2016) and neoliberalism (Chakrabortty 2016; Metcalf 2017; Legge 2017), and new social attitudes towards global issues such as poverty and inequality (Beinhocker & Hanauer 2014; Kocka 2015; Lewandowsky, Ecker & Cook 2017) – which are referenced in some scenarios.

Before moving to explore the scenarios for the university's futures, the three main drivers identified in this section – globalisation and markets, knowledge, and technology – have been interpreted and summarised in terms of how each idea views them, as shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Change Drivers Shaping Idea Futures

Change➔ Idea⬇	Globalisation and Market	Knowledge Production Purpose	Engagement with Technology
Traditional Idea	Rejects	For us - academics	Low
Managerial Idea	Embraces	For jobs – the economy	High
Reframed Idea	Accepts if context appropriate, prefers local engagement	For society – social problems	Medium
Dismissive Idea	Embraces	For me – my learning needs	High

The logic for these positions draws on discussion in Chapter 5 and is as follows.

Traditional Idea: prefers a more local or national focus rather than global operations; knowledge is produced by academics for use by academics and shared when they decide; engagement with technology is low – it is used but not necessarily for teaching and research.

Managerial Idea: embraces and promotes globalisation; global rankings and reputation matter; knowledge is produced in ways that support national economic priorities and vocationally oriented teaching to ensure graduates gain employment, with academic research focused on national and global needs; technology is at the core of operations globally and locally.

Reframed Idea: largely, but not always, rejects globalisation because of its negative impacts on society and the university, seeks a more local or national context although global operations may be possible in collaborative contexts; knowledge is produced collaboratively within and outside the university and has a clear focus on social issues; engagement with technology is low to medium, depending on context and social needs being addressed and used when needed and as is relevant.

Dismissive Idea: embraces globalisation and connectedness with other learners; knowledge is open, produced by people everywhere, with artificial intelligence assisting in managing knowledge and making it accessible to learners; technology use is high to maintain global connection and access to the production and sharing of knowledge.

Taken together, these three change drivers informed the classification of the scenarios as reflective of a particular idea.

7.5   Possible University Futures

The majority of scenario titles carried with them an image or metaphor of the future university, usually described as a *type* of university or its context such as 'the corporate university' or 'swept away by market forces' – words that immediately conjure up images of the neoliberal university and the Managerial Idea. Some had more generic titles such as 'the future university' (Blass 2002) or 'alternative futures for European universities' (van Geffen, Niewczas & Bukowska 2013) while others had a hint of the new in the title - 'the university as a fully integrated and distributed platform' (Drucker 2014). Discussing the specific content of each scenario in detail or generating a comprehensive comparative analysis is, however, not the aim here, where instead the scenarios provide a starting point for the development of a

framework to better understand the intersection of the ideas and the university's assumed futures (Section 7.6). The focus at this point is instead on identifying two things: (i) the idea underpinning each scenario; and (ii) the archetype category of each scenario. Since scenarios clustered by ideas can reasonably be expected to be similar in focus, re-clustering the scenarios by archetypes results in possible futures that *apply to one or more ideas*, providing a new perspective on how the university's possible futures are understood in the present. Definitions of the four archetypes used are summarised here again for ease of reference, and a more detailed description is provided in Appendix 3:

- **Continuation**: the present trends and forces continue without major disruptions or surprises. The system continues its current trajectory;
- **Discipline**: the system is confronted with a major challenge to how it has been operating and is forced to adapt and compromise in order to 'save itself' and keep the basic structure of the current system intact;
- **Descent**: The system 'breaks' or falls into a state of dysfunction. The established way of doing things no longer works, and there is decline in the 'health 'of the system. Usually not apocalyptical in nature but can be, in which case it is often called Collapse; and
- **Transformation**: Entails fundamental change to the system. The existing rules of the game are scrapped and entirely new ways of doing things emerge.

Table 7.2 shows the frequency of possible futures generated by each idea.

Table 7.2 Frequency of Possible Futures by Ideas

Idea	Number of Possible Futures	Percentage of Possible Futures (totals are rounded)
Traditional Idea	8	9%
Managerial Idea	51	56%
Reframed Idea	29	32%
Dismissive Idea	3	3%
Total	**91**	**100**

The dominance of Managerial Idea futures (56% of all scenarios) is to be expected since it is also dominant in the discourse and represents what is often called a baseline scenario (Bishop 2017) – in this case, the continuation of the present neoliberal university. The percentage of Reframed Idea futures is 32%, a not insignificant number, suggesting that the assumptions of this idea are already strong in the literature, albeit still emergent in terms of power in the

discourse. The Traditional and Dismissive ideas have few futures because the nineteenth century university of the former idea no longer exists, and the latter idea is yet to emerge fully. Table 7.3 shows the number of archetypal futures generated by each idea.

Table 7.3 Archetypal Futures by Ideas

Idea➔ Archetype⬇	Traditional Idea	Managerial Idea	Reframed Idea	Dismissive Idea	Total by Archetype
Continuation		28	17		**45**
Descent	5	8	1		**15**
Discipline	3	13	6		**22**
Transformation			5	3	**8**
Total by Idea	**8**	**51**	**29**	**3**	**91**

Two things are immediately noticeable. **One**, that Continuation futures dominate the scenarios, significantly more than other archetypes – which is not surprising given the strong assumption in three ideas that the university will always exist. **Two**, is that not all archetypes are present in every idea. The Traditional Idea, for example, has no Continuation future because the university of the past no longer exists, and the Dismissive Idea only has transformation futures because it desires a future without a university as it is understood today – which is a future totally different to the present.

The next sections focus on the types of archetypal futures generated by each idea. Each section begins with an overview of the keywords used to categorise the scenarios, followed by a summary of the scenarios derived from the archetypes relevant to that idea. Each scenario was given a number to enable it to be linked to Appendix 2 in the discussion of the archetypal futures for each idea. There was an element of interpretation in the allocation of scenarios to ideas and archetypes, and the defining characteristics of each idea in Chapter 5 and the dynamics across the ideas identified in Chapter 6 were also used to identify the most appropriate archetype. Because of this interpretive factor, the choice of archetype is necessarily imperfect. Finally, as with all scenarios, the analyses discussed in the next sections are not predictive but represent possible futures for the university found in the University Futures literature set.

7.5.1   Traditional Idea

Keywords used: archetypes were allocated to scenarios for the Traditional Idea based on keywords such as traditional, public funding, rituals, insular, and niche/elite. Only two archetypes were allocated for this idea (Table 7.4) – Descent and Discipline – which were

classified using keywords such as resourcing/funding pressures, research shifting outside the university, the role of government particularly in terms of providing funding, declining student numbers, and competition.

Table 7.4 Frequency of Archetypal Futures in the Traditional Idea

Archetype	Frequency
Descent	5
Discipline	3
Total	**8**

Since the manifestation of the Traditional Idea as the modern university does not exist in the present, there are no Continuation or Transformation futures, which are both essentially incompatible futures for this idea. A summary of the characteristics of the archetypal futures is provided below.

***Descent* futures** focus on an inability to compete effectively in the market (9) resulting in major financial problems (42). Asia is a global education powerhouse in one scenario that ultimately saw Western universities being taken over by Asian universities (63). The perils of focusing on traditional values is highlighted (9, 23, 42, 63) as is not moving quickly enough to capture the online learning market (72). The image here is of the Western university struggling to survive and unable to respond quickly enough to significant social change.

***Discipline* futures** suggest that while a university continues to exist, it is not a replica of the past but is niche in nature in terms of branding (8) and/or as small, elite universities (40). Universities are concentrating on maintaining traditional strengths in a changing world to survive (40) but life is difficult. Funding is public and/or private (8, 61) and variable across institutions which exist in local contexts. A two- or three- tier system also seems to be emerging here. The clear image is of struggle – some universities fail, some survive but within a very constrained context.

For both futures, the university can only be considered as an ideal since the modern university upon which these futures are based does not exist as a university in the present. The likelihood of the neoliberal university and its variations regressing into a fully state-funded university, that is left alone for academics to focus on the pursuit of truth in their own time, beholden to only themselves, with collegiality, autonomy and academic freedom as fundamental values is low and, as demonstrated in the Three Horizon Analysis in Chapter 6,

any future underpinned by this idea is unlikely to be viable over time and would eventually disappear.

7.5.2 The Managerial Idea

Keywords Used: keywords such as business, commercial, size, technology, online, market, global/international (operations/competition/students); research commercialisation, personalisation, quality, and funding were used here. Table 7.5 shows the frequency of archetypal futures.

Table 7.5 Frequency of Archetypal Futures in the Managerial Idea

Archetype	Frequency
Continuation	28
Descent	8
Discipline	13
Total	**51**

The dominant archetype for the Managerial Idea is *Continuation*, which is to be expected because the neoliberal university is dominant in the present, and holders of this idea implicitly assume this university will continue. There are no *Transformation* futures because a dominant university is fit-for-purpose and is assumed it will continue in the present form for the foreseeable future – that is, there is no reason for it to transform into any other form.

Continuation futures are heterogenous in nature, reflecting the variations of university type discussed in Section 5.4. **Global** universities are common, with a focus on global courses and subjects (1, 2, 44); strong competition for students and research (23, 35); and universities that are global leaders, with even an elite university (scenario 26). There is global networking (44); and global operations (57, 63). Notable is the use of terms such as 'academic superstars' (1), 'star researchers' (23), 'star professors' (33, 35,63) and 'star performers' (54), suggesting that **academic careers** are becoming increasingly individualised, albeit along a spectrum of 'star potential'.

Technology (11, 20, 30, 34, 35, 44, 57, 60, 65), online presence (1, 11, 42) and digital developments (15, 34), including immersive experiences for students (63) are common references, but this is not surprising since technology is omnipresent – its use in particular contexts is what differs across universities. **Research** appears in fifteen scenarios but with different foci – research becoming an elite function (60); research moving outside the university (26) government funding for research being opened to the world, patents being

deregulated, with research increasingly disconnected from teaching (23). In some cases, universities make a choice to focus on either teaching or research (8, 26). **Learning** is commodified (11, 26) or vocational in orientation (11); facilitating learning rather than teaching becomes the dominant approach (15); academics are guides/mentors (1); students have more choice and control (20), are seen as customers (42), or alternatively as raw materials (67).

Types of institutions include elite, mass and experimental (65); mega, regional local (1); and an industry-based university that focuses on research and industry ready students (67). The university could be run on business principles (3); with public funding (22, 31, 47, 67); a mixture of both public and private funding (25), or industry funded (22, 46, 71); partnerships with industry and business are important (14, 22, 51, 52, 58, 60) as are networks (20, 44); the environment is market focused (22, 25, 26, 30, 35, 54, 60, 65) with strong competition, particularly for students (23, 26), and internally, there is increasing collaboration across disciplines (11). Here the Continuation futures describe a university of many diverse forms, as is the case today, with many purposes, accepting new requests from government without complaint.

Descent futures are characterised by continuing demands for transparency and openness that bring down the boundaries of the university, with increasing industry involvement in universities. This leads to a reduction in the number of universities and their functions, such as universities only for research or teaching for the masses (18), or universities as certifying bodies (18). Research becomes an elite function, and a binary divide might reappear (61); a lack of government funding is common (73). The image here is of a university failing to recognise and keep up with change, and ultimately waning in visibility and power.

Discipline futures are characterised by global operations (5, 7, 87); technology is fundamental to operations (5, 7, 75, 76, 87); and institutional types range from continuation of the neoliberal university (5); student focused institutions that operate at the cutting edge (7); totally online (75, 87); or brick and mortar (75). These futures have a university doing what the neoliberal university does today but in modified ways to suit changing contexts that emerge in the future.

7.5.3 The Reframed Idea

Keywords used: archetypes were allocated to scenarios for this idea based on keywords that mirrored the values of the Traditional Idea (collegiality, academic freedom and autonomy), references to public and social good, a community focus and an articulated shift away from the purpose and operations of the neoliberal university. Table 7.6 shows the scenarios and archetypes for the Reframed Idea; this is the only idea that has futures in all four archetypes.

Table 7.6 Frequency of Archetypal Futures in the Reframed Idea

Archetype	Frequency
Continuation	17
Descent	1
Discipline	6
Transformation	5
Total	**29**

Continuation futures here represent possible pathways for the Reframed Idea that might emerge over the next decades. They are characterised by a **community/social focus** (18, 20, 54, 79), a local/national focus rather than global operations (20, 52), a return to the values of the Traditional Idea (47), a community service purpose that is responsive to social needs (54), seeks to make social contributions (49, 52, 68) and social partnerships (48, 49, 54). This future university might become a social laboratory to turn problems into innovations (55). There is a stronger focus on carbon reduction and resource use (52). The university has **public support and funding** (11, 20, 47, 70) and **private funding** (49). **Learning** is valued for its own sake (49) and access to universities is universal (26) with a wider range of students (26, 48, 55). **Academics** have regained their professional status and leadership status (45, 26) which is now eco-leadership based (54, 55), and there is cooperation between students, academics and managers (68). Academics, usually humanities based, start think tanks to influence policy making (83) to change the world for the better.

In these scenarios, **teaching** and flexible learning feature more than research (18, 26), with an open curriculum (54,56) based on liberal arts principles and soft skills, focused on problem-solving (85) and developed with alumni and the private sector (54). Some universities are specialised in particular disciplines to seek cross-discipline innovation and train students to work across boundaries (89). **Research** now exists outside universities (26), and where research exists in the university, it is focused on the humanities and social sciences. Elite

universities also exist (20, 26). **Technology** is used only to connect people (11) and facilitate peer to peer learning (54) which is valued for its own sake (47).

The single ***Descent future*** for the Reframed Idea (6) is one that sees the university move to a more open and collaborative approach, tailored for different contexts. The irony is that it may be too successful here because learning is eventually accepted as a social responsibility *within* society, and while the myriad of university types that now exist do continue, the need for structured learning within an organisation decreases over time, and hence the formal university structure ultimately disappears.

Discipline futures represent types of universities that might emerge if the Managerial Idea remains dominant into the near future – that is, they assume that the external environment will continue to change to the extent where new university forms can emerge and survive alongside the neoliberal university. These universities vary from locally-based universities that seek non-government funding and private/industry clients to survive (4,78), to more globally oriented universities seeking to attract international students while still working with local delivery centres (15) or working within industry to meet community needs (70) and a combination of public/private students (4). The focus here is on benefits to society with socially oriented research (15, 78), a liberal education ethos (16) and a more learning organisation structure (39). Academics are flexible, working with the corporate world (39) or as knowledge transfer brokers to society (78). The reframed university here can be successful but will not be dominant in the short-term.

Transformation futures describe universities which are social in terms of networking and interaction (12, 76, 81), has open boundaries with less bureaucracy (12, 81, 90), and are inclusive (12). Technology plays a role (12, 76, 81), academics and their expertise return to foreground (12, 76) and new varieties of learning have been established (88, 90). These futures would emerge if there was a pivotal social disruption that moved society away from neoliberalism and globalisation towards learning in society.

7.5.4   The Dismissive Idea

Keywords to identify archetypes for this idea were more difficult to identify than for the previous three ideas. Continuation, Discipline and Descent futures make little sense for this idea because there is no university in the present to continue, move into discipline mode, or descend and disappear. Because the Dismissive Idea is pre-emergent, its exact form cannot

yet be defined with precision, so allocating the scenarios to an archetype category was less certain than other ideas. Terms such as transformation, new, innovation were considered, but ultimately it was an interpretive exercise to identify narratives that were considered to describe a learning environment that did not resemble existing types of universities today. Certainly, some elements, such as play in Scenario 88 which might be seen to be an extension of Lego Serious Play™ (Lego 2020), are present today but narratives used for this idea described learning in new ways without the university structure of the present to facilitate it. Table 7.7 shows the frequency of archetypal futures for this idea.

Table 7.7 Frequency of Archetypal Futures in the Dismissive Idea

Archetype	Frequency
Transformation	3
Total	**3**

Transformation futures describe new ways of learning *in* society, which is the future this idea seeks. Microcolleges (82) seems to draw on the Traditional Idea, with the academic at the core of learning and working wherever learning is needed. Embedded in the community and working with the community, academics may not have a university anymore, but there is a place for them in this future. The two other futures – *Interface University* and *The University of the Body* – draw heavily on technology, which is appropriate since learning in society without a university will most likely occur via some type of technological platform. *Interface University* (86) is familiar because the interface between humans and artificial intelligence is topical in the present (Gray 2017; The British Academy & The Royal Society 2018; Butt 2019), but here artificial intelligence and students are equal partners in learning. The academic is not to be seen, although it is feasible that it is academics who are designing the artificial intelligence. *The University of the Body* (87) has students enmeshed in society. Here there is a university, but not a familiar one. Instead, its focus is on society, helping students navigate their way through a technologically based world in that social context – the university does not exist in an empirical form. The reality here is a complete technological future for learning, where the university does not *prescribe and deliver* learning but rather merely facilitates the immersive learning experience of the student.

This section has defined archetypal futures for each idea derived from the University Futures literature set. The next two sections analyse these archetypal futures, **first** to provide a summary of theses futures and **second**, to integrate the futures in search of new and novel futures for the university.

7.6   Archetypal Futures

7.6.1   Summary of Archetypal Futures

This section provides a summary of the archetypal futures identified and analysed in Section 7.5. Table 7.8 summarises the archetypal futures in each idea across the archetypes – that is, the archetypal futures are the organising premise, not the ideas.

Table 7.8 Archetypal Futures for Each Idea (derived from scenarios)

Archetype→ Idea↓	Continuation	Descent	Discipline	Transformation
Traditional *Academic stakeholders dominant*		University cannot compete, fails to use technology effectively	Few small, elite, usually local universities survive for a time	
Managerial *Managers/ Government stakeholders dominant*	Business as usual, neoliberalism remains strong; global, manager led	University boundaries break down as society demands openness, industry is more involved, government funding collapses, universities decline	Global operations, technology underpins operations; many contexts, many university types, sometimes become single purpose focused	
Reframed *Academic and social stakeholders dominant*	New/alternative universities continue to emerge slowly, focus on social issues, new mindset, global and local operations, academic led	Education becomes a social responsibility, and is learner driven in peer networks in society; stand-alone university types begin to lose relevance	Smaller university sector, often existing within community or industry, private and public funding; supporting learners in their contexts	Boundaries between society/ university dissolved; focus on social justice and inclusivity; technology driven platforms for new forms of learning or a reframed agora of the past
Dismissive *Social stakeholders dominant*				No universities from 2020 remain. New structures in society facilitate learning for society.

Continuation futures are present in Table 7.8 only for the Managerial and Reframed Ideas, which is logical since they manifest as the only two university types that exist in the present. These futures do not exist for the Traditional Idea or the Dismissive Idea because there is no university in the present to continue – the modern university having disappeared into history and learning in and for society on a wide scale is not yet a reality.

Descent and **Discipline** futures are present for the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas, highlighting that different responses to continuing social change can generate different pathways into the future. While it seems implausible that the Traditional Idea could manifest as *any* type of university in the present, its Descent and Discipline futures (Section 7.5.1) represent existing institutions that either do not move to incorporate digital technology quickly enough, leading them to lose relevance over time, or existing small Ivy League type institutions which lose relevance if learning does begin to move completely outside the university, the positioning expressed in the Dismissive Idea. The Managerial Idea, as the Three Horizons analysis in Chapter 6 demonstrated, ultimately loses relevance and is no longer fit-for-purpose, theoretically moving through first a Discipline future before moving to a Descent existence.

The Reframed Idea and the Dismissive Idea both hold **Transformation** futures which are considered to be incompatible with the two other ideas – the Traditional Idea because, as with the Continuation futures, there is no university to transform, and the Managerial Idea as for Descent and Discipline futures, the neoliberal university is not fit-for-purpose in this future. At this point, both the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas will be the source of transformation:

- the Reframed Idea is already thinking about and enacting the need to change how the university as an organisation is understood, and so has begun to move beyond the constraints imposed by the neoliberal university to see new future possibilities; and
- the Dismissive Idea because it rejects the Managerial Idea and the neoliberal university, seeking to enact widespread and alternative learning and research structures in society.

These two ideas could potentially merge to work towards structures and operations that allow learning in and for society to become a reality, although such a merger would not be possible in the present since the Reframed Idea sees its university as led by academics, whereas the Dismissive Idea sees learning as pervasive within society. A future without a university as it is understood today is then also a reality, and that too represents a transformation future.

Of note is the lack of Transformation futures that describe a future for the university *within* the present university sector, suggesting that the answer to Stein and de Andreotti's question (2016, p.3): "to what extent can these institutions be transformed without larger social transformations?" is that they *cannot* be transformed from within. It is posited here that such a transformation only becomes possible as an outcome of a pivotal social disruption in the

same way that the pre-World War II university was transformed by neoliberalism (Barrigos & Samier 2013). Neoliberalism is now so deeply embedded in every aspect of society that the neoliberal university in some form could potentially maintain its legitimacy until such a disruption occurs.

7.6.2   Integrating Archetypal Futures

Very few of the scenarios analysed in the previous section have generated the "radical futures" that Stein and de Andreotti (2016) were seeking, simply because they are grounded in the presents of the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas. Vincent-Lancrin (2004, pp. 257-258) notes that images of the future:

> are largely rooted in the present – the expectations, fears and hopes that form the path to the future … the scenarios … are familiar, reflecting fairly closely the burning historical and institutional issues facing universities in OECD countries today.

A truly radical future is a Transformation future, and as Table 7.3 shows, only eight out of ninety-one of these futures were identified across the scenarios. The question to ask then is 'are these futures new enough?' Enough to stretch, crack and even break open the extant discourse to let in all possible futures? This section explores how *integrating* the archetypal futures provides a new perspective on how the university's futures might emerge and defines an approach that may allow the discourse to take on a more integrative stance to break open *enough* to achieve the expanded discourse that is sought in this research.

Archetypal futures are based on the premise that all scenarios can be allocated to *an* archetype and that the archetypes can be then be used to imagine new futures. This research does not generate new single archetypal futures however, and rather uses an integrative frame to work *across* the archetypal futures so that new perspectives on how the university's possible futures might emerge *beyond* the constraints of individual ideas can be identified. While Table 7.8 suggests that archetypal futures identified from the scenarios identified in Section 7.5 exist independently of each other, here those futures are collectively taken to be the starting point for a new, more integrative discussion.

The integrative starting point is to make the archetypal futures and the theoretical future frames they define the focus, not the ideas. Rather than only indicating that each idea can generate more than one archetypal future (Table 7.8), here the focus in on how a singular archetype might be able to hold the space for more than one seemingly antithetical idea. That

is, this framing of 'ideas within archetypes' essentially 'forces' the ideas to co-exist in possible futures that are not assumed or accepted by the ideas in their synchronic variational forms. Such a new perspective has the potential to identify just how an expanded discourse space might open up if it did indeed value all ideas and all possible futures. The focus in this section then shifts from the futures *for* the ideas to the theoretical types of discourse spaces that might be generated from deliberately integrating two or more ideas and forcing these ideas to find *some* form of possible future that holds elements of the best, the positive in all the ideas.

A brief discussion of de Wit and Meyer's (2010, p. 17-18) concept of **strategic paradoxes** is useful at this point. A paradox exists when two seemingly oppositional positions about an issue or problem appear to be equally valid at the same time:

> A problem that is a paradox has no real solution, as there is no way to logically integrate the two opposites into an internally consistent understanding of the problem … one factor is true and a contradictory factor is simultaneously true … A paradox has no answer … it can only be coped with as best as possible.

Importantly for this research, this concept of strategic paradox is integrative: "they [both positions] stimulate readers to seek a way of getting the best of both worlds" (p.18). Here, the merging of ideas in their archetypal futures generates such a paradox – *how can seemingly oppositional ideas be considered together in any meaningful way to find the best of possible futures for the university*? The next sections attempt to answer this question, seeking both the new and novel in these future configurations that can also lead to potentially different implications for action and decision making in the present compared with those which emerge when only the contested futures embedded in four ideas are considered.

7.6.2.1 Continuation Futures

Continuation futures are shaped by the Managerial and Reframed ideas. While seemingly hostile in their fundamental assumptions about purpose and legitimacy, they also share the common assumption that the university will always exist. Thinking about an alternative future university that might emerge from these two ideas provides the opportunity to consider what elements of the neoliberal university of the Managerial Idea and the cooperative university of the Reframed Idea might remain relevant into the future, particularly if there is a pivotal social disruption that results in the decline of neoliberalism, as the Three Horizons analysis in Chapter 6 suggests *will* happen at some stage. Assuming there was, for example, a

social shift that moved learning in the university towards learning *in* society, then the Reframed Idea would likely be more fit-for-purpose than the Managerial Idea. The neoliberal university of the present, however, is currently inhabited by the authors of both the Traditional and Reframed ideas, who have constructed both the resistance literature and the cooperative university, and who are all in a good position to begin to articulate and enact decisions *within the structure of the neoliberal university* that can construct the desired new university form over time. While unlikely in the short-term, a longer-term perspective *could* lead to a reframing of the neoliberal university into the more cooperative university envisaged by the Reframed Idea. This is not fanciful, because this 'change from within' is exactly what happened when the Managerial Idea and the neoliberal university overwhelmed the university in the 1990s and beyond. That said, the regulatory legitimacy basis of the neoliberal university would have to change for this type of more social future to emerge, which is also a possibility after a pivotal social disruption.

7.6.2.2 Descent Futures

The **Descent futures** generated by the **Traditional**, **Managerial** and **Reframed** Ideas present an interesting conundrum. The Traditional and Reframed Ideas stand in opposition to the Managerial Idea, but in a Descent future, the co-existence of these three ideas provides an opportunity. The *context* which has generated the Descent futures is critical in this space since the only option is to find a way out of Descent into the Discipline space or continue to lose social legitimacy – so a strong and deep understanding of social change in that context is essential. Considering how to identify potential strategies to influence or mitigate the sorts of changes in the external environment that would generate these Descent futures would be possible – *not* to strengthen the Managerial Idea, but to see changes through a more 'social' lens, and to take an outside-in perspective on how that change is likely to affect the university – a new perspective that would help to respond to the changes that potentially could send all three ideas into Descent futures trajectories. This is a proactive stance to these changes and avoids reactionary responses that lead inevitably to crisis management as the only strategic option. Here, questions that explore how globalisation might develop, including whether a strong backlash against globalisation might occur, how technology might be used and what forms of knowledge will be needed in the university of the future become fundamental for the continued existence of the university. These sorts of conversations already exist, except that these are informed by singular ideas and do not generate the integrated perspective sought

here. Without this sort of collaboration to identify new responses to change, the ideas would ultimately move into Descent trajectories.

7.6.2.3 Discipline Futures

The **Discipline futures** are also found in three ideas – Traditional, Managerial and Reframed – all of which share the assumption that the university will always exist. Here we can assume that the **Traditional Idea** is rapidly losing its validity in the present and a Discipline future for it is an attempt to stave off an inevitable Descent future. This would be survival for a period as small, niche, elite institutions for the wealthy – similar to the Ivy League institutions in the USA and what were the Imperial Universities of Asia. As indicated above, because the **Managerial** Idea will ultimately begin to lose its legitimacy some point in the future, it could move into the Discipline space if it is unable to respond to new social needs to maintain its legitimacy. If this pathway is not viable, it could move into a Descent trajectory. The Discipline mode for the **Reframed** Idea might be considered to be a holding zone of sorts – where the Managerial Idea is still dominant and where alternative and cooperative universities continue to develop. As discussed in Transformation Futures in the next paragraph, there is also a pathway out of a Discipline future for the Reframed Idea. If all three ideas occupied this Discipline space at the same time, the conversation would need to be focused on co-existence in the short-term. That is, all three ideas would have to accept that the neoliberal university does not have a guaranteed future and that the hope of the Reframed Idea to connect the university to society while maintaining some of the Traditional Idea's values *is* a viable pathway to the future. The conversation here then is one that seeks to find the positives in the neoliberal university that will be needed in the future, and ways in which its perceived negative impact can be addressed in the Reframed Idea's new university type so that this university can be co-designed by those who hold the Managerial and Reframed Ideas. This conversation space perhaps seems the most difficult – because the beliefs that underpin these two ideas are oppositional – but a pivotal social disruption may be enough to enable the conversation to take place – because the underpinning imperative then would be to collaborate to find the university the future needs to ensure its survival in some form.

7.6.2.4 Transformation Futures

Finally, the **Transformation futures** emerge from the two newer ideas – **Reframed** and **Dismissive**. Again, this is not surprising because as Section 6.4 showed, both are located on different horizons and so do not occupy the same 'space' as the Managerial and Traditional

Ideas which are more focused on the present. Both the Reframed and Dismissive ideas exist in the more innovative spaces of H2 and H3 and both are seeking to destabilise H1 where the Managerial Idea and the neoliberal university are located. The type of potential collaboration identified in the Discipline Futures is also influential here – this outcome is feasible if again, a pivotal social disruption is part of the scenario. Transformation futures take time to develop – for example, challenges to the global neoliberal system in which universities now exist is underway but nowhere near the required 'tipping' point of a pivotal social disruption. This does not mean, however, that understanding the nature of the potential transformation and the type of society that might exist post-disruption is impossible. Rather a new space opens up to identify how to facilitate preferred outcomes and mitigate negative outcomes for the university and to explore what was once unthinkable – a future without a university, since the focus is now on something totally different to today – the university that exists *in society,* one that is totally different to the university of the past and present.

7.7   Concluding Comments

If all ideas and all futures are valued in the extant discourse, then a new capacity begins to emerge for those who lead universities and/or make decisions about their possible futures – namely, the ability to reorient thinking away from an *assumed* future embedded in *one* idea to a more integrated stance towards the future university, *and* a focus on defining the university the future *needs* rather than merely defending the university of the past or present. Exactly what reimagined futures emerge from such an expanded discourse is actually of less significance than the strengthened and reframed discourse *itself*, one that is oriented away from the past and towards the future. This reorientation is what Wack (1984) sees as part of the development of new mental models and that Tuomi (2017) suggests will generate ontological expansion in terms of how the university is understood in the present. In this expanded ontological space*,* new assumptions can be generated, a new worldview on what is possible can be constructed, and a new range of strategic actions can be identified and considered in the present. Chapter 8 moves away from the university's futures to return to the present – an *expanded* present in which a new structure for the discourse is proposed.

Part Four: Integration in the Present

Chapter 8: The Expanded Present

8.1   Overview

Throughout this research, the need to integrate the visible and invisible, the tacit and the overt, the inner and the outer, and the idea and the university has been paramount. The aim has been to find a discourse space that is open and inclusive and that does not privilege one perspective about the future of and for the university. A new conversations framework is proposed in this chapter, one that has the potential to facilitate such a stronger and more inclusive conversation. Stronger in Barnett's (2013a) sense that we first need to recognise the university's futures can be other than what they are now, and more inclusive by allowing the discourse to escape the constraints constructed by each of the four ideas to take broader and deeper perspectives on the university's futures. This conversations framework is designed to facilitate a discourse that values *all* ideas and *all* futures so that surfacing and 'seeing' the full potential of the university's possible futures becomes feasible at least in principle; and hopefully in practice. One question now arises: exactly how might a discourse space that is more integrative in its nature be constructed? This chapter explores how this question might be answered.

8.1.1   Chapter Structure

Section 8.2 discusses how a reframed discourse might be structured by defining a conversation framework based on the four-quadrant model in Integral Futures.

Section 8.3 defines each of the four conversation spaces that make up the framework that together integrate the world 'in here' with the world 'out there'.

Section 8.4 shows how four different types of conversations come together to generate the reframed discourse sought in this research, one that has the potential to expand present understandings of the relationship across the idea, the university and society.

Section 8.5 concludes the chapter.

8.2   A Reframed Discourse is Possible

8.2.1   Overview

Any useful conversation about possible futures in the sense discussed in this thesis takes place in a space that is inclusive, collaborative, and participative to ensure there is a diversity of perspectives informing how those possible futures are understood. It is a conversation that *always* questions the veracity of the dominant future. In this conversation, possible futures should – must even – be created by people who have a stake in that future *and* who care about future generations, as Stevenson (2002, p. 418–419) points out:

> Creating the future can be controlled by the wealthy, powerful and famous, and their minders and lackeys. But in the spirit of democracy, future-creating would seek to ensure that people who have a stake in the future, either through their likely habitat there, or their successor generations, should be able to participate in that creation.

A future generated by people in this context avoids what Inayatullah (2008) calls the used future, one that has been constructed by someone else that is 'purchased' and accepted as our own. He asks (p. 5): "Is your image of the future, your desired future, yours or is it unconsciously borrowed from someone else?" For example, strategic planning exercises typically present *a* future to people in an organisation, one that is ready-made and a fait accompli, a future already decided for them – and one they are now required to implement. Rejecting this used future (singular) is critical if the discourse is to open up to the inherent probability of many futures (plural).

Rejecting the used future also turns the focus on to people, not the plan, as the core of any conversations about possible futures in organisations. Then what Stevenson (2002) and Inayatullah (2006, p. 657) call 'anticipatory action learning' can become a reality, where the focus of that learning is "collaborative, and works within the epistemological framework of participation." That is, if people are going to be able to move beyond their cognitive constraints about the future to surface their foresight capacities (Chapter 2), conversations about the future *must* draw on *their* knowledge, experience and expertise, and use *their* ways of knowing to ground those conversations. This positioning helps to make the future personal, surfacing a sense of agency and hope that is usually not generated using standardised, off-the-shelf FSF processes or conventional strategic planning formulas. Engaging with FSF processes that put people and participation at the core is the first step in

enabling us to reframe thinking about the future for and of the university, *and* to find new ways to act in the present – which Miller (2018) frames as "using the future in the present".

8.2.2   Framing the Conversations

As Chapters 6 and 7 discussed, the discourse about the university's possible futures as constructed by the literature constrains new perspectives about those futures from emerging. The contest across the four ideas, each trapped in *its* interpretation of the university, is locked into a choice between essentially two possible futures for the university – one is an updated version of the university of the present, either business-as usual or reframed, and one in which the university of the present no longer exists. The struggle between these contested futures has generated a discourse that is fragmented and confused, where the idea is invisible, the university is described with the language of war and labelled a toxic place in which to work. The hostile nature of that discourse over the last forty years means that finding a common space for a conversation about possible futures for the university that is open, challenging, inclusive and seeking the new and novel in the present seems impossible. This section seeks to make the seeming impossible, possible.

The conversation space proposed in this and following sections seeks this reframing of the discourse and has the potential to shift mindsets as Wack desired (Chapter 7), to expand ontological understanding of the university and its possible futures (Chapters 5, 6 and 7) and simply, to take off personal cognitive filters to recognise the fundamentally constraining nature of the extant discourse. These are 'big' words, but ultimately accepting the confused discourse of the present as all that there is – or worse, and all that might be – cannot be an option for this research. Answering the research question and demonstrating the contested ideas do indeed constrain the emergence of the university's possible futures (Chapter 7) cannot therefore be the end point of this work – not only because that finding alone does not illuminate any implications for policy and decision making in the present, but also because an FSF approach implies agency and action.

The first step proposed here is to understand a reframed discourse as the result of the integration of four distinct *types* of conversations. 'Discourse' brings with it a particular meaning in academia, one which is value laden and defined by paradigmatic perspectives and boundaries, and that can lead to confusion (Alvesson & Karreman 2000). At its core, a discourse is essentially a debate or a conversation, one that is generated by people who care

about the topic being discussed – in this research, the university's possible futures. If one research aim is to demonstrate how a 'reframed discourse' can inform action and decision making by university leaders, managers, academics, and policy makers – both within and outside the university – then moving beyond the constraints of paradigmatic limits is essential. Seeing the discourse as open and not confined to particular language use or the epistemological boundaries of the four ideas allows the reframed discourse to be viewed as shaped and moulded by these four conversations that, when integrated, enable the development of a deeper understanding of the power of the idea in the construction of possible university futures.

All FSF work, both qualitative and quantitative, relies on *conversations* with people whose possible futures are being explored. These conversations involve exploring the depth and breadth of potential futures by defining change drivers, imagining futures images, identifying the detail of the futures being imagined, and considering implications for action and decision making today, while ensuring that cultural factors are understood as primary shapers of thinking about these futures. This process, that van der Heijden (1999) calls a *strategic conversation*, is designed to challenge assumptions about the official future – the dominant future – and takes place over an extended period of time, as individual mindsets gradually shift and as a collective foresight capacity emerges in organisations.

The conversation being proposed here is framed by Integral Futures which was defined in Chapter 3 where it was used for the integrative literature review, and which provided the foundation for the integrated conceptual frame discussed in Chapter 4. The four-quadrant model (4QM) used there also defines four conversation spaces, each grounded in one of the four quadrants, which are defined here again for ease of reference:

- **Upper Left (UL)**: a subjective quadrant that generates the intentional, interior world of the individual. Hopes, joys, dreams, cognitive capacities, consciousness and intentions reside here and can only be accessed by asking an individual to share. This is the realm of individual ideas and images of the future. 'I' language is used.
- **Lower Left (LL)**: the collective cultural world, where individual beliefs and experiences are shared, resulting in collective meanings and worldviews that underpin culture and meaning – the way we do things around here, the rules of the game. 'We' language is used here.

- **Upper Right (UR)**: the empirically observable and measurable aspects of the organisation (its 'behaviour') including processes, infrastructure, and behaviours of individuals as they interact in organisations. 'It' language is used in this quadrant.

- **Lower Right (LR)**: the external social system of the organisation shaped by technological, economic, environmental, social and political change within which people and the organisation exist. This is the environment in which an organisation's legitimacy is determined by its degree of 'functional fit' in this space. 'Its' language is used here.

These four quadrants represent four dimensions of reality, each of which must be considered to the same degree to gain a holistic understanding of *any* issue. This integral approach ensures that both the invisible and visible, the university qua idea and the university qua institution, are considered as equally valuable in the search for the full range of the university's possible futures known in the present. It ensures that culture is understood as integral to successful strategy development, a position not just espoused but put into practice.[11] An integral futures frame ensures that these conversations are deeper, challenging worldviews and assumptions that enable organisations, as Inayatullah (2015, p. 351) writes:

> to make the transition from technical fixes to adaptive responses and even to transformative journeys, where they change as they create new futures. Based on a new story, they are able to see possibilities that were invisible before.

The integral frame enables these deeper conversations to occur, moving beyond the present singular focus on the university in the discourse. This new framework explicitly adds the *invisible* to the *visible* in the present discourse which now assumes the value of the ideas, dismissing its overt power to shape the present and future of the university in its organisational form. The next sections use the 4QM to define the futures conversation framework, from its overall construction (Section 8.2.3), to each conversation space (Section 8.3) and finally how to make each conversation space practical by proposing a series of questions to be addressed in each quadrant (Section 8.4).

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[11]My three decades long experience in strategy development has identified that most strategic planning processes are focused on the tangible, observable right-hand quadrants, while the intangible, assumed left-hand quadrants are not often discussed overtly. Yet this culture always "eats strategy for breakfast" (Inayatullah 2012, p. 54), leading to strategy implementation failures.

8.2.3   Four Conversations

The 4QM provides a design frame for the conversations framework that is collaborative, accepting, challenging and inclusive, and that has the dual aims of understanding the university of the present in new ways in order to ensure that the future university is the one the future needs. This reframed discourse has the potential to then be one focused on *conversations* not *contest*, one that has hope and agency, one that is grounded in foresight, and one that can see the idea as the robust cultural meta-concept that it is, no matter how many types of university are demanded, defined, developed or dismissed. *Instead of seeing the university structure and assuming the structure is the idea*, this conversations framework regards the idea as inherently valuable, that has a history equally as rich as the university, and that recognises both idea and university in their integrated form. Figure 8.1 shows the four conversations.

Individual Conversations

Individual context: beliefs about the future and unquestioned assumptions about the future	**Organisational processes**: bringing people together for strategic conversations
Cultural context: collective norms, beliefs and unquestioned assumptions about the future	**Social system**: social changes and disruptions shaping the organisation's futures

Developing Futures Consciousness

Individual Consciousness

Invisible Side of University

Organisational Culture

Organisational Behaviour

Visible Side of University

Social Systems & Structures

Developing Futures Orientation

Collective Conversations

Figure 8.1 Four Conversations Spaces (based on Integral Futures, Chapter 3)

In the UL quadrant, individuals hold ontological beliefs about the future that they consider real but that are largely tacit and taken-for-granted. The focus of the conversation in this space is one that therefore takes place inside individual minds and consciousness – it is a conversation with self, enabled by critical reflection processes (Cunliffe 2004) that are usually undertaken only when there is some external imperative to do so – for example, being required to critically reflect on personal behaviour in difficult situations, as part of a

professional development program, or when asked to imagine and accept a future that seems highly improbable. That is, we rarely challenge – in a conscious way – why we think, act and behave in certain ways, or consider how our behaviour has influenced outcomes of interactions with others in both positive and negative ways – or why we accept some futures as valid and reject others.

This UL conversation space is designed to develop critical reflection skills that enable individuals to recognise their assumptions about the future and how they are used and begin to challenge them for validity – that is, to build their futures literacy and activate their individual foresight capacities (Chapter 2). This is also the space where futures consciousness (Lombardo 2016) starts to emerge, defined by Ahvenharju, Minkkinen and Lalot (2018, p. 2) in terms of five dimensions: time perspective, agency beliefs, openness to alternatives, systems perception, and concern for others. It is also where autonoetic consciousness is activated (Klein 2016; Natsoulas 2017), a self-reflective capacity that emerges when we remember the past or imagine the future that enables us to reflect on our experience in those mental spaces.

The LL quadrant supports a collective conversation about cultural assumptions shaping an organisation's futures that are accepted as valid and ultimately taken-for-granted. In this space, the conversation is about culture as reflected and understood by rituals, organisational stories and myths, language, physical arrangements and formal and informal practices, and the accepted norms and 'rules of the game' in the organisation (Martin 2002b, 2002a). Schein (2017, p. 18) defines three levels of culture: artefacts (that exist in the UR quadrant of Figure 8.1), espoused beliefs and values (articulated in the UR quadrant), and deeper underlying assumptions that "determine behaviour, perception thought, and feeling" that are constructed in the LL. Notably, espoused values do not always align with the artefacts or deep assumptions, or with action.

The LR quadrant is the domain of social change. Conversations here seek to understand the nature of the external social system in which an organisation exists and in which it must maintain its legitimacy base. This is the reality into which an organisation must find its 'strategic fit' and must monitor continuously to be able to respond effectively to changes emerging in this space. This conversation is a familiar one because the rate and pace of change and its impact on organisations is well recognised in the present, understanding its nature is a step in most strategic planning processes, and is identified and analysed in the

environmental scanning step in FSF processes (Chapter 3). How that conversation is framed, however, is critical and the usual approach of using trend analysis as the foundation of a strategic plan is insufficient when it comes to considering possible futures shaped not by trends but by deeper global change forces.

The UR quadrant is where conversations occur in an empirical sense, where people come together and interact in a process, a meeting, a corridor conversation and the like. It is the only quadrant in which the behaviour, conversations and actions of individuals in a collective sense can be observed. This conversation space is where an individual's ideas and thinking intersect with those of others in the organisation and can be understood in a collective sense. Processes to think about the future that are designed in this space in organisations are, however, usually focused on achieving an outcome (a plan, a project, a strategy for example), and generally pay little attention to the likely impact of culture on the implementation of those outcomes, unless an integrated approach such as that discussed here is used. If individual foresight capacities have not been activated in the UL, then a collective foresight capacity cannot fully emerge in the LL and be used in the UR – which means that thinking will remain trapped in the present. The conversation framework discussed here is designed to draw on individual foresight capacities in the context of the need for individuals to take action to achieve desired organisational futures.

The two left hand quadrants are focused on building individual and collective *futures consciousness* in organisations – that is, the process of surfacing foresight capacities and developing individual and collective capacities to anticipate the future in the present. This space is also about surfacing agency – recognising our capacity to take action – or not act – to shape the future today, both individually and collectively. The two right hand quadrants focus on building an organisational *futures orientation* – that is, being aware of how the future is understood in conversations and to understand how to orient those conversations toward finding the organisation's possible futures – as opposed to accepting and/or reinforcing an assumed linear future. The aim is to ensure an organisation remains fit-for-purpose, and how organisational processes can be redesigned to bring people together to co-create that fit over time. This is the space in which we need to be able to think in multiples about the future and find pathways into possible futures to expand perceptions of options for decision making and action in the present – to reperceive the present (Chapter 7).

This framework aims to find new and novel futures that exist in the present, where imagination is an accepted way to co-create shared images of the future, and where those images can be made real through FSF processes. The aim of spending time in a conversation in each quadrant is to better understand how individual and collective assumptions shape what futures are considered acceptable and why others are rejected, and why some action is supported, and other options are dismissed. Essentially then, we seek to understand how both the self and an organisation's culture shape understanding of its possible futures – and how that culture might need to be adapted to generate an organisational foresight capacity. With the integral frame established, the next section moves to explore each conversation space and its role in imagining and creating possible futures.

8.3   Conversations Spaces

8.3.1   Overview

This section discusses and defines each conversation space, identifying its focus and primary way of knowing, and demonstrating how the four conversations connect and shape each other to create the reframed discourse. Figure 8.2 shows the four conversation spaces and the primary approach used in each space to frame and generate the conversations and the type of conversation taking place within each quadrant that is designed to seek new ways of understanding an issue.
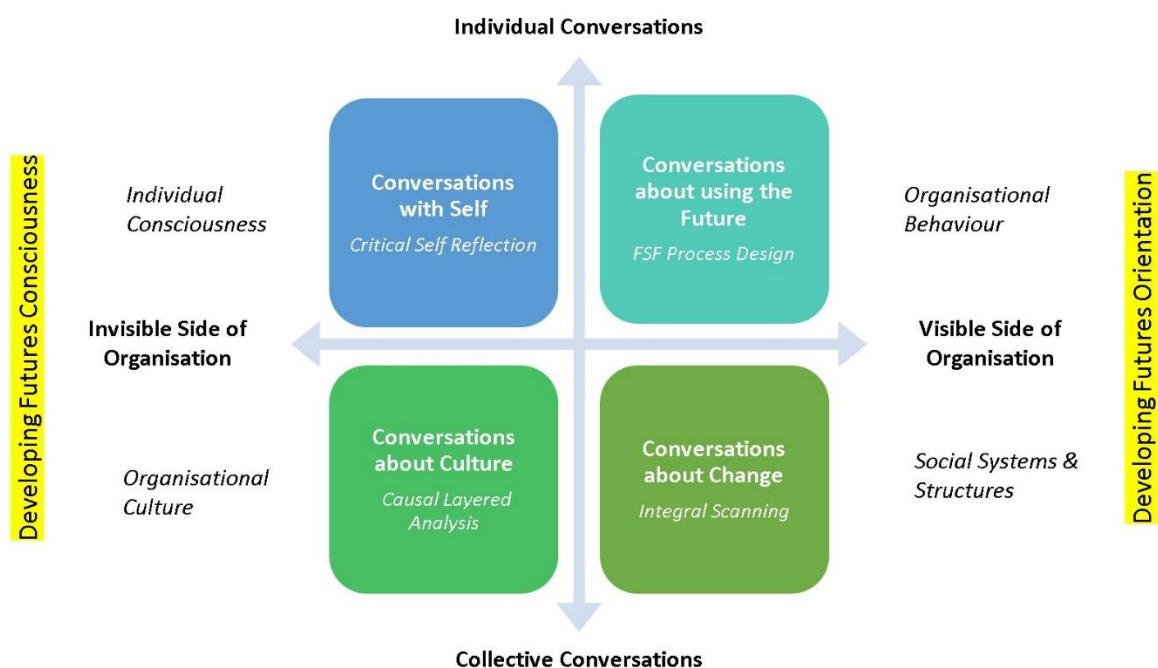
Figure 8.2 Conversation Spaces and Primary Methods

The conversations have no required sequence or rhythm but rather are, as described by Esbjorn-Hargens (2009), "co-nascent – literally "they are born together" and are mutually implicated in one another … they co-arise and tetra-mesh. Ultimately though, for individuals and organisations which now take a presentist stance to the future, a starting point is required simply because this new framework needs to be introduced to – and accepted by – an organisation in some way. This introduction occurs in the UR quadrant when people collectively experience an FSF process designed to demonstrate that the future can be understood in new ways in the present and that many new alternative futures can be imagined (Conway 2001; Conway & Voros 2002).

8.3.2   Conversations with Self (UL)

The aim in this conversation is to understand the 'world in here' in more depth – a reframing of thinking that enables the new and novel to emerge as possible futures are considered. Beaty et. al. (2016, p. 87) indicate that:

> Self-generated thoughts arise from internally focused activity that is largely independent of external input. Although self-generated thoughts can occur spontaneously in mind, they also have been shown to benefit from goal-directed process and cognitive control.

That is, it is possible to adapt our thinking and beliefs to address a defined goal or challenge. In this quadrant of individual consciousness, conversations aim to develop a sense of personal agency by surfacing individual foresight capacities to be able to both recognise the range of anticipatory assumptions – from open to closed – in use (Miller 2018) and an explicit awareness of possible futures in the present. This is the space where existing mental models about exactly what 'the future' means are challenged, a process that is ongoing and strengthened each time a person engages with an FSF process. It is also the space that needs to expand in an ontological sense if we are to recognise personal futures agency explicitly and even accept futures that might have been rejected previously.

Based on the theories of Clare Graves (1974), Beck and Cowan's work on Spiral Dynamics (2005) now constitutes one interpretation of development levels (known as SDi) in the UL quadrant that move progressively from closed to more open minds, the transition in thinking being sought in this framework. Spiral Dynamics specifies the development of different stages of human consciousness that manifest as a value system at each level. Fundamentally,

humans can and do change their thinking as society evolves, as Beck and Cowan (2006, p. 24; italics added) write:

> From our earliest upright steps as Homo sapiens we have trekked from one awakening to another, becoming a slightly different being with everyone. *New times produce new thinking* as new theories of everything are spawned, history is revised, priorities and values are reordered-stacked, and people marvel that they did not see it all so clearly before.

The UL in SDi terms is a values system structure, one that demonstrates how beliefs shaped by those values can change as society changes; that is, they are not fixed for life. These value systems are deep 'core intelligences' that generate beliefs that, in turn, shape actions and behaviours in the present, including which futures are accepted and which are not. Spiral Dynamics is mentioned here only because it is now a part of one version of the 4QM and because its value, even at the very superficial level of explanation here, makes clear that humans can move beyond the status-quo to embrace the new and novel in the present – as long as their minds are open to that change.

As shown in Figure 8.2, *critical reflection skills* are required in this conversation space which, as Cunliffe (2004, p. 411) writes, means "questioning our own assumptions and taken-for-granted actions, thinking about where/who we are and where/who we would like to be, challenging our conceptions of reality, and exploring new possibilities." This is a conversation that requires individuals to be critical about themselves, to be open to see other perspectives about reality and to continually reflect on their actions in social contexts. Double loop learning is important in this conversation – the ability to move from an 'exterior to self' stance to reflection on events/behaviour to deeper questioning about assumptions, beliefs and practice that shape that reflection – "the cognitive rules or reasoning they use to design and implement their actions" and enable individuals to recognise when they are being defensive in interactions with others (Argyris 1991, p. 6), and when engaging with the future.

This sort of questioning about self can be uncomfortable because it requires people to recognise in very overt ways how their thinking shapes their interactions with people and how they respond to change, in both positive and negative ways. Critical reflection is a skill that can be taught (Cunliffe 2004; Sch n 2016) to enable a move from reflecting on objective reality assumed to be understandable through logic and reason, to taking a social constructionist stance to reality – that multiple realities about the future exist that are accepted or rejected *depending on the people in the conversation*. Discomfort arises when

new information is provided that challenges existing assumptions to a degree that it is no longer acceptable to the individual, when "contradiction, doubts, dilemmas and possibilities" emerge that requires "highlighting ideologies and tacit assumptions – exploring how our own actions, conversational practices, and ways of making sense create our sense of reality" (Cunliffe 2004, p. 414). It is this discomfort that presents the most significant hurdle to opening up minds to new thinking, primarily because when our brains' pattern recognition processes are engaged, their default position is to reject the 'new' as irrelevant. De Wit and Meyer (2010, p. 33) see this rejection as a result of cognitive rigidity:

> People are generally inclined not to change their minds. Once people's cognitive maps have formed, and they have a grip on reality, they become resistant to signals that challenge their conception … Once an interpretive filter is in place, seeing is not believing, but believing is seeing. People might have the impression they are constantly learning, but they are largely within the bounds of a paradigm.

For this reason, in the context of this research, it is unlikely that we will change our minds unless we are either already operating cognitively at a high thinking level that is actively seeking the new and novel, or we are challenged in an FSF process to the degree that our cognitive map is demonstrated to be invalid. This cognitive rigidity is why the UL is the most critical – and difficult – conversation in terms of being able to move beyond the cognitive constraints of deeply held, tacit beliefs and assumptions about the future. Finally, the impact in this conversation is only discernible when a person recognises and can articulate the changes occurring in their thinking.[12]

8.3.3   Conversations about Culture (LL)

The aim in this conversation space, as in the UL quadrant, is to delve below 'surface' understandings of an organisation to identify shared meanings that shape its operations, relationships and decision making. This conversation is focused on developing an organisational culture that is open to the future, and a collective futures consciousness that generates awareness that multiple possible futures exist – that is, the culture values all ideas and all futures. Organisational cultures have many definitions, are nuanced, and need to be understood holistically (Watkins 2016). Alvesson (2011, p. 2) suggests that organisational

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[12] This statement is made based on my personal experience at Swinburne University of recognising that my foresight capacity had become visible to me. A senior manager asked me why I was doing this job (introducing foresight into the planning framework), and I answered: "I think differently now, I can't describe exactly how, but I know I see the world differently". At the time, I did not attribute this thinking shift to my use of foresight, but I recognised very clearly that my thinking was more expansive compared to my pre-foresight perspectives.

culture as a field of study has been superseded by a focus on organisational discourse and identity, although he suggests both are "quite similar to what [is] earlier more commonly labelled organizational culture and can be seen as expressing some form of a cultural view on organizations – that is, emphasizing shared meanings and understandings of organizational reality." Whatever label is used, how to make these shared meanings explicit is this focus of this conversation space – to seek out the deeper assumptions so taken-for-granted that they are subconscious in nature and rarely espoused. As Martin (2002, p. 2) writes:

> Cultural observers also often attend to aspects of working life that other researchers study, such as the organization's official policies, the amounts of money different employees earn, reporting relationships, and so on. A cultural observer is interested in the surfaces of these cultural manifestations because details can be informative, but he or she also seeks an in-depth understanding of the patterns of meanings that link these manifestations together, sometimes in harmony, sometimes in bitter conflicts between groups, and sometimes in webs of ambiguity, paradox, and contradiction.

Culture positioned here as collective futures consciousness plays a primary role in what is accepted as a possible future by an organisation, and what is rejected. This conversation is about identifying the norms that determine this validity and to break them down if necessary so that other ways of using the future can also be viewed as credible. The aim here is to develop a collective foresight capacity in a critical mass of people who are then able to construct possible futures beyond the linear future.

It is only when individuals have had a conversation with self – that is, have recognised their own foresight capacities or at least have begun to understand the nature of their anticipatory assumptions – can they come together collectively to explore possible futures and generate this conversation. *Causal Layered Analysis* (CLA) developed by Sohail Inayatullah (Wildman & Inayatullah 1996; Inayatullah 1998, 2009) is a well-developed approach designed to surface such collective cultural understandings of reality that are usually not visible in day-to-day life (Blass 2003). There are numerous CLA case studies (see for example, Inayatullah 2004; Inayatullah & Milojević 2015) that demonstrate how a discourse can be disassembled to identify its cultural underpinnings, and then reframed to generate new understandings of the issue being explored and potentially new action in the present.

Situated in the poststructuralist critical tradition, CLA assumes that reality is layered and, like Integral Futures, accepts that there are different ways of knowing (Inayatullah 2004, p. 14). CLA "opens up space for the articulation of constitutive discourses" (Inayatullah 1998, p.

815) and recognises reality as inherently constructed and layered. That is, CLA seeks to move deeper beneath surface signals of an issue to explore its underpinning systems, structures, and worldviews. CLA allows 'drilling down' beneath superficial reporting of assumptions and reactions to issues to explore unconscious and unarticulated beliefs and ideologies influencing and shaping that issue. It allows the range of different meanings associated with the issue to be identified and locates the issue within the broader social structures within which it is felt and experienced. The method respects all perspectives as valid, and by surfacing different and often divergent perspectives, it is possible to see how an issue has been defined more by perceptions than reality. Importantly, moving among the levels generates a deeper understanding of the issue being explored, and highlights what Inayatullah (2009, p. 7) calls a transformative dimension – "to deconstruct so that alternative futures can be investigated, and desired futures created."

CLA works across four areas of perception:

- **Litany**: the official public description of the issue, unquestioned and unchallenged, reported in news and in social media;
- **Systemic Causes**: the drivers of change shaping the Litany, that are questioned during analysis but only within the dominant paradigm; causes can usually be attributed to short-term social, technological, economic, environmental, or political factors;
- **Discourse/Worldview**: the deep assumptions and discourse underpinning the issue - ideological, stakeholder, civilizational and epistemological, including questions such as whose voice is dominant, and who is 'othered' – this is the level where individuals' often contested beliefs systems and mental models underpinning meanings are surfaced and where ideologies clash; and
- **Metaphor/Myth**: the deep stories and images and often emotive dimensions of the issue, operating at the cultural level that can enable and constrain the futures being considered – and importantly, "historical and social contexts determine which metaphors gain currency" (Curry 2015b, p. 29).

CLA is usually represented as an iceberg (Figure 8.3) to demonstrate both its layered structure and its vertical dimensions of time and visibility.
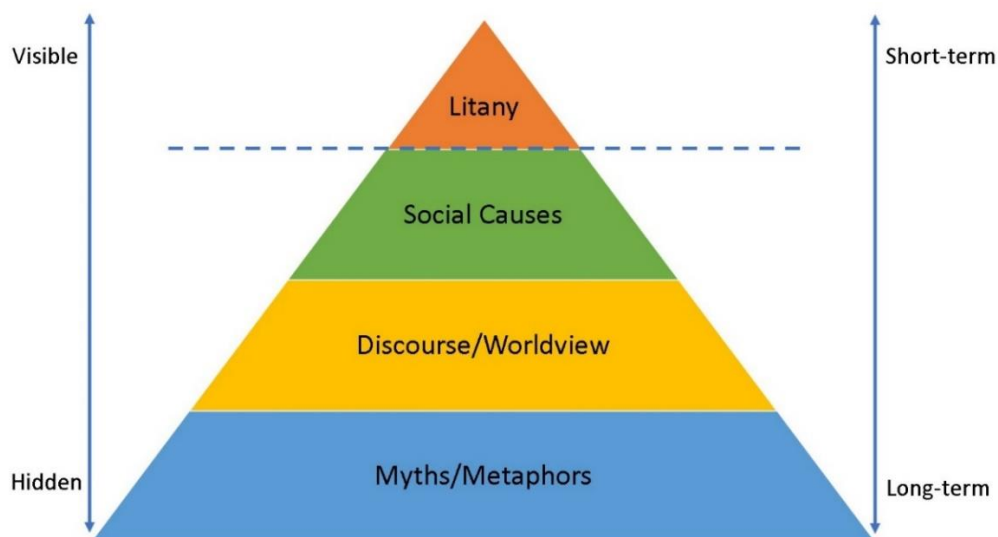
Figure 8.3 Causal Layered Analysis

CLA provides the necessary integration between invisible and visible and a focus on depth that is required for the conversations framework proposed here to be effective. When applied in practice, CLA allows for alternative solutions to issues and problems to emerge that do not replicate the present, and while Inayatullah (2004) developed CLA as a stand-alone method, he has linked to scenario development in two ways: first, the diversity of worldviews surfaced and systemic causes identified can be used as the basis for scenario building, and second, each of the four levels can be used to build scenarios, either at a single level or working in reverse from Level 4 (Myth/Metaphor) to Level 1 (Litany) (see Curry 2015b, p. 28).

As an example of CLA in practice, each of these layers has been applied to this research:

- **Litany**: views in the literature about the impact of changes occurring to the university's purpose structure and its assumed future (Chapters 5 and 6);

- **Systemic Causes**: change drivers that are shaping the Litany – here these relate to the impact of neoliberalism, primarily around globalisation, technology, and knowledge (Chapters 4 and 7);

- **Discourse/Worldview**: the space where the dominant ideology is questioned. Questions are asked at this level: whose voice is dominant in the discourse? What other voices are being 'othered' and not heard? In this research, the dominant ideology is neoliberalism, and the resistance literature is asking these types of questions (Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

- **Myth/Metaphor**: here the four ideas underpin the worldviews and how they are expressed in the literature – they hold the stories – and myths – about the university that are taken-for-granted and that generate multiple metaphors about the university (Chapters 5 and 6); and

- **Rebuilding CLA:** integrating the competing ideas to build a shared view about the future university (Chapter 7).

Table 8.1 uses CLA to provide an interpretation of the research that demonstrates how the different stances on the university taken by the four ideas can be understood. Its value is that it provides another dynamic and another view that constructs the ideas ecosystem discussed in Chapter 6.

Table 8.1 Summary CLA Analysis for the Four Ideas

Idea → CLA↓	Traditional Idea	Managerial Idea	Reframed Idea	Dismissive Idea
Litany	Our university is being assaulted and must be defended at all costs	We must maintain fit-for-purpose status at all costs	We will not play the neoliberal game anymore	The university has lost its value
System Causes	Rise of managerial culture and neoliberal university	Globalisation, technology, knowledge as product	Neoliberalisation of the world is at the root of all problems	Rising costs of higher education, inability of universities to address social challenges; reliance on industrial era education system
Worldview	Academic privileged	Government/ Manager privileged	Academic/Society privileged	Society/Student privileged
Myth/ Metaphor	A university left alone	A university that obeys	A university redesigned	A university no more

If this CLA analysis was then to be reconstructed in reverse order upwards through the layers, new perspectives could emerge by first seeking to redefine the metaphor/myth applied to the university – a university in and for society, for example – that would ultimately generate a new Litany and identify pathways into new futures (Inayatullah et al. 2016). Finally, because culture is intangible and constructed by the daily interactions of people in organisations, different perspectives must be articulated in some way – here, conversations about culture happen in the Upper Right quadrant.

8.3.4 Conversations about Change (LR)

This conversation is familiar to most people in their everyday lives and in organisations. The rate and pace of change is an accepted feature of our societies. Understanding that change in deeper ways, beyond the litany, is the focus of this space. Chapter 3 discussed how integral scanning (Slaughter 1999; Voros 2001) was used to structure the initial literature review, and understanding the changing external environment is usually the first step in any FSF process. Chapter 4 pointed out that understanding the nature of complex change in the external environment and that how to respond to it is at the heart of FSF work, noting Bell and Mau's (1973) imperative to ensure social change approaches were considered with a long-term perspective. Attention is paid to not only understanding change that is visible in the present in this space – such as technological change, the global impact of climate change or the shifting geopolitical landscape – but also change that is emergent, not yet influential in terms of changing how people live and work. This is space where weak signals can be identified (Day & Schoemaker 2004; Hiltunen 2010; Saritas & Smith 2011). Understanding the *complexity* of the change ecosystem is also critical (Miller 2017), which requires taking a systems stance to understand how changes intersect and influence each other in both positive and negative ways.

This conversation now usually first takes place in the planning group in an organisation which is charged with providing information for strategy development processes. Within this smaller group, open minds are essential to ensure that no changes are dismissed before their relevance to the organisation's present and its futures is explored. This is the space where assumptions about this relevance within the planning group should be tested with others outside the group, either as part of UR processes or by opening up access to information being identified to both validate that information and provide new perspectives about it. This organisational-wide process can occur by seeking interpretations of the organisation's change ecosystem in, for example, regular face-to-face sessions, surveys or engaging with online platforms that provide learning opportunities about the organisation's external operating environment for people across the organisation *and* identify new perspectives on that change. The latter strategy also demonstrates that thinking about the future is open to everyone in the organisation not just the leadership group, thereby avoiding the dysfunction of the 'used future'.

There are a number of FSF methods that can be used to analyse and interpret visible change, such as the Futures Triangle (Inayatullah 2008), the Futures Wheel (Glenn 2009), and the Harman Fan (Schultz 2002), while Emerging Issues Analysis (Dator 2018) is useful to better understand pre-emergent and emergent change. The aim here is to move beyond linear extrapolation of visible trend based change patterns often generated by data-based methods and trend analysis to a more nuanced understanding of the many trajectories that change can take over time, and that capture the complexity and uncertainty that characterise the external change ecosystem. The aim in this conversation is to increase the capacity of the organisation to be *futures oriented,* a stance that enables the 'outside-in' perspective desired in this research.

8.3.5   Conversations about Using the Future in the Present (UR)

In this conversation space, people come together in an organisation to co-create possible futures – to use the future in the present in ways that identify the new and novel and generate perspectives that provide new understandings and new options for action. This quadrant integrates the three other quadrants – people bring with them their beliefs about reality and the future (UL), and the meaning they attach to that reality based on their cultural context (LL), while information about the organisation's social ecosystem provides the context for the conversation (LR). The aim here is to develop images of the future that honour the knowledge that each person brings to the conversation while also challenging, questioning and testing their usually assumed beliefs that underpin those ways of knowing – to make explicit the constraints of any extant discourse. This aim requires generative, creative thinking where the process design in this quadrant 'forces' people to consider that the previously unacceptable and unthinkable might be valid.

Conversations about using the future in the present are therefore designed to surface these unquestioned assumptions, to trigger the process of surfacing foresight capacities and to construct a long term context for the organisation that enables multiple pathways into multiple futures to be identified. This pathways perspective ensures conversations are oriented to the future, *not* the present, an outlook Tibbs (1999, p. 3) describes as maintaining focus on a 'strategic star':

> The star symbolizes the enduring purpose of the strategic self, a perennial strategic destination that will never actually be reached or completed but which reflects the continuing aspiration and social role of the organization.

This 'star' represents the long-term future, the desired future, the future that informs action and decision making in the present, and that is generated from UR conversations. The design of these conversations is grounded in FSF processes designed to both generate expanded thinking in individuals and to inform present action and decision making today. These pathways to the future provide direction but are not fixed and can be reoriented as society changes. Scenario development provides a familiar process but as indicated in Chapter 7, these processes do not always include the people who have a stake in the futures being explored as part of the conversation, instead isolating this conversation to the top level of organisations. 'Good' scenario processes that are opened up and seek participation rather than shutting it down – by quarantining 'strategic thinking' to the leadership group – *are* possible if they are designed to include people who "have traditionally been considered 'external' for the foresight endeavor" (Nikolova 2014, p. 2).

This sort of democratisation of the future is not necessarily new (Nikolova 2014), and its feasibility is increasing with new digital technologies and information gathering platforms that allow people to experience different ways of using the future such as global online games (Dunagan 2012; Candy 2015), experiential futures (The Exploration Factory 2014; Kelliher & Byrne 2015; Candy et al. 2016), global platforms to collect stories (Snowden 2020) or gather feedback (Futurescaper 2020), or to create physical manifestations/installations of imagined futures (Candy & Kornet 2019). The common aim across these participatory approaches is to open minds to the reality of possible futures in the present, and to enable recognition of the constraining influence of unquestioned assumptions about the future leading, in turn, to both a re-framing of their perspectives and an appreciation for broader range of futures – and actions – now available to them.

Any FSF design process has to enable people to build the "capacity to see what is actually going on, in contrast with what was planned for, expected or intended" (Simpson & French 2006, p. 245). That is, to enable people to shift thinking beyond the status-quo, to challenge assumptions and to see/interpret existing change and events in new ways and/or an openness to valuing opinions different to their own. Burt et al. (2016, p. 18) write of the need for an 'openness disposition' when developing futures in this quadrant, which is defined by Bozionelous (2004, cited in Burt et al. 2016, p. 404) as a stance that "encompasses imagination, receptivity of new ideas, multiplicity of interests and adventure seeking." In their research, Burt et al (p. 22) found that "openness disposition opens up a space within

which dialogue can flow, individual perspectives can be shared with others, and collective insight can be built through the performance of scenario conversations."

FSF processes here then need to provide a collective knowledge generation process (Miller 2018), one that "can collectively progressively figure out novel futures, namely that could not have been deduced from the existing individual and collective knowledge of the participants at the beginning of the collective process" (Ehresmann et al. 2018, p. 82). While the conversation in this space might involve a range of methods, this opening up of dialogue and perspectives and the emergence of collective insight is essential to develop the *futures orientation* required in this quadrant.

To conclude this section, Table 8.2 summarises the four conversations in terms of aim, focus, foresight development and desired shifts in thinking and action.

Table 8.2 Four Conversations Summary

Futures Positioning	Conversation	Aim	Focus	Development of Foresight	Desired
Seeking future consciousness	UL: Questioning the self	Recognising individual foresight capacity	Identifying personal anticipatory assumptions	Surfacing individual foresight capacities	Individual ontological expansion
	LL: Questioning cultural beliefs shaping the present	Building a futures aware culture based on shared meaning about possible futures	Identifying collective anticipatory assumptions	Developing a collective foresight capacity	Collective ontological expansion
Developing organisational futures orientation	LR: Understanding change shaping the future	Embedding a futures orientation to connect the organisation and its environment	Seeking to more deeply understand complexity & uncertainty of change	Seeking new & novel understanding of change	Deeper understanding of change ecosystem and place of organisation
	UR: Using the future in the present	Building shared foresight capacity to use the future in the present	Establishing organisational processes for creative, participative, collective thinking	Enabling images of possible futures to emerge	Possibility of sustained collective futures thinking and action emerging over time

The four conversations progressively build individual and collective foresight capacities over time (Slaughter 1996), ultimately generating shifts in thinking that enables the ontological expansion about the university's possible futures sought in this research – to think about and *see* the present in new ways. This conversation framework is flexible enough to apply to any topic, issue or strategic paradox that requires a new integrated lens to find new understandings and ways of knowing (De Wit and Meyer 2010). The next section explores how the four conversations can be integrated to develop a reframed discourse about the university's possible futures.

8.4　The Conversations Framework Applied

Section 1.1.2 argued that the future for the university as an organisational form *cannot* be considered separately to the ideas when its possible futures are being considered: both the university *and* the ideas – as constructed both individually and collectively and as understood in the past and the present – must be integrated to create a research space that values all ideas and all possible futures. Figure 8.4 shows how these four conversations construct the reframed discourse about the university's possible futures.
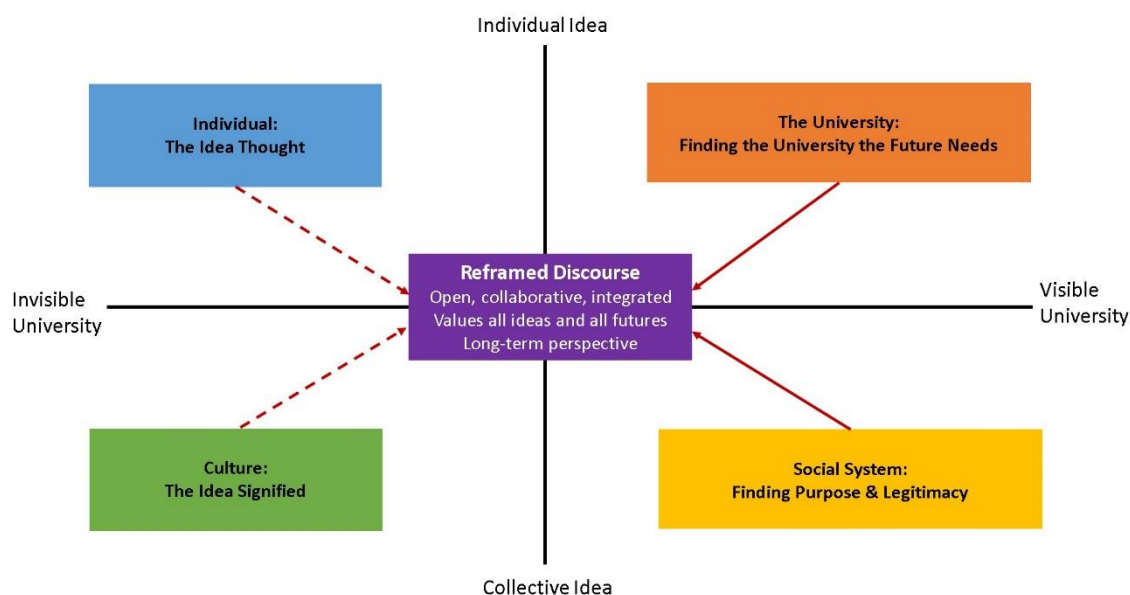
Figure 8.4 The Conversation Framework Applied to the Research

The vertical axis defines the idea as understood individually and collectively. The horizontal axis defines the invisible and visible sides of the university. Each coloured box represents a conversation type – and integral quadrant – and the reframed discourse is shown in the middle of the figure (purple box). The red lines represent connections between the quadrants

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and the discourse – dotted red lines indicate tacit connections, solid red lines represent explicit connections. Each quadrant brings a particular perspective, a way of knowing the relationship across the ideas, the university and society, which in Integral Futures terms are collectively called quadrivia (Esbjörn-Hargens 2009): "the quadrants represent the native ways in which we experience reality in each moment and [the associated] quadrivia represent the most common ways we can and often do look at reality to understand it."

This integrated frame reinforces a central position taken in this research: that the discourse about the university's possible futures must value all ideas and all possible futures. The next sections explore each conversation space that needs to take place in the discourse and provide indicative questions that can be asked in each conversation to prompt the desired ontological shift (Table 8.2). Here the goal is to answer the question: how can the current discourse about the university's possible futures be integrated to value all ideas and all futures?

8.4.1 UL: The Idea Thought

The space where the idea is constructed is in individual minds. It is where we turn inwards to reflect on beliefs about the university and its futures. The questions we ask of ourselves start with these questions:

- What is the university's enduring social purpose (Tibb's star)?
- Who has the power to define how the university is structured and operates?
- Will the university always exist?
- What is my preferred future for the university?

Responses to these questions are – without any critical reflection – likely to produce a *litany* response. Further questions are therefore required:

- Why do I believe this? Why am I so confident that I am correct?
- Was my belief valid in the past, but is no longer valid now or into the future?
- What other perspectives could be valid? Can I accept them as valid? If not, why not?
- What would need to change for me to accept other perspectives as valid?
- What would someone else say about my idea in the present context? How would I respond to justify my belief? Would my response be appropriate?

- How likely is my assumed future for the university? If unlikely, what other futures would I accept as feasible? Indeed, can I even accept that imagining alternative futures in the present is possible? If not, why not?

The major constraint to opening up ideas to the potential of other ideas and other futures is cognitive rigidity (Section 8.3.2). Breaking down that rigidity is possible over time through critical reflective questioning which is, however, likely to generate what is best described as a grieving process that arises as people slowly let go of what have been deeply held, fundamental beliefs about the university.[13] That grieving needs to be acknowledged in the collective conversation in the UR quadrant (Section 8.4.4).

8.4.2   LL: The Idea Signified

This is the conversation that seeks to articulate shared meaning about the university in the present and its possible futures. It is in this space that individual beliefs about an idea coalesce to become taken-for-granted as a collective cultural construct that shapes how the university is understood. Letting go of deeply held beliefs that are shared in a large group of people across the world – as evidenced in the literature reviewed here – is not easy to accomplish and the co-existence of four contested ideas is evidence of that. Values of the past are held sacrosanct and rituals such as graduation ceremonies still hold something of the medieval university in their design that are considered to *signify* the university. This space is the locus of the idea as worldview, it is the place that generates resistance, disbelief and outrage (the Traditional Idea) as those values are challenged (by the Managerial Idea) and ultimately *hope* and *insight* which leads to a reframing of the university's purpose (the Reframed Idea). For those who hold the Dismissive Idea, this conversation might generate scepticism that there is still a strong belief in the university's relevance in the present – and most importantly, this contrary view *must* be respected and included in conversations in the UR. Questions to ask in this quadrant are:

- What do I believe are the fundamental values of the university? Are these values still valid today? Why?

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[13] I experienced this grieving process when I realised that a new Vice-Chancellor at Swinburne did not want to 'do foresight'. I understood at that point that I could no longer work at Swinburne and that this foresight thing I once thought was just another job had not only changed how I thought about the future; it had also changed how I saw the world. I recognised then that foresight in some form would always be part of my future.

- Will these values be valid into the future or are they constraining our understanding of the university the future needs?

- How might these values be reinterpreted for the future university? Can we accept those reinterpretations? If not, why not?

- How might I contribute to the construction of new collective meanings that are more open to the university's possible futures?

- What exists in the present university that needs to be maintained into the future?

- How do answers to the previous questions shape what we consider to be the university's purpose?

As with the UL questions, there is likely to be a personal and collective struggle in this conversation between what is so deeply held it is implicitly believed to be 'real' and immutable, and the imperative to recognise that the university of the future is unlikely to be the university of the past or present. Emotions will become visible in this conversation (typically disbelief, even anger) as people either accept or reject the notion that their values may need to be questioned, and as with the grieving process that emerges in the UL, these emotions need to be validated – and explored – in the UR conversation.

8.4.3   LR: Finding Purpose and Legitimacy in the Social System

This conversation contributes to understandings of the university's purpose and legitimacy that emerge from its external changing social ecosystem. It focuses on deepening understanding of changes shaping the university's future to provide a frame for richer exploration about the range of futures that can emerge beyond the linear future in the UR. Chapter 7 identified that knowledge shifts, technology and globalisation were considered in the literature to be the three major changes currently shaping the university in the present and into its future – but how those changes are evolving over time also needs to be considered in this conversation. Indicative questions are:

- What are the global changes that are *pushing* the university into the future?

- How do these changes intersect to construct the social ecosystem in which the university exists? How might the ecosystem change over time? What might trigger such changes?

- What signals might tell me a pivotal social disruption is emerging? If this disruption became reality, what impact would it have on the university of the present?

- How does the university currently fit into this ecosystem? What issues emerge from this positioning? How might the university need to change its positioning – its purpose – to stay relevant *and be considered legitimate* in the ecosystem as it evolves?

- Is it possible that the university of the present might not be able to respond to external changes and lose its legitimacy and social value? What changes would cause this situation to eventuate?

- What different actions and decisions in the present might be possible if the answer to the previous question was yes?

These questions need to be asked of people across the university to gather a wide range of perspectives about how people perceive the nature of change in the present – and how the university might respond to those changes. This space seeks to be more authentically inclusive than conventional strategic planning, the opinions of all people in the university are valued, no matter what role – or idea – they hold. The information garnered here provides another input into the conversation in the UR quadrant.

8.4.4   UR: Finding the University the Future Needs

This quadrant holds the observable conversation where information from the three other quadrants coalesces to produce a collective, futures-oriented strategic conversation. This is not the conventional strategic planning conversation but instead is a purpose- designed FSF process that is premised on the need for inclusive conversations that are seeking shared understanding about the university the future needs. Indicative questions are:

- What structures, resources and processes are needed to bring people together to have conversations to explore the university's possible futures on a continuous basis?

- How can these processes be as open and participatory as possible, that people 'in the room' have diverse backgrounds, and that the conversation is inclusive and respectful of differences?

- How can existing mindsets be challenged to move beyond the constraints of unchallenged assumptions about the university's futures? How can old narratives about these futures be reframed? How can we change our understanding of the university – its purpose and legitimacy – to change its assumed futures?

- What design principles need to be applied to ensure this conversation integrates information from all quadrants and values all ideas and all possible futures?
- How can processes be designed to enable people to construct pathways into a range of possible futures?
- How can we design a university that the future needs?

This conversation is essentially an applied FSF process which, by its very nature, asks people to imagine the future, but not all such processes explicitly ask people to recognise and challenge their specific anticipatory assumptions about the future – or to even challenge the possible futures they accept as reasonable. The UNESCO Futures Literacy Lab (FLL) (Miller 2018) is one such process. It is designed to begin with a disruption of the routine to "spark this inquisitive and reflective human process in order to nurture the development of FL [Futures Literacy] … [and made visible in] that instant of realization when someone is inspired to ask a 'new' question" (p. 98) that allows novelty to emerge in the process. Identifying assumptions is at the core of the design of the Generic Foresight Process Framework (Chapter 3) but the success of the process design in this conversation space depends ultimately on the degree to which practitioners have first identified their *own* anticipatory assumptions about the future – that is, they have had the conversation with self (the UL quadrant).

Unless the practitioner consciously designs a process to generate the degree of cognitive dissonance required to accept the new – the conversation will be superficial (Voros 2003) and unhelpful in terms of action and decision making in the present. What is needed then is a process – such as the FLLs – that can be designed or adapted at the local level by foresight practitioners to ensure that thinking of participants is or becomes *open* to the future, and that assumptions are surfaced in order to enable recognition of emergent novelty in the present. Then, the ability to anticipate the future in conscious ways becomes possible, as does understanding the criticality in our thinking of what is called 'the long term-perspective', defined here as the conscious cognitive capacity that enables humans to accept responsibility for future generations that is achieved by considering the potential future impacts of our thinking and scenarios over the long-term before taking action and making decisions today.

This is also the conversation space where guided processes to imagine possible futures are appropriate. Mental time travel, for example, is discussed by Oliver Markley in a significant body of work published between 1998 and 2015 (for example, Markley 1998, 2008). Ramos

(2015, p. 93) was taught by Markley and experienced this future visualisation process first-hand; he commented that the images generated "were so profound that I remember them 15 years later today", demonstrating that once experienced, this sort of opening up of the mind, this ontological expansion, is essentially irrevocable. This type of cognitive process that enables thinking about the future to be accepted as a valid activity for participants, and to address the difficulty some people have in letting go of the present to let the future emerge must be part of the FSF process in this conversation.

Realistically and practically, the degree of openness required to let go of the deeply held beliefs constructed and maintained in the left-hand quadrants to enable more expansive thinking about the university's futures will take time to develop in both people and organisations. It will involve moving beyond the used and disowned futures to finding *novel* futures that Miller (2018, p. 60) asserts will allow discovery of "new ways of making sense of the emergent present [to take] advantage of the unknowable as it starts to become knowable … Making sense of novelty calls for a greater capacity to invent and explore openness in all its forms." At the core of this openness is questioning of our worldviews and their taken-for-granted ways of making sense of the university – which, in turn, will require an acceptance of the imperative of finding the new, rather than reinventing the old, if the reframed discourse is to become a reality.

8.5   The Framework in Practice

This conversations framework was designed to help integrate the visible and invisible sides of the discourse about the university's possible futures and to demonstrate how FSF processes can be developed to achieve this integration. The framework has been 'field tested' to varying degrees during the research in several presentations. Feedback has been generally positive in terms of its ability provide a new lens – the four ideas – with which to explore the university's futures, as detailed in Appendix 6.

This field testing was undertaken because the futures conversation framework was never intended to be theoretical (see Section 1.6). Instead, its practical value will rest in an FSF process designed specifically for universities that are seeking new ways of exploring their possible futures, beyond the constraints now imposed by the struggle in the discourse between the Traditional and Managerial Ideas (Section 5.2) – that is, a process that provides a clear structure and ways of identifying and understanding futures for the university that are

other than the present. Such a process needs to be readily customisable, able to be used with people across the university not just senior managers and leaders, and one that can be provided in different time frames depending on context, purpose, desired outcomes and available budget. At the core of any such customisation, however, must be recognition of the non-negotiable prerequisite that all four conversations *must* be included, starting with the UL quadrant – the conversation with self. The continued development and further elaboration and refinement of this specific process is, however, a post-thesis endeavour.

8.6 Concluding Comments

What is being discussed in this chapter is a way to develop a transformed discourse. Transformation is a much used word, and for this research it represents a significant shift in thinking, rather than an organisational transformation (Bucy, Hall & Yakola 2016), although both are ultimately required for the university to be able to move beyond the boundaries of its neoliberal form. As indicated throughout this thesis, this transformation will not occur until both the university's culture in the form of the idea and its organisational structure are given equal consideration. Of course, university transformation does not happen in a vacuum but rather in a social context as norms, practices and attitudes change. The Transformation archetype makes it clear that a new idea and a new university means doing and thinking in totally new ways, unlike anything that exists in the present. This sort of transformational shift may be the result of a social 'jolt' in the form of a pivotal disruption, but its implementation will take time – emerging first in individual thinking and emerging cultural norms, and then in the university's structure and operations.

Suddendorf and Corballis (2007) suggest that the fundamental neurological function humans have to use the future in the present provides us with an adaptive advantage, one that can inform action and decision-making in the present to ensure survival as individuals, for organisations, for society and even the planet. That is, we *can* think individually and collectively about the future in meaningful and useful ways in the present *and* generate images of the 'other than now' that allow us to expand and deepen our perspectives on what is possible in a long-term context. In other words, we *can* take responsibility for future generations in the present (Principle 5 in Section 2.2.2) *and* ensure our action and decision making does no harm to them or the planet.

Today, with contested ideas and different images of the university's future emerging, it is argued here that people who write and talk about the future of the university need to do so with this long-term context at the core of their work. The stronger futures orientation and consciousness proposed here *can* be developed in the present through the use of FSF processes, both individually and collectively, and we *can* imagine new futures for the university – as long as we accept that our brains provide us with an inherent capacity to imagine new and novel possible futures, to resist the dictates of our assumptions, and to understand that our ideas of the university are fundamentally a set of collective assumptions *not* reality.

If people who work in universities were oriented to the future in the ways discussed in this thesis, new questions could be asked to generate images of the future for and of the university. What if:

- the Managerial and Traditional ideas were both respected and valued – and a truce was called so their current battle for dominance subsided – what university might these two ideas then shape together?
- the Managerial and Reframed Ideas found common ground, enabling a restructure of the neoliberal university with a future where they could co-exist in a new context – what university might emerge then?
- the Reframed and Dismissive Ideas did actually merge – or perhaps, the Reframed Idea is ultimately subsumed by the Dismissive Idea – would a university exist or would learning indeed be in and for society?
- all four ideas merged, and the assumption that the university might not exist in the future was accepted, and if the starting point is to find the 'post-university' the future needed, not that *an* idea wanted, what sort of university might emerge?

These questions would generate a vastly different discourse compared to that which exists today, and that ultimately is the aim of this research: to contribute to broadening the present discourse to enable it to value all ideas and all possible futures, and shift the discourse to a more positive, inclusive and informed debate. It is argued here that such a discourse would develop a wider, deeper and longer-term view of the university's potential future operating environments that are already being shaped by the actions of policy and decision makers today – and would allow all known possible futures in the present to become visible.

The integral approach used to structure the framework discussed in this chapter enables the invisible and visible sides of the university to merge in the UR conversation space, to capture both the world 'in here' – the idea – and the world 'out there' – the university – and value them equally as sources of knowledge and understanding about the university's futures. As Voros (2008, p. 199) writes, Integral Futures is " an approach which attempts to take the broadest possible view of the human knowledge quest, and of how this knowledge can be used to generate interpretive frameworks to help us understand our images of what potential futures may lie ahead." This integrally informed, futures conversation framework is offered as one such way to better understand the university's possible futures in ways that, most critically, privilege no idea or particular future, but rather seek to find the university – or indeed the post-university – that the future needs.

Chapter 9: Concluding the Thesis

9.1   Overview

This chapter concludes the thesis and takes a 'helicopter view' of the research reported here – focusing not on specific details about the literature reviewed and the analyses undertaken, but rather on how that literature used as data has revealed a discourse that is a myriad of contradictions: hostile and hopeful; complacent and disaffected; trapped in the past yet seeking new futures; singular at the surface but splintered below; and articulating a depth of emotion about the university and its futures that is palpable and real to the authors, yet simultaneously myopic to many possibilities.

This thesis was an exploration of how the discourse about the university's possible futures might be expanded so that it values all ideas and all futures in its search for the university the future needs. The primary research question was: *how are the university's possible futures constrained by contested ideas of the university in the present?* The overarching research findings are threefold: **first**, that the four contested ideas of the university identified in the literature *do* constrain the emergence of the university's futures – primarily because the synchronic variations each argues for the validity of its own assumed future at the expense of any others, effectively shutting down the discourse about the university's *possible* futures.

Following the first finding, the **second** is that positioning the idea as an enduring and malleable meta-concept allows these constraints imposed by the ideas to be recognised and broken down so that all possible futures imagined in the present can be considered in the discourse. The idea as meta-concept moves beyond the narrowly competitive ideas to provide a broader conceptual scaffold that can capture and sustain all ideas over time as valuable in their changing contexts and allows the power of those ideas to shape the university's futures to be surfaced and recognised in the discourse.

The **third** finding is that a discourse space that values all ideas and all futures can only be constructed by integrating the university qua idea and the university qua institution. The futures conversation framework proposed here is designed to facilitate this integration and to

expand our understanding of the university's possible futures – including accepting that a future without a university as we understand it today might actually 'crack open' the discourse enough to allow consideration of the university the future needs to become the focal point of our conversations. Clinging to ideas that generate a discourse trapped in the present, that prevent new and novel ideas from emerging, and that generate a hostile discourse must no longer be the norm.

The research was grounded in FSF to provide the required integration of past, present and future (Chapters 2 and 3), and used a conceptual frame within which to explore relationships across the four contested ideas, the university and society (Chapter 4). That relationship was clarified by demonstrating how the linear nature of the historical evolution of the ideas generates a confused discourse, one which assumes the university and the idea are so interdependent that the power of the idea to shape the university's futures is not considered overtly, leading to its conceptual validity being questioned. Instead, here it was demonstrated how the idea is better understood as a diachronic meta-concept (Chapter 5) rather the more ideal construct of the idea as a singular concept found in the literature. With this new perspective about the co-existence of the four ideas and multiple university types as equally valuable, the range of dynamics *across* the ideas became visible through the application of three frames – William's (1997) work on discourse, the Three Horizons Framework and a new Futures Mindset frame – which provided an expanded and deeper understanding of the co-existence and contest across the ideas (Chapter 6).

The thesis then shifted to explore the nature of the university's possible futures as they are understood in the present, first by exploring the positives and negatives of the most popular FSF method to imagine the future: scenario development and defining scenario archetypes as the analytical frame. The analysis and interpretation of a range of existing scenarios for the university's future that were derived from the literature offered a comparison point to the assumed futures embedded in the ideas, and by generating a set of new archetypal futures that generated additional futures, it was established that the ideas do indeed constrain the emergence of the university's possible futures (Chapter 7). A theoretical merging of these archetypal futures was also discussed in Chapter 7 to demonstrate that even when seemingly antithetical ideas are combined, some form of novel future *can* emerge when thinking is open to possibilities beyond a single idea. A futures conversation framework was then proposed as a way for these constraints suppressing the emergence of the university's possible futures to be broken down and enable a reframed discourse to be constructed. This conversation

framework is designed to integrate the university qua idea and the university qua institution in ways that have the potential to shift the discourse from closed to open to the university possible futures (Chapter 8).

The remainder of this chapter first discusses the value of the integrative approach used throughout the research and then identifies the major research findings and areas for future research.

9.1.1 Chapter Structure

Section 9.2 defines how the integrative stance that underpinned this research has generated a new perspective on the discourse.

Section 9.3 demonstrates how the university was considered holistically, and more than the sum of its parts, focusing on the position that the idea is an idea of the university, not its various functions.

Section 9.4 discusses the nature of the confused discourse – first, the relationship across the idea, the university and society and second, by exploring the primacy of legitimacy in that relationship.

Section 9.5 defines the positioning the idea as a meta-concept that allows the idea to be recognised as holding validity across time and positing that the current belief that the university and the idea are equivalent can be viewed differently.

Section 9.6 discusses how the possible futures for the university are constrained by the four ideas in the present, and how alternative futures are visible if specific FSF processes are used to identify them.

Section 9.7 considers the need to challenge the fundamental assumption in the discourse of the present that needs to be challenged – that the university as an organisation will always exist in some form.

Section 9.8 summarises the arguments made in the thesis that propose a structure for a reframed discourse in the present.

Section 9.9 details areas for future research that have been identified in the thesis.

Section 9.10 concludes the chapter and this thesis.

9.2   An Integrated Perspective

The need for an integrative stance was paramount across the thesis and delivers a strengthening of our understanding of the role the idea plays in defining the relationship across the ideas, the university and society. First proposed in Chapter 1 to integrate the university qua idea and the university qua institution, the value of this integrative stance strengthened throughout the thesis as a range of disparate concepts, theories and frameworks were integrated:

- the university as idea and the university as an organisation (Chapter 1);
- past, present, and future by using FSF as the research approach (Chapter 2);
- the inner and outer domains of knowing that are fundamental to FSF – inner in the sense of tacit worldviews that construct the ideas and images of the future, and outer in terms of the university as an organisation and it social context (Chapter 3);
- the literature review, undertaken using an integrative review approach, designed to look for patterns *across* the inter-disciplinary literature that was reviewed, rather than *within* specific texts and disciplines (Chapter 3);
- four theoretical perspectives into a conceptual framework to provide a multi-perspectival lens on the relationship between the idea, the university and society that enabled a deeper understanding of this relationship in the past and present to be defined (Chapter 4);
- the four ideas into a meta-concept that clarifies the relationship between the idea and the university, and that captures multiple university types within each idea – rather than assuming there is a singular idea for each university type – which enables the idea to be recognised as an enduring and malleable cultural construct that remains valid over time (Chapter 5);
- understanding of the relationships *across* the ideas – by exploring how each idea argues for its own particular view of the future at the expense of other ideas, their positions in the extant discourse, their co-existence in the present, their potential evolution into the future, and a new integration of the futures assumed by each idea to demonstrate that together, the ideas do constrain the emergence of the university's possible futures (Chapter 6);

- existing scenarios for the university's future derived from the literature to generate an archetypal futures analysis that demonstrated the types of expanded discourse that might emerge if the ideas and their futures are considered holistically (Chapter 7); and

- our understanding of how individual and cultural worldviews shape beliefs about what possible futures are real and appropriate, with our understanding of the university located in its social context, both of which shape those futures and inform action and decision making in the present. This integration is at the core of a new futures conversations frame designed to enable the extant discourse to be reframed to develop a strong futures consciousness and orientation in universities (Chapter 8).

Using this integrative imperative as a primary analytical frame allowed the relationship across the ideas, the university *and* society to be considered in a new way, one that places them all on the same level, and one that allows imagining the university's possible futures to move beyond each individual idea's official – and constrained – future.

9.3   The University is More than the Sum of its Parts

This integrative stance led to the research being focused on the organisational level of analysis, and so did not delve into the complexities and idiosyncrasies of how the university is structured, how it functions on a daily basis, how it is led and managed, how it delivers teaching and research to society, its relationships with external stakeholders, or its enabling factors such as collegiality, academic freedom and autonomy. This positioning recognises the fundamental reality that the idea is an idea *of the university* – not its functions, its location, its structure, its work practices, or its leadership and management. Understanding the idea and the university as existing on the same level and of equal conceptual value means the idea remains visible in the discourse, and its constructive power in terms of the university's possible futures can be recognised and valued (Chapter 5).

9.4   A Confused Discourse

9.4.1   The Idea, the University and Society

The three-way relationship between the idea, the university and society as it is constructed in the literature has generated a confused discourse. The university is the focus, the shaper, the centre of attention, even when the idea is being discussed, and even when there is significant

social change occurring. When society is being discussed *within* the university, it is the university that is assumed to know best about its trajectories into the future (Bleiklie, Laredo & Sörlin 2007), an indicator of the myopia inherent in much of the literature. The idea is present, but implicitly and unconsciously assumed, and just how it influences those trajectories is rarely identified. This extant discourse is one where the idea has been subsumed by the university, its discursive power lost. With the university at the centre of the discourse, both the idea and society are considered as little more than supporting actors.

When there was a single idea (the Traditional Idea), this assumed alignment between university, the idea and society was adequate. There are now four ideas co-existing in the present, however, each with different core assumptions, and each with a different interpretation of this relationship across the idea, the university and society. The confusion in the discourse becomes clearer through the lens of each idea. The continuing power of the *Traditional Idea* in the present – a idea from *within* the university, fighting to defend a university that no longer exists and whose core assumptions about purpose and legitimacy no longer apply – has generated the Ideas Resistance literature which, in turn, has informed the construction of the *Reframed Idea*, which draws on the assumptions and values of the Traditional Idea to seek to design a new university. The *Managerial Idea*, believing its university will continue into the future, ignores both the Traditional Idea and the *Reframed Idea*, which is working to establish a new university type in society, outside the influence of the Managerial Idea and the neoliberal university. Together with the emergence of the *Dismissive Idea*, constructed *outside* the university's direct influence, it is then clear that society also has the capacity to generate ideas of the university. One such social idea – the Managerial Idea – maintains the university in the present, but in such a destructive form from the perspective of the other three ideas that it is rejected, while the second social idea, the Dismissive Idea, rejects any idea of this university form at all. The once assumed singular idea defined from *within* the university is no longer sufficient to understand the university's relationship with society in the present or its possible futures.

Rather than attempting to defend the validity of the singular conceptual idea in a discourse now shaped by four ideas, the thesis proposed that the idea be considered as a meta-concept, one that ensures both the university and idea are valued equally, and one that also ensures alignment between the ideas, the university and society across time. The idea as a diachronic meta-concept remains stable over time, recognising its continuing, critical cultural value for those who work in universities. Synchronic variations of the idea ensure alignment between

the university and society at any historical point, ensuring the university is fit-for-purpose for its times. Most importantly, the ideas and the university are both recognised as inherently valuable – and essential – for understanding the scope of the university's possible futures in the present.

9.4.2 The Central Importance of Legitimacy

The need to maintain legitimacy by adapting purpose when a pivotal social disruption occurs is a fundamental force at work in the university's history. Three of the four ideas have only one perspective on this: that the neoliberal university is illegitimate, even though as demonstrated in this research, it is an organisational form that is maintaining the university's legitimacy base in the present. This legitimacy base has changed during the university's history (Chapter 5), and the simple reality is that it *will* continue to change into the future. In the early nineteenth century, the modern university may have considered itself autonomous from society, but it was the *state* that granted it normative legitimacy that allowed it to decide how to control its operations, and it was those internal operations that were self-defined by academics. The post-World War II society challenged this legitimacy base, incrementally at first, but by the time the late twentieth and first decades of the twenty-first centuries arrived, society (in the form of governments) had taken back explicit control to define the university's legitimacy and established a more visible regulatory legitimacy regime. The resulting neoliberal university, while detested by many, serves to maintain the university's legitimacy by meeting requirements imposed by the state. The Reframed Idea, which draws on the Traditional Idea for its fundamental assumptions, seeks to return the power to define purpose and legitimacy to the university – but, to operate as a university outside the neoliberal system in the present, it too will need some form of legitimacy, either regulatory or normative, but that is not yet well defined. The Dismissive Idea is also claiming that power to define legitimacy – or more accurately, the university's illegitimacy – but this idea is pre-emergent and how that claim might proceed is not yet known.

There is a sense here of a pendulum swinging backwards and forwards between legitimacy types that define a particular university form as 'fit-for-purpose'. The Traditional Idea and the modern university were fit-for-purpose for their times and generated specific university types as it was established across the Western world. The Managerial Idea and the neoliberal university is fit-for-purpose for the present, and it too has generated many university types. The Reframed Idea and the Dismissive Idea are yet to manifest as a university form that is

deemed fit-for-purpose by society because these are ultimately *future* universities – and there is potential for either or both of them to become fit-for-purpose, depending on how society evolves into the future. Ultimately however, the university that is deemed fit-for purpose in society because it is meeting specific social needs in specific contexts is the genuinely legitimate university, *not* the one assumed by a particular idea.

9.5   The Idea a Meta-Concept

Positioning the idea as an enduring but malleable meta-concept is based on an internal logic that an idea remains relevant for its times until there is a pivotal social disruption. The university's *functions* can change incrementally, leading to new university 'types' (Chapter 5), while the idea of the time sustains the university's purpose, legitimacy and assumed future as a quasi-constant. The conceptual construct of the Idea remains valid, and the university is able to adapt its functions often without undermining the value of the idea. Importantly though, only *one* synchronic idea variation can be dominant at a time, but the ideas, whether dominant, residual, emergent or pre-emergent, can and do all co-exist in the present. The value of the 'idea as meta-concept' rests in its flexibility – it can hold all four ideas that, in turn, hold the past, present and future of the university in their assumptions – it holds the 'idea of the idea' over time. These assumptions can then be valued in the discourse, not resisted, rejected, or dismissed, and their possible futures can become visible. And, within the meta-concept and the four ideas of the present are the seeds of the future, the latent ideas, those yet to emerge.

'Old' ideas and the universities they manifested, *and* new ideas not yet fully emergent do not then disappear into the background of the discourse as is the case now. Instead, the idea as meta-concept reinforces the power of the idea as having integrity throughout history, and as supporting and ensuring that the university form is fit-for-purpose for its present. The idea therefore is not fragile, and it does not have to be reframed continuously as new university types are defined. It instead provides an enduring cultural scaffold for the university as an organisation that helps people make sense of the university of the past and present, *and* that is also permeable to change, even to the possibility that the university in its present form that has its origins in medieval times may not exist forever. The idea in its splintered forms, generated by associating it *directly* with university *types*, has little value or influence in the extant discourse, while this research demonstrated how its value as a core cultural construct can remain intact and can have an impact in the discourse.

What this research offers and contributes to our knowledge about the idea is a new interpretation of just what the idea *is*. The idea is not a university type, a fuzzy philosophical discussion topic, or a useful theoretical concept to justify a personal position on what the empirical university *should be*. Here, the idea is considered to have outgrown its nineteenth century roots in the modern university, adapting as the result of social change, and surviving precisely because it *is* a cohesive factor in the university's culture. The level of distress and resistance to the emergence of the neoliberal university in the literature demonstrates just how deeply the idea is embedded into that culture. This research sought to understand what the defining elements of the idea might be – its three core assumptions and beliefs about the university's purpose, legitimacy and assumed future – which provide a lens through which to understand the university in the past, present, and into its possible futures in a new way.

The most significant integration for this research is the positioning of the idea as a meta-concept which fundamentally changes how we understand the three-way relationship between the idea, the university and society. Viewing the idea as something that changes every time a university takes on a new function and is defined as a new university type has confused the extant discourse. The alternative perspective presented here not only resurfaces the idea in that discourse as a strong and valid cultural construct; the possible futures in those ideas – and beyond – then also become visible and able to be considered in the discourse.

9.6   Constrained Futures

The research has demonstrated (Chapters 6 and 7) that the four ideas constrain the emergence of the university's *possible* futures. What is at stake here is how open we are to accepting these futures, now premised either on the assumption that the university will always exist (Traditional, Managerial and Reframed Ideas) or the assumption that the university of the present is no longer needed (Dismissive Idea) so that the discourse can expand and deepen, enabling us to focus on the university the future needs. The insistence of each idea that only *their* future is the right future shuts down the discourse to the degree that alternative futures are not visible. These constraints on the emergence of the university's possible futures are unlikely to be removed until we reframe our understanding of the idea and view it as meta-concept (Chapter 5) and challenge the assumption that the university will always exist. The university's possible futures are much more than those currently derived from the current confused discourse and are dependent on the university's ability to respond to social change in ways that ensure that the university is always fit-for-purpose for its times. The constrains

of the present can be removed by the idea as a meta-concept which allows all ideas and all futures to be valued in the discourse. The future for the university does not depend on the supremacy of a single idea. It depends on continuing alignment between purpose and legitimacy to ensure the university is always meeting social needs. And, it depends on the ability of those who care about the university to expand and deepen their thinking, to challenge their assumptions about their 'right' future for the university, and to open their minds to the possibility that the university of the present might not always exist.

9.7   The University of the Present Might Not Always Exist

The assumption that the university has an assured future must be challenged if the aim of this research to expand the discourse can be considered as feasible. By problematising this assumption, a wider discourse space opens up – by treating a future without the university as a real possibility, a different conversation is possible, one that explores *many* futures, rather than only the futures assumed by each idea. Bernal (1929, p. 1) writes: "There are two futures, the future of desire and the future of fate, and man's reason has never learnt to separate them. Desire, the strongest thing in the world, is itself all future …" The future for the university embedded in the Traditional, Managerial and Reframed ideas is one that is *desired,* but it is not necessarily the one that *fate* will deliver, particularly if the discourse continues to consider only the futures assumed by the ideas. The desire can generate a wide range of possible futures as Bernal explores in his book, but desire is also inherently a product of worldviews, of hope for a preferred future, and of belief in human agency to shape those futures. Desire alone, however, generates an imagined future for the university that is so taken-for-granted that it keeps us trapped in the present, in the disowned future, the one that constrains the discourse from valuing all ideas and all futures.

The assumption that the university will always exist is a perilous one. Blind faith in the university's innate right to survive is the primary reason the relationship between the idea, the university and society is confused, why there is a lack of belief in the very concept of the idea, and why three of the four ideas discussed here are working actively to see the demise of the Managerial Idea and the neoliberal university, even though it is this university that maintains the legitimacy base needed for the university to exist in the present. This assumption is considered here to be *the* major obstacle to breaking open the extant discourse. Only when *all* ideas and *all* futures are valued in that discourse – including one where the university of the present may not exist – will the university's potential futures become visible

– not only its possible futures, but also its yet to be imagined futures. Then, instead of assuming that the university has some sort of innate right to exist forever, the discourse can focus on ensuring that the *right* university for the times always exists – and ultimately, that may mean a future where no university as we understand it in the presents exists. Indeed, the assumed future for the university might then, perhaps oddly, becomes more generic: *that the university is always fit-for-purpose for its times*.

9.8   A Reframed Discourse is Possible

The first step in reframing the present discourse is recognising that our foresight capacities can be surfaced and used in the present. Only then will the number of possible futures available to the university in the present become visible as individuals find their futures consciousness, and the discourse takes on a stronger futures orientation, one that embeds foresight – thinking about the future in new ways in the present – into the university's fabric and culture. The extant discourse about the university's possible futures can be reframed, but only if existing cultural worldviews about the idea of the university are reframed first. If the idea remains largely invisible in the present discourse as it is today, with its power assumed but never discussed, the discourse will continue to be based on unchallenged assumptions that are no longer relevant or helpful when it comes to imagining the university's futures.

Ultimately, if the depth of feeling about the university as expressed in the language used in this literature is to be enough to ensure the university has any future, the discourse must first value all ideas and all possible futures. The new futures conversation framework is presented as one way to open up the discourse, one that integrates and values individual worldviews, the university's culture, its organisational form, and the wider society in which it exists. The grounding of this framework in Integral Futures sought to value all perspectives about the university's possible futures consciously and explicitly to understand the university in the present in new ways. A reframed discourse will only be possible, however, if the people who construct that discourse are able to open their minds to the reality that the university can be other than what they believe it *should* be.

9.9 Areas for Future Research

9.9.1 Expanding University Types

One limitation on the research was that it was focused on the public Western university form. This immediately dismisses other 'types' of university – for example, private, corporate, and online universities. As indicated in Section 1.5.1, whether those who work in these types of university hold *any* idea of the university is a topic yet to be explored. Such research would expand understanding of the continuing evolution of the conceptual idea, potentially adding new layers to the meta-concept (Section 5.5) and including new images of the university's possible futures into the discourse – or even demonstrate that the idea is a construct that has validity and relevance only within the Western, public university type.

9.9.2 Decolonising the University

Exploring potential futures for the university from a more global and decolonised perspective was beyond the scope of this research (Section 1.5.1), which is clearly located in a Western worldview. The significant literature on decolonising the Western university would expand the discourse explored here and ensure that the discourse valued *all* ideas and *all* futures, not just those generated in Western universities. Further research here would provide a stronger base for analysis and interpretation of an expanded literature, potentially identifying new ideas, and understanding of the impact of these ideas on the university's futures beyond what was possible in this research. This focus would not only be more inclusive; it would add another lens with which to understand the university's possible futures in the global context.

9.9.3 The Role of Stakeholders

An early decision in the research to focus attention on two major internal stakeholders of the university – academics and managers – who generated the majority of the literature reviewed here (Section 1.5.2). The sensemaking about the ideas by these two groups largely generate the social construct that is the ideas discussed in this thesis. This decision was made ultimately to ensure the research was manageable and because at the time of writing, there was little literature on external stakeholders and their ideas of the university. The literature generated by stakeholders who are constructing the Dismissive Idea outside the university is an exception and that literature has been incorporated here. Future research that specifically explored *the idea* of the university – not the university or its operations – across the range of

its external stakeholders, and with students, would provide additional perspectives on the idea, the university and its futures that, in turn, would continue to expand the discourse about the university's possible futures.

9.9.4   The Literature on University Futures

The literature on the university's possible futures is rich and significant in terms of the sheer number of texts. Many images of the future are generated, many preferred futures described, and many texts are focused on personal beliefs and assumptions about the university's role and functions in the future. The sub-set of the University Futures literature set used in Chapter 7 to explore some possible futures was focused on structured scenarios and so, as indicated in that chapter (Section 7.4.1), it did not explore texts written either by individuals who had a particular perspective on the future university, or more general discussions about what the future university might be. That literature and newer scenario development work since this research was undertaken could usefully be reviewed to gain an understanding of how views about the university's futures both have changed over time *and* stayed the same.

9.10 Concluding Comments

The thesis has used the terms 'new' and 'novel' throughout – seeking a discourse about the university's possible futures that moved beyond the constraints of the ideas in order to surface and value all ideas and explore all futures. The university is positioned as an organisation that is best understood *not* as a revered social institution that will always exist, but as one that has not yet recognised or used the full range of its possible futures in the present. Each idea defends its assumed future to the extent that any other future is considered invalid, resulting in a university that that is trapped in the intersection of the past and the present, so deeply engaged in the critique of the neoliberal university that the emergence of its possible futures is constrained. The assumption that the university will always have a future is problematised here, not because it is necessarily an invalid assertion for those who accept it, but because it *closes down the discourse* to the possibility of these other possible futures.

In the same way, belief in the *cultural* value of the idea has faded from the discourse because as a singular concept, the idea is confused with the university. The idea has become a casualty of the tendency for new external demands on the university to generate a new

university type, which means there must also be a corresponding idea, leading to a multiplicity of ideas in the present. The question is then asked: how can the idea still be valid? The depth of feeling about the idea and the university is grounded in a belief in the eternal validity of its purpose and legitimacy in society which also generates the assumption the university will always exist. The disregard for this deeply help assumption by the Dismissive Idea must be taken seriously, for if its implications are not considered, or responded to in the present, we may see a future where any form of the university is not considered as fit-for-purpose, in a Descent trajectory, or even a future without a university at all.

The futures for the university are many, and trapping their emergence in the present in the four ideas, is likely to generate a similar situation to that which existed in the 1980s and 1990s – where clear signals of the potential impact of a pivotal social shift were ignored or downplayed (Chapter 5), leaving no response for academics but to accept and/or resist the neoliberal university, and for managers to change structures and processes of the university to ensure it survived by maintaining its legitimacy. The idea as *meta-concept* not only has explanatory power for the ideas and the university of the past and present, but also for how its potential futures – both articulated and latent – might be identified, explored and understood in the 'history of the ideas' that is now visible in the discourse defined here. Challenging assumptions about the university's futures and proposing the idea as a meta-concept thus opens up the extant discourse to the possibilities inherent in an integrated view of the relationship across the idea, the university and society – and to the possibility that the four futures assumed by the ideas are recognised as *not* all that the university can ever be.

The research sought to do justice to the worldviews of the authors of texts reviewed, and to find the new that rested between the lines of those texts when they were integrated and considered collectively. The research has made clear just *how* important the idea is to understand both the university in the present and the nature of its possible futures, and how critical it is for us to ensure that the idea becomes and remains visible in the integrated discourse. The idea and the university can then humbly cohabit a new discourse space such as that defined in Chapter 8, one that is focused on finding the university that fits the society of the times, both present and future, and that strives to move beyond today's contest between the four ideas, a contest that has resulted only in a hostile discourse and constrained futures.

Finally, this research was conceptual and aimed to better understand how the ideas and the university co-exist, how the university's futures emerge, and how the university of the present has come to be what it is over its centuries of existence. It will be the university's ability to orient itself towards the future, to escape the current discourse trap, and to maintain 'the idea of the idea' as a core cultural construct, that will ultimately determine if its possible futures become visible in the present to generate thinking that is new and novel and break down the limiting boundaries of the current discourse. Only then will the university be able to ensure it is the university the future needs – whatever form that takes and at whatever time in the future.

Addendum: The Pandemic

This thesis was finalised in the first half of 2020 when the coronavirus pandemic became a reality across the globe. In the context of this research, the pandemic can be understood as an early signal of a pivotal social disruption, one foreseen in general terms but not in its specific detail. In these 'Covid' times, how we live, work, communicate have become virtual, and has been constrained by lockdowns and restrictions to a degree not seen before. Talk of the 'post-Covid normal' is frequent but exactly what that means will only become visible as it emerges when a vaccine is available, herd immunity is feasible, and we have learned to live with 'the virus'.

What sort of synchronic variation of the idea might add another layer to the diachronic idea as a meta-concept in this post-Covid world? What university will emerge? And, perhaps unthinkable in pre-pandemic times, we might even consider a future without the university as it existed in 2019. A new university *might* emerge if all ideas merged to generate a new conversation space as proposed in Chapter 8. Or perhaps the impact of the pandemic on universities is too great, and many begin to move into Descent and Discipline future trajectories as they are no longer financially viable, along the Traditional and Managerial Idea. Perhaps the Reframed Idea can continue to strengthen but will it survive as a 'university'? Is its best chance of a Continuation future a merger with the Dismissive Idea – where the need for knowledge production and use to be socially grounded, open, accessible and inclusive which may be a better 'fit' with a possible post-Covid world?

The four ideas all hold elements of a new university form, or even of a new way of learning located in society and designed for society. The neoliberal university structure does not have to survive in the long-term but realistically it provides an essential stepping stone to a future yet to emerge – as long as our minds stay open to that future and we value all ideas and all futures that we can identify. The future of the university in the post-pandemic era is yet to be constructed and it is beyond the scope of the thesis to attempt to include a well-researched chapter on its potential impact after the thesis had been finalised. That conversation needs to be held outside the constraints of this thesis – it is real not conceptual, and I look forward adding the perspectives generated here to that conversation.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Evolution of the Research Topic

Section 3.3.5 indicated that the research topic had shifted over the research period from 2012-2017. This appendix provides more detail about the origins and nature of these shifts, which occurred as the result of three points in the research when a cognitive 'block' was recognised – that is, the argument being made was not making sense.

The **first** block occurred in the middle of my first year in 2012 when I was discussing my first attempt at defining my topic (Figure A1). I realised at this point that my carefully crafted topic statement had layers of meaning and existed in a much larger context that I had assumed. Notably here though, in the first year of my candidature, the notion of worldviews and beliefs was already present, as was the need to understand those beliefs in a collaborative sense in the context of the university.

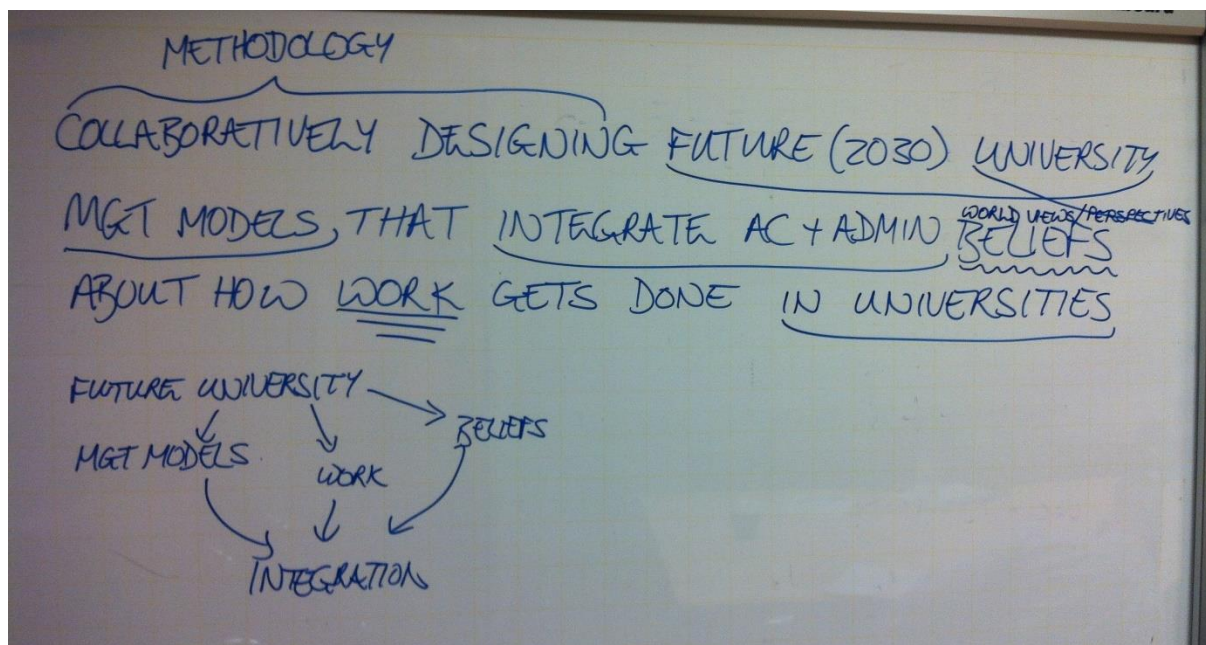Figure A1: Original Research Topic 2012

My 2012 Confirmation of Candidature report and presentation had the title *Constructing 'fit for purpose' management in 2035: the influence of worldviews* as the title, which reflected a broadening out and refinement of the original topic from management models to management itself and a clear focus on worldviews which remained constant in the research from this point on.

The **second** cognitive block came when preparing an ethics application in 2013, initially with the title *The Future for Professional University Managers.* My focus had shifted from fit-for-purpose university management to professional managers in universities by this time. The process of writing the ethics application made me realise that – as deeply held as this topic was – it was not the right one, mainly because I recognised that the tension between academics and managers was not a topic in itself. The topic was instead about how university management had changed in universities and the consequent competing ideas of the roles of academics and managers. I had to understand the former before the latter made sense, so I returned to a focus on management. That is, it was the changes happening at the university level that were shaping the relationship between academics and administrators that were, in turn, shaping the future of the professional manager role. The ethics application that was finally submitted had the title of my thesis as *The Future of University Management.*

The **third** block came after a period of leave of absence in 2014 and a change in supervision – which meant new perspectives were now being applied to my research. I submitted a revised ethics application in January 2015 with the (slightly amended) thesis title of *The Futures of Australian University Management.* This application was approved but three attempts in the first half of 2015 to recruit research participants were unsuccessful. The second half of 2015 was essentially a period of stasis except for continuing discussions with my supervisors around how to proceed with participant recruitment, which included reframing the research again and using social media as a recruitment tool. In hindsight, the process for participants was probably too lengthy (over six months) and too complex with a proposed combination of Delphi and interviews during that period. In a meeting towards the end of 2015, one of my supervisors (Associate Professor Patricia Buckley) spoke words to the effect of "It's not the future of management that is the problem, it's the future of the university." This was the turning point for me. After further discussions, the final topic was confirmed, and it was decided to convert my candidature from the Practice Based stream to a traditional PhD approach which was more suited to my now conceptual topic: *Contested Ideas of the University: Enabling or Constraining Possible University Futures?* This application was submitted in December 2015 but was deferred until my Mid-Candidature Review was completed, which occurred in late 2016, and the conversion application was formally approved in early 2018.

With the topic confirmed, focus shifted to defining the new thesis structure, the nature of the ideas and how they intersected with each other. At this point, there were two ideas identified

(Traditional and Managerial) and during 2018, a social idea was added. This idea was later split into two, one originating *inside* the university (Reframed Idea) and one *outside* the university that retained the social term originally and later, later as its nature became clear, became the Dismissive Idea.

What is clear in hindsight is that these three shifts in research focus all held the same basic concern with the future of the university, albeit perceived at different levels at different times. This focus was first focused on the internal dynamics of the university (the relationship between academics and administrators), then it shifted to the future of a university function (management) before moving to the future of the university itself. As noted earlier, these shifts also maintained a focus on competing worldviews – and it was this focus that was ultimately understood and articulated as contested ideas of the university, with the Traditional and Reframed Ideas framed as academic worldviews, the Managerial Idea as the manager worldview, and the Dismissive Idea as a worldview of and in society. Additionally, the scenario archetype defined as a method in the 2015 ethics application as part of the research remains in the research reported in this thesis.

As indicated in Chapter 3, these shifts reflect a maturing of my thinking and deepened the analysis and interpretation that have shaped this thesis, particularly in terms of understanding the criticality of the ideas for those who are interested in the university's futures, and also for exploring what exactly an idea *is*, how it is constructed, and how each idea connects with the three other ideas to provide multiple pathways in the future for the university.

Appendix 2: Tags Used to Categorise Literature

As indicated in Chapter 3, tags were allocated to individual texts based on their relevance to the research question. Relevance was determined by a set of criteria defined in Chapter 3. This resulted in a large number of tags which were categorised to produce the six literature sets used as data in this research:

Table A1.1: Context: the university's external environment;

Tables A1.2-A1.3: Ideas: (i) philosophical literature about the conceptual idea; and (ii) resistance literature critiquing the neoliberal university;

Table A1.4: University as Organisation: the structure, leadership, management, work, relationships of universities; and relevant theories;

Table A1.5: University Futures: possible futures for the university, including scenarios and individual texts;

Table A1.6: Futures Studies and Foresight: FSF history, theory, methodologies, and methods; and

Table A1.7: Research Methodology and Methods: qualitative, post-qualitative, interpretive research approaches, literature reviews and data analysis.

The following seven tables list the tags in each literature set and provide a brief description of the focus of each area of literature. Similar tags dealing with different aspects of the same topic are combined.

Table A1.1 Context Category Tags

Tag	Focus
Capitalism, Surveillance Capitalism, The Commons	Mainly the critique of the existing evolutionary stage of capitalism, including surveillance capitalism. Includes collapse of current economic system and new types of system that can emerge such as peer to peer production.
Change	General discussion of social change theory and change processes generally and in organisations/institutions, creativity, disruption, innovation
Change Drivers	Global social, economic, environmental, technological, and political changes, generally also tagged with specific change
Civilisational Shift	A coming collapse of present economic and social systems (capitalism/globalisation/neoliberalism); addressing civilisation challenges; great transitions, Fourth Industrial Revolution
Disruption	A change generated primarily by technology leading to significant innovation that results in major changes to how work is undertaken and/or how people live
Economic crisis	Related to capitalism, related to development of an economic system based on ecology, and away from growth imperatives to sustainability, post-growth world
Geopolitical issues	Mainly related to global tensions, risk, and insecurity
Globalisation	Impact of globalisation on universities, also backlash against globalisation
Governments, Government Reviews	Relationship of governments with universities, including government reviews, government decision making
Growth	Focus is on concept of de-growth, moving away from growth as primary economic imperative towards more human centred economy
Higher Education	Changes to higher education at the industry level, shaped by more global changes and shifts that shape the industry and then have an impact on university functions and operations
Individualism	Rise of individualism in society and social implications
Knowledge	Changing understandings of knowledge, democratisation of knowledge, knowledge economy, impact on universities – production, maintenance, and transition
Legitimacy	Mainly organisational/institutional legitimacy and role in defining relationship between organisations and with society
Neoliberalism	Rise of neoliberalism in society, critique of existing neoliberal system, both globally and in terms of impact of university purpose and operations
Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Robots, Internet of Things, Digital, Virtual	Technology trends and changes, impact on society, work, and organisations, includes blockchain
Social Change	Understanding social change, creating a new society and drivers of this change. Also includes work on civilisational shifts and microhistory. Includes incremental and fundamental social change, shifting social attitudes, norms, and practices

Tag	Focus
Social Compact	Related to legitimacy, implicit agreement between society and organisation to collaborate for social benefit
Social Enterprises	Emergence of a new type of organisation with a focus on social benefit
Sustainability	Includes environmental challenges, climate change, energy transition, global warming, action underway and constraints to action
Trust	Declining trust in public institutions, including the university
Work	Mainly the future of work and implications for government, organisations, individuals, and the university.

Table A1.2 Ideas Philosophical Category Tags

Tag	Focus
Ideas – general	Understanding the generic idea and 'the idea of the idea' in a philosophical or conceptual sense
Ideas – history	Specific use of the university's history to justify the validity and/or relevance of a particular idea, usually but not always the Traditional Idea
Ideas - indicator	Phrases or assertions in a text has a reference to one or more of the three assumptions, and in the case of the Reframed Idea, the hindsight 'mea culpa' recognition of responses to managerialism when it first emerged
Ideas - university	Texts where the term 'idea of the university' or 'idea' is specified in the text
Purpose	Specific reference to the purpose of the university
Legitimacy	In the context of the university only, including specific references to the term, or legitimacy can be identified from language use in the text
Assumed future	Generally, a statement about the university's future in the singular and positioned as an assertion, a fact, a belief, or statement
Traditional Idea	Texts where author is considered to hold the Traditional Idea
Managerial Idea	Texts where author is considered to hold the Managerial Idea
Reframed Idea	Texts where author is considered to hold the Reframed Idea
Dismissive Idea	Texts where author is considered to hold the Dismissive Idea

Table A1.3 Ideas Resistance Category Tags

Tag	Focus
Academic agency	Ability and loss of ability of academics to control their work
Academic capitalism	Based on marketisation of universities and higher education that linked them to national economic systems
Academic culture	Discussion around the changing nature of academic culture from, for example, collegial to corporate, and audit, performative cultures, shifts in cultural norms and values
Academic de-professionalisation	Loss of autonomy, increase in business like performance measures and activities, increased regulation, and away from collegiality
Academic freedom	Loss of ability of freedom to control academic work
Academic-manager relationship	Discussion about the changing role of the manager in universities, transfer of power and authority away from academics to managers, and negative impact on university
Academic work	Texts discussing changes in academic work – related to academic de-professionalisation and academic-manager relationship
Administrative creep	Related to academic work and increase of administrative work by academics
Autonomy	Institutional autonomy, a concept emerged in modern university and assumed autonomy from state, and lost when neoliberal university became dominant
Collegiality	Loss of collegial approach to academic work and in university governance
Customers	The rise of consumerism in society leading to students being considered as customers
Culture	Assertions about the university's culture, negative impact of neoliberal university, and need to recover what is perceived to be traditional culture of universities
Disobedience	Defining active and overt resistance to the neoliberal university
Knowledge	Changes in the generation, transmission and use of knowledge, including critique of democratisation of knowledge at expense of academic expertise. Also changed use of knowledge in teaching and research.
Language	A particular use of negative language akin to the language of war and violence to describe the neoliberal university, either by itself or in the context of the relationship between Traditional and Managerial Ideas, also used in discussion of the Reframed Idea
Managerialism – resistance	Texts that articulated an overt resistance to managerialism as applied in the university usually from an academic perspective
Markets	The impact of markets on the role of the academic specifically and the university generally
Values	Academic values, typically autonomy, collegiality, and academic freedom, including the need to sustain them over time

Table A1.4 University as Organisation Category Tags

Tag	Focus
Administration	Evolution of administration in universities. Refers to the management of the university as a whole and 'non-academic' functions
Administrators	Relating to class of staff defined differently in different contexts. In the USA, administrators are executive officers (for example, President), in Australia and the UK, they are what were termed 'non-academic' and now termed professional staff. This category is largely historical (pre-1990) and covers administrative role, training and professionalisation.
Bureaucracy	Increase in bureaucratic structures and processes, including introduction of business concepts and practices in universities
Change	Related to change in Table A1.1, as applied and understood in universities
Culture	Relationship with structures and processes, and values, beliefs and norms accepted by staff, move to performance, measured culture, loss of university 'heart' and 'soul', includes idea of the university
Decolonisation	Defining need for decolonising the university, both in terms of curriculum, thinking and decision making, literature used in thesis but broadly beyond scope of research.
Governance	Changes in university governance and relationship with the state, government policy and reviews, and roles and structures
History	History of the university from medieval times
Identities	Both academic and professional manager identities in relationship to each other – defining changes in the context of neoliberalism and values, including reduction in trust in universities
Institutions	University as social institution, how change happens in institutions, nature of institutional work, including isomorphic effect on institutional development
Leadership	Perspectives on leadership of university, including changes to types of leadership, emergence of new roles, experience as leaders, leading academics, and leadership literacies
Legitimacy	Changing basis for the university's legitimacy over time, including the stakeholder group granting the legitimacy, including legitimacy theory
Management	Texts related to the management of universities, its historical evolution as a facet of universities, includes discussion of appropriate management methods and approaches, impact of management on academic nature of university
Managers	Evolution of professional managers – both academic and administrative, third space where academics and managers collaborate; professional development, work practices
Managerialism	Definitions of managerialism, impact on academic work, collegiality, and academic freedom, generating tensions and conflicting values, usually negative in nature
Manager-Academic Relationship	Texts focused on the changing relationship between academics and managers from both perspectives, negative views from academics, and positive views seeking to justify manager role in relationship to academics, the latter usually quite strong in critique.
Neoliberal university	Productivity, unbundling of university functions, corporatisation of the university, impact on decision making processes, resistance literature reflected here with critique of university structures, processes and cultures, funding, and external competition

Tag	Focus
Power	Power, conflict, authority, and relationships in universities, including clear focus on redistribution of power inside and outside universities
Professionalisation	Changing professional status and roles in the university, generally in terms of increasing professionalisation of managers and deprofessionalisation of academics
Role of university in society	Public good, social role, knowledge production, including relationship with society (social compact, legitimacy) and relationship with state. Also rankings and development of global industry
Stakeholders	Impact of different stakeholder groups, engagement with stakeholders, involvement in university governance, and third mission for universities
Students	Usually about students as customers, need to put students at centre of the university, and emerging student needs
Technology Use	Both academic and administrative uses, includes education technology, digital/virtual technology, artificial intelligence uses
Types of university	Positioning of university as a specific type, usually national (for example, American, Australian, British, German university), also university structure (for example, neoliberal or co-operative university), and strategic focus (for example, entrepreneurial university)

Table A1.5 University Futures Category Tags

Tag	Focus
University futures 1	Personal perspectives on the university's future – usually by critiquing a particular facet of the university (for example, research, knowledge, learning, leadership, management, engagement, campus), most often involving a singular revised future
University futures 2	Structured scenarios for the university generating a range of possible futures, usually produced by government, universities, including research institutes, and more recently, commercial organisations
University futures 3	Approaches to imagining the future for the university, including seeking alterative futures to that assumed by the Managerial Idea
University futures 4	Reframing the existing discourse about possible futures for the university, implications of not reframing the discourse to include all ideas and all futures

Table A1.6 Futures Studies and Foresight

Tag	Focus
Anticipation	Anticipating the future, using the future in the present, anticipatory assumptions, relationship with FSF
Assumptions	Nature of assumptions about the future, how assumptions are constructed and impact on thinking about the future
FSF History	History of FSF field, includes national as well as more general histories of the field, includes sociological contributions to FSF
Foresight	Identify nature and characteristics of the innate human capacity to imagine the future, individual and social foresight capacities
Foresight case studies	Case studies of specific applied FSF processes, usually in organisations
Foresight process evaluation/ impact	Assessments of foresight processes on organisational outcomes and process evaluation, also at FSF level (Foresight Maturity Model)
Foresight methods	Identifying foresight methods and use in FSF processes (for example, Delphi, emerging issues, forecasting, scanning, scenarios, visioning, weak signals, wildcards, gaming, futures cone, crazy futures)
Foresight paradigms	Research that explicitly identifies paradigms in FSF, largely defined by difference between quantitative and qualitative approaches
Foresight styles/consciousness	New models for assessing individual foresight styles, competencies, and consciousness
Foresight terminology	Issues identified across the literature set concerned with developing a unified definition and set of terminology for FSF
Foresight theory	Developing a theoretical base for FSF, ontology and epistemology, defining fundamental elements (for example, layers, latents, complexity, uncertainty), philosophical foundations, critical futures
Futures education	Identifying how futures is taught in schools, universities including face-to-face and online
Futures literacy	Capacity to use the future in the present, identifying assumptions, surfacing foresight capacities
Futures processes	Finding the right questions, wicked questions, process (workshop) design, stakeholder relationships, practitioner depth, futures conversations
Futures thinking	Inner worlds, mental models, worldviews, intuition, moral responsibility (future generations), sensemaking, 200 year present, agency, attention to the future in organisations, ethics
Futures Studies	The field in which research and practice takes place, quantitative and qualitative approaches, and frameworks (for example, Action Learning/research, Anticipatory Learning, Generic Foresight Process Framework, Causal Layered Analysis, Six Pillars, Three Horizons)
Images of the future	Research on the images of the future, including tensions between competing images
Imagining the Future	Neurological structures used in imagining the future, mental time travel, creativity, temporal focus
Integral Futures	Integrating inner and outer worlds in FSF theory and practice, reality as layered and socially constructed, basis in Integral Theory
Metaphors, Narratives & Stories	Using metaphor in FSF process, storytelling, and narratives to document possible futures, uses in qualitative FSF work such as scenarios

Tag	Focus
Scenarios	Case studies, scenario theory and practice, processes and impact, scenario types (for example, aspirational futures, deductive/inductive, exploratory, industry, internal/external, normative), also scenario archetypes
Social foresight	Foresight as a social capacity
Strategic foresight	Foresight processes used in strategy development processes (for example, technology foresight, corporate foresight)
Strategic planning	Strategic planning practice in comparison with strategic foresight
Strategic thinking	Existing thinking process used in strategy development, aligned with strategic foresight
Terminology	Terminology used to define FSF theory and practice
Thinking	More general than futures thinking and strategic thinking, focus on thinking processes – belief systems, blind spots, biases, cognition, decision making, emergence, ideas of the future, learning organisation, degree of openness, also design thinking and connection with futures thinking, also systems thinking
Time	Temporal focus as critical factor in futures thinking, different understandings of time, big history, macrohistory
Trends	Indicators of social change identified in environmental scanning, uses of trends in scenario and FSF processes

Table A1.7: Research Methodology and Methods

Tag	Focus
Analysis	Analysis in qualitative research & research based on using literature as data, including hermeneutic, thematic analysis, analysing secondary data, FSF methods for analysis
Bricolage	Identifying theories and methods most appropriate for research to generate new perspectives on a topic
Coding	Rationale and justification for coding (or not) qualitative data generated in field research
Interpretivist Research	Interpretative research approach, social construction basis, actors' perspectives, poststructuralism, morality of interpretation, identifying differences between other major approaches (critical, positivist, post-positivist)
Literature Review	Approaches to reviewing literature, including conventional and creative approaches, berrypicking, discipline based review approaches, integrative and systemic reviews
Post-Qualitative Inquiry	Alternative approach to doing & analysing qualitative research, alternatives to coding data
Qualitative Research/Methods	Various definitions, focused on human issues in present, methods that focus on human interaction as data source, reputation/status issues, can be futures oriented
Quantitative Research/Methods	Various definitions, focused on data, using quantitative methods for analysis, predictive/forecasting stance
Research Validity	Different types of validity for both qualitative and quantitative research
Researcher in the Research	Reflective practice of research, acknowledging role as shaper of research
Social Construction	Rationale for underpinning methodology and method choice, human centred approach, recognising reality as constructed, different variations of social construction, differences from social constructivism

Appendix 3: Scenario Archetype Descriptions

Summary definitions of scenario archetypes were provided in Chapter 7 where the archetypes were applied to discuss the university's possible futures. This appendix provides more detailed descriptions of each archetype which are drawn from the work of a number of people in the FSF field (see Reference List at end of the Appendix). While Dator (2009) is usually credited with formalising the archetype approach in FSF, there has been extensions of his approach since then, along with some renaming of the archetype titles. These alternative names have been listed where appropriate below the archetype descriptions in the following sections. Each description is formatted as follows:

Title: the archetype's title (used in this thesis);

Alternative titles: alternative titles are sometimes used instead of Dator's original terms;

Summary: description of the archetype – its generative process and implications for society

Characteristics of this future: major indicators of each archetype; and

Type of Future: a generic description of the type of futures that is generated by this archetype.

Finally, these descriptions aim to provide a broadly generic 'picture' of the archetypes and should not be considered definitive in nature. They are, however, considered to be fit-for-purpose for this research. The archetype descriptions drawn on the report by the Australian Academy of Sciences (S. J. Cork et al. 2015), Dator's (2009) definitions and the work of Bezold (2009b) and Hines (2014).

A3.1   Continuation Archetype

Alternative Titles: Continued Growth, Business-as-Usual

Summary

Steady economic growth. The present trends and change drivers continue without major disruptions or surprises. The system continues its current trajectory. The purpose of work and life is to build economies and promote growth.

Characteristics

- Usually economic growth oriented, opportunity filled, abundance.
- Technologically innovative designed to promote growth.
- Upwardly mobile society is the expectation.
- Dominant, science guided decision making.
- Liberal thinking is a dominant perspective.
- Government/education focus on building vibrant economy – to develop people, institutions/technology to keep economy growing.
- Social and political change is incremental, and rule/law based – stability is the goal.

Type of Future

Futures of this type generally focus on continuation of the economic growth that has occurred in the developed world over the past 200-300 years. Other elements might also grow or expand, including population, urbanisation, or agricultural areas, and increasing usage of natural resources. A common assumption in Continuation futures is that increasing wealth, through economic growth, will reduce birth rates and increase lifespan. In some of these futures, markets are free from regulation while governments intervene in others to stimulate growth. Some consider how economic growth might proceed without using more resources; then they begin to resemble Discipline or Transformation scenarios. In other extreme-growth scenarios, inequality grows unacceptably, and societies collapse due to resource depletion. Futures that focus on such undesirable outcomes are more usefully considered under the Descent archetype.

A3.2 Descent Archetype

Alternative Titles: Collapse

Summary

The system 'breaks' or falls into a state of dysfunction. The established way of doing things no longer works, and there is continuing in the 'health 'of the system. Usually not apocalyptical in nature as steps can be taken to 'pull back from the brink' (for example, a dictatorship is overthrown), followed by a move to a Discipline future but can lead to collapse.

Characteristics

- Driven by resources shortages, food shortages, climate change, environmental disasters, widespread disease (both natural and human generated).
- Also, political/admin ineptness can be causative.
- A snowballing series of accidents, terrorist events, nuclear war, asteroid/comet impact.
- System degradation occurs and becomes dysfunctional.
- System challenged and needs to respond.

Type of Future

Futures of this type are about the loss of many aspects of society that are valued. Descent futures might emerge because good intentions to change society fail (for example, over-use of an essential resource while intending to grow an economy or restraining use of resources to protect them but causing an economy to collapse), or because of direct destruction of desirable aspects of society (e.g. invasion of a country and destruction of its culture or the spread of a disease that destroys people's health and wellbeing). Dator (2017, p. 5) writes: "Collapse gives humanity the great chance and obligation to start all over again—to experience a new Garden of Eden, within which we may learn to be content and happy, or from which we may learn to evolve gracefully, peacefully, cooperatively, meaningfully."

A3.3   Discipline Archetype

Alternative Titles: Equilibrium, Restraint

Summary

The system is confronted with a major challenge such as environmental/climate induced changes that forces a significant shift in how it has been operating, leading to significant adaptations/compromises in terms of resources use in order to keep the basic structure of the current system intact.

Characteristics

- Industrial growth model is shown to be unsustainable and/or undesirable, with signs of it 'sinking' in the present.
- Managed 'shrinkage' is needed, so behaviours adapt to growing internal or environmental limits.
- Re-orientation of life/society to values rather than growth is likely, with life disciplined around those values.
- No longer pursuit of wealth and consumerism as driver of activity.

Type of Future

Discipline or restraint scenarios address aspects of today that are leading to undesirable future outcomes. The focus of this discipline is, in most cases, sustainable use of natural resources (such as climate change mitigation or pollution control), but disciplined approaches are more accurately viewed as a move to living within existing means. Discipline can also apply to aspects of our society, such as collective responsibility for matters like economic equity and poverty reduction becoming the norm. Some extreme discipline scenarios involve imposition of beliefs of a strong group in society on others and even the exclusion of some members of society who ignore the need for restraint. Such undesirable discipline futures, however, can be more appropriately considered a Descent archetype. When Discipline scenarios envisage fundamental changes to society's behaviours and/or values, they become Transformation scenarios, although where the boundary between restraint and transformation occurs is sometimes blurred.

A3.4   Transformation Archetype

Alternative Titles: None

Summary

Fundamental change affects every part of the system. This archetype was originally focused around technological change but its meaning has expanded over time to represent "a paradigmatic shift in human zeitgeist, either at the technological or spiritual level" (Fergnani & Jackson 2019, p. 3). This system that emerges is totally different to the one that existed previously. New ways of living and working emerge.

Characteristics

- Fundamental paradigm shift – challenging 'birth-like' process.
- Similar to the Discipline archetype but here there are new values, institutions, and technology, fundamentally different from anything that existed before.
- Transformation can be driven by fragmenting/isolating effects of technology (eg artificial intelligence and digital technology, genetic engineering, nanotechnology, teleportation, post-humanism), but also by more spiritual shifts that result in achievement of new levels of consciousness (for example, moving to a higher, more collective level of thinking and operating in the Spiral Dynamics values system discussed in Chapter 8).

Type of Future

Futures of this type are about fundamental changes in societies for the better (undesirable changes are considered in the catastrophe archetype). Transformations might be technological or consciousness/worldview changes that go beyond incremental shifts, and/or major changes in attitudes, policies, and practices in relation to the environment, inequity, governance, or industries. Transformation futures usually represent new types of societies with totally different ways of operating that are completely different from the present. The key question is 'what sorts of changes would be fundamentally different from the present?' Answering this question requires us to think hard about what is characteristic, of the present. This makes this archetype a difficult one to consider.

Appendix 4: Scenarios for the University's Possible Futures

Chapter 7 uses a set of scenarios developed by individuals and organisations that specified an image of a future university that is distinctly different from today's university. This appendix details the relevant content of these scenarios in Table A2.1. The columns used in the table are defined below.

- Column 1 is the item number given to each text used;
- Column 2 specifies the author of year of publication;
- Columns 3 to 5 detail the Context, Time Horizon and Changes used to construct the scenarios;
- Column 6 is the identification number given to each scenario;
- Column 7 is the title of the scenario;
- Column 8 is the scenario summary, derived from the text;
- Column 9 is the idea allocated to the scenario; and
- Column 10 is the archetype allocated to the scenarios.

Column 8 – the scenario summaries – have been drawn from each individual source. The text here has been paraphrased wherever possible, but for some scenarios with long descriptions (for example, scenario 6 – the Women's University), the summaries have used the original source text to varying degrees.

Table A4.1   Summaries of Scenarios in the University Futures Literature Set, Sorted by Year of Publication

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
1	Abeles 1997	Universities in general	2025	Technology, knowledge shifts	1	A Wired World	Academic superstars in both research and teaching. University's long half-life of knowledge will bridge past, present and future. Academics as mentors and guides to students, helping them appreciate knowledge lineage. Publishing is online, universities are connected downwards to K-12 and with communities. Core courses are global and online, institutional diversity is high - mega-universities, regional universities, and local universities. Research is conducted in institutes with relationships to private sector, focus on socio-cultural issues.	RI	CO
2	Tjeldvoll 1998	Research University	Not stated	Rise of knowledge market; ideological changes; scientific knowledge shifts; challenge to knowledge production	2	The Degenerating Service University	Financial issues cause lowering costs which leads to lower quality overall - university falls into vicious circle at risk of closing	MI	DE
2					3	The Service University Supermarket	Research university based on business principles. Customised short courses for business & professional studies. Little need for humanities staff.	MI	CO
2		DI			4	The Academic Service University	Increased funding from non-government sources; successful competition for foundations/niche market for its research & education; public/private clients; independent research & programs; maintains standards; freedom from state	RI	DI
3	Duderstadt 1998	Research University	21st century	Demand for knowledge/ higher education; access to knowledge expanding to learner-centred; focus is impact of information technology shifts; challenges are to meet diverse needs, public vs private good, market forces vs public purpose, role of research	5	Swept Away by the Tsunami of Market Forces	Inability to meet knowledge demands; high costs; IT impact sees shift in university away from the past. Learning more accessible to students outside the university, learning as a commodity, students as consumers; universities are part of global HE networks and industry; no single control point; more specialised; unbundled functions (eg Nike U).	MI	DI
3					6	A Culture of Learning: Renewing the Social Contract	Many forms of university; learner centered, affordable; lifelong learning; interactive and collaborative; diverse; education has become a driving social need and societal responsibility. No precedent for future forms; greater differentiation; potential to disappear like the family farm.	RI	DE

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
4	Manicas 2000 (In Inayatullah & Gidley 2000)	American universities	Not stated	Globalisation, access to knowledge, costs of higher education, technology	7	Convenience Institutions	On the cutting edge of both new technology and new education markets. User-friendly, operate as businesses, serve 'job-minded students', provide skills and credentials on demand, anywhere, anytime, by any medium of instruction.	MI	DI
4					8	Brand Name Institutions	Dominate the HE sector. Private, heavily endowed Ivy League universities, attract external funding, maintain traditional undergraduate education. Liberal arts colleges are small in number and cater for elite with scholarships provided.	TI	DI
4					9	The Do-Nothing Scenarios	Minimal investment in technology which is grafted on to existing operations. Basic form and structure of university remains unchanged. Traditional modes of education are promoted, face resourcing pressures, competition with other universities which have moved to online learning.	TI	DE
5					10	The Commodified University	Technology is used to commodify knowledge distribution. Programs are developed for online delivery. Capitalising on economies of scale, learning is routinised, reducing the diversity and quality of knowledge forms and content. Teaching staff are laid off, casuals and technology manage preparation and delivery, and in some cases assessment. Vocational focus, research driven teaching is problematic.	MI	CO
5					11	The On-Line Learning Community	Universities invest wisely in technology to connect and increase knowledge diversity through networks. Teachers are mentors and learning becomes self-directed. Intellectual curiosity and vocational aspirations are developed together. Public investment to ensure knowledge diversity and blurring of community-university boundaries – teaching and learning now a broader community effort. Face to face communication is retained. Technology used to connect, transform, and extend rather than control.	RI	CO

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
6	Milojevic 1997	A university for women	Not stated	Knowledge, community, technology	12	Women's University	Community based, focused on better health, happiness & quality of life for present & future generations. Seeking to transform societies within which learning takes place; improve conditions of women's lives and teaching activities to change patriarchal cultures. Community & university boundaries dissolved; community participates in university decision making. Values community, communication, equality, mutual nurturance, shared leadership, participatory decision making, democratic structure, interdependence, integration of cognitive and affective learning. Inclusion of powerless & different among students & faculty. Technology enhances connections, communication & learning. Academics free to pursue interests. Disciplines focus on problem solving. No separation between knowledge & politics, theory & practice, mind, and body, or public and private to facilitate development of new inter-, multi- and transdisciplinary frameworks.	RI	T
7	Blass 2002	British university	None stated	Globalisation, technology, access to education, diversity, competition	13	The Corporate University	University-industry relationship is core - research/IP; Mode 1 knowledge becomes focus again; cooperative and corporate education; collaboration across disciplines; learning communities	MI	CO
7					14	The Virtual University	Requires digital access; digital-based education delivery; digital connects academics & research; move from teaching to facilitating learning; user driven; developing students as 'cyberthinkers'; student driven; highly competitive growth domain.	MI	CO
7					15	The Global University	Internationalisation providing additional funding/growth; outside national jurisdiction; needs virtual capacity; global curriculum; works in collaboration with local delivery centres/other universities to produce new knowledge; new mindset focused on benefits to university and society.	RI	DI
7					16	The Future University	Corporate, global, and virtual. Distributed knowledge production, liberal education ethos returning, changing role of academic and student.	RI	DI
8	Internal documents	Swinburne University	2010		17	Hire-Ed	A business-driven scenario in which business and enterprise flourish. The focus is on continuing business viability for all organisations. Higher education is viewed as a profit-making enterprise and government funds for education continue to shrink. Available funds are directed to the larger higher education institutions relying on an ever-increasing throughput of students. Learning and teaching are technologically driven. The university eventually sells its research function to private industry.	MI	DE

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
8					18	Life-Learn	A community driven scenario in which economic rationalism has been increasingly discredited and people are trying to counter its effects. There is a growing interest in social capital and community revitalisation. The community has responded negatively to increased deregulation of the higher education market and is now demanding that fees be capped. Flexible learning and teaching dominate, and students are interculturally competent in their personal and professional lives.	RI	CO
9	OECD	Higher Education	Not stated	Increasing global cooperation, technology, open knowledge	19	Open Networking	Higher education and universities are internationalised, intensive networking among institutions, scholars, students, industry. Collaborative not competitive. Gradual harmonisation of systems, students can choose from global subjects; have some autonomy to complete course wherever they want. Technology used in teaching and research.	MI	CO
9					20	Serving Local Communities	Universities focused on national/local missions. Embedded in communities, address community needs. Mainly publicly funded, local funding support as well. Academics trusted professionals who control teaching/research processes; teaching is their primary focus. Scope of research is humanities and social sciences, more strategic research in government sector. Small number of elite institutions are internationally networked.	RI	CO
9				Market forces, ageing society, rising public debt	21	New Public Management	Universities are publicly funded but are market focused. Take advantage of foreign education market, deregulation of fees and patenting research. Growing links with industry. Public and private education boundaries are blurring, most university resources come from tuition and industry/foundation support.	MI	CO
9				Trade liberalisation, migration, new private entrants	22	Higher Education Inc.	Universities compete globally to deliver services on a commercial basis. Research and teaching are increasingly disconnected, and universities usually focus on one as core mission. Market is demand driven, and fierce competition for students and star researchers. Government research funding is open to the world.	MI	CO
10	Vincent-Lancrin 2004	Neoliberal University	Not stated	Demographic changes; funding; technology; internationalisation; liberalisation; new public governance; knowledge economy; increasing partnerships; diversity of providers; lifelong learning; intellectual property difficulties	23	Tradition	Universities continue on, training young people for jobs. Both teaching and research, mostly publicly funded by government which also regulates and manages universities. Public accountability framework means little scope for profit-generation. Lifelong and online learning begin to emerge outside universities.	TI	DE

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
10					24	Entrepreneurial Universities	Selective institutions preparing young people for life. Funding comes from a variety of sources both public & private. Research is a lucrative activity via IP returns. Market-oriented but without losing academic values; teaching quite elite, lifelong learning in mass institutions. Greater differentiation across universities because of more autonomy and ability to respond to local contexts. Commercial approaches (elearning & internationalisation) are important. Strong links to local economy.	MI	CO
10					25	Free Market	Private tertiary sector assures quality and accreditation. Funding from market. Specialised universities by function, field, and audience. Business awards degrees to workers. University sector hierarchy is strong, global super-elite, academics polarised; research has moved outside the university. Strong competition for students, international sector important. Teaching is standardised, curricula patented.	MI	CO
10					26	Open Education & Lifelong Learning	Universal access, university meeting demands of flourishing knowledge economy, delivers professional development widely in society, more older learners, more learner, demand and teaching oriented, governments/independent bodies accredit, assure quality. Research outside universities, best researchers work in private sector, specialised institutes, or elite universities; applied learning moving to professional school model, high responsiveness to market forces, business invests in online learning. Potential for university to follow professional school models.	RI	CO
10					27	Global Network	Demand and mostly market driven. Universities form partnerships with themselves and industry; learners define and choose courses from global network offerings; online learning is strong, market for lifelong learning is strong. Standardised teaching content. Lifelong Learning is strong as universities take on new forms. Research outside university, teaching is technology based; academic polarisation (superstars and the others), programs matter more than the institution. IP provides high returns.	MI	DI
10					28	Diversity/ Disappearance	Learning continuous throughout life, by people themselves, sharing expertise in same field. Professions (eg medicine) are trained within businesses via apprenticeship system, using virtual technology. Knowledge spreads via technology. Learning is open and mostly free/non-commercial, partnerships are common, global networking is strong, credentials assesses by assessment bodies, knowledge is pervasive and less a determinant for career or social stratification. Research less specialised and cheaper and moves outside universities which eventually disappear.	RI	CO

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
11	Westerheij-den, Huisman & De Boer 2004	Neoliberal University	2010	Government policy, globalisation, knowledge economy; two tier system: colleges and universities	29	The Palatial Garden	Universities resemble university of today (2004), mostly government funding, small private sector. Similar missions across institutions, national and international research, cater for local/regional labour market needs. Lifelong learning is key, technology integrated into programs, diminished in size, and specialise in fewer disciplines, accreditation controlled by government.	MI	CO
11					30	The Polder Garden	Smaller sector because of mergers, with multi-campus institutions, strategic alliances at department level, government involvement in bachelor's degree curriculum and accreditation, freedom to design courses at postgraduate level; government regulates sector, setting 'rules of play'. Higher education is a public good, government funds specific programs (eg science & engineering).	MI	DI
11					31	The Natural Garden	Universities are disappearing as national borders, institutional types and definitions of students become blurred. Networking is the 'motto', "both symbiotic and parasitic" (p. 380). Industry cooperation the norm, some takeovers of colleges by industry and universities to degree that most universities are no longer recognisable. Two universities still exist – a research leader funded by a research agency, and a massified university, with wide array of courses. Foreign campuses are established; some international in-country partnerships succeed, online delivery is strong. Some regional partnerships, for profit institutions now exist; universities existing more as certifying institutions; international accreditation/quality schemes becoming a reality.	MI	DE
12	Inayatullah 2006 (in Kelo 2006)	Universities in General	Not stated	Globalisation and corporatisation, increasing global competition, digitalisation/ virtualisation, sustainability, demographic shifts	32	Center-Periphery Reversed	Six Internet-based distance-learning universities are located in developing countries – Turkey, Indonesia, China, India, Thailand, and Korea. Primarily focused on adult education, online education is also spreading to primary and secondary schools. Asia continues to rise, led by India and China – and the world's best universities are increasingly in Asia.	MI	CO
12					33	Centre-Periphery Enhanced	Business as usual continues unabated. Western universities continue their dominance. With advantages in gaming, digitalisation, globalisation, as well as research patents and entrepreneurship. Their prestige and endowments give them a significant advantage. Asian universities continue to fall behind with insufficient talent and in some places, a lack of technology.	MI	CO

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
12					34	Global Markets 1	National boundaries are blurring. Western universities are growing in number in Asia, and elite universities, though costly, are still leading because of their access to technology (for research, teaching and management), star professors (lured to the university to create min-universities), and continuing strong branding and marketing.	MI	CO
12					35	Global Markets 2	Th market for mass university education begins to segment. Some universities move totally to online education, while other struggle to survive with the rise of multinational competitors. Some change focus to community college level. This is a market in flex and ripe for change.	MI	DE
12					36	Global Markets 3	This is a niche market with many opportunities ranging from short courses and secondary education. Many new niches are developing, both safe and experimental. A new dominant paradigm for the university is emerging and these niches may or may not survive.	MI	DE
12					37	Global Governance	The Bologna process has become global. National ministries cooperate, with credit transfer between universities across the world a reality, resulting in a fluid movement of students and staff. A global World University Organization (WUO) is established and ensures global standardisation. Its funding supports developing countries and the world-as-university image thrives. However, as with UNESCO, there are many problems with states withholding funds, and private universities start to have a global impact.	MI	DI
12					38	The End of the University	The existing World University Organisation cannot manage the complexity of knowledge and learning across the world. New forms of learning emerge, framed by discoveries in brain-mind science, with virtual learning to enable the whole world to become a university.	MI	DE
12					39	Corporatized and Responsive to change	Both administrators and academics understand the world has changed, and that their relationship must change. Governance moves from guilds to learning organisations. New sources of revenue are sought, generally from the market. The administration seeks to facilitate the creative potentials of academics. Academics do not see themselves as selling out to the corporate world. Rather, they integrate their entrepreneurial selves into their identity. New technologies are used in ways that meet the changing needs of professors, administrators, and students.	RI	DI

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
12					40	Feudal Traditional – Responsive to change	This is the niche university. The hierarchy of the professoriate remains and the rituals of graduation continue, but limitations emerge as student number reduce, while funding continues. Vice-Chancellors remains known for their scholarship and leadership capacity, not just for his capacity to earn. Academics respond to the changing world, but discriminate as to what needs to change, and what traditions must be stable.	TI	DI
12					41	Corporate-Reactive responses to change	The massified university: staff are resistant to change. Limited adoption of new technologies reproducing lectures and not more interactive approaches, ineffective communication. The decline of the industrial model sees tenure slowly eliminated, and freedom of speech diminished. Students are essentially customers even though old academic titles and positions remain. Health indicators are poor in the organisation.	MI	CO
12					42	Traditional/Feudal – Reactive	The hierarchy and feudal nature of the traditional university remains. Little willingness to engage with globalisation, virtualisation, and corporatisation. Governance remains top-down, and financing remains a problem. The university becomes insular. "The deep myth is that of Cinderella, hoping for a fairy god mother (the State or a Benefactor) to save the day."	TI	DE
13	Universiti Sains Malaysia 2007	University Sain Malaysia	2025	Globalisation, multiculturalism, technology, politicisation	43	A La Carte University	Courses appeal to regional and global learners and employers, networking globally, education is anytime, anywhere, uses latest technology, learning designed and personalised for client.	MI	CO
13					44	The Invisible University	Open source university, technologically driven, flexible, student-centred knowledge, slim and trim administration, physical presence but focus is on-site repository of knowledge and knowledge for all concepts.	MI	CO
13					45	The Corporate University	Privately funded, independent yet regulated. Close collaboration with industry for funding plus commercialisation of research and teaching,	MI	CO
13					46	The State University	Operates at state level, catering for local industry, niche, nimble and flexible organisation, dependent on public and private sectors to generate growth and income.	MI	CO
13					47	The University in the Garden	Return to shared values and introduction of holistic based education system. Autonomous, accountable, and sustainable. Learning valued for its own sake to endow individual with intellectual, spiritual, and humanistic faculties. Academic leadership, innovative thinking, seeks entrepreneurial development, knowledge, and creation of ideas.	RI	CO

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
14	Quistguaard et.al. 2008	Bemidji State University	2018	Access to education, social view of higher education (public vs private goods), demographics, technology, societal values	48	Doing More with More	Partnerships, diverse student population, public support and lifelong learning, more private funding, online learning in demand, state funding stable.	RI	CO
14					49	Service Corps University	Focus on leadership and civic engagement, service degrees in demand, strong interest in public good among students, increasing competition, social partnerships to build service/experiential learning	RI	CO
14					50	The World is Flat	Business partnerships, specialised degrees, more demand for liberal education and lifelong learning, less state funding, demand for internships/apprenticeships, articulation partnerships with other universities, less demand for service degrees.	MI	CO
14					51	MN Career Institute	Reliance of student tuition, specialised degrees, high student expectations re career outcomes; market driven, partnerships with business, industry, and universities.	MI	CO
15	Munck & McConnell 2009		Not stated	Globalism, internet, policitisation, multiculturalism – knowledge, market, public good, virtualisation	52	Community Resurgent	A locus focus in a less mobile world, with strong emphasis on carbon reduction and resource use. Inward looking, re-focusing on local cultures & communities; consensus & social contribution. New approaches to establishing priorities for local/national social needs.	RI	CO
15					53	Market Ascendant	An open, mobile world driven by personal performance, efficiency, MY needs, and money. The market provides and entrepreneurialism rules. Personal profiles define service and price, while visibility and celebrity ethos create 'star' performers.	MI	CO
16	Ahmed et. al. 2012 Also Inayatullah et. al. 2013	BRAC University	2030	No specific drivers, but scenarios define system issues as climate change, social empowerment, technology, urbanisation,	54	Advancing Knowledge	A university with a mix of liberal arts and specialised curriculum, peer-to-peer interactive learning, experiential learning; developing curriculum with alumni and private sector – community service and private sector engagement leading to creativity and social responsiveness	RI	CO
16					55	An Ecosystem of Leaders	Move from traditional ego-centric model of leadership to ecological and synergetic leadership, valuing difference, creating a social laboratory for innovation, turning problems into innovations.	RI	CO
16					56	BRAC University Global	The university is global and franchised. Driven by advances in technology, student desire to develop global perspectives, development of global accreditation systems, globally focused faculty.	MI	CO

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
17	Ernst & Young 2012	Australian universities	2022-2027	Democratisation of knowledge, contestability of markets and funding, digital technologies, global mobility, integration with industry, competition	57	Streamlined Status quo	Some universities remain operational as broad-based teaching and research institutions, but progressively transform the way they deliver their services and administer their organisations — with major implications for the way they engage with students, government, industry stakeholders, TAFEs, secondary schools, and the community. Partnerships and outsourcing underpin this strategy.	MI	CO
17					58	Niche Dominators	Some established universities and new entrants will fundamentally reshape and refine the range of services and markets they operate in, targeting particular 'customer' segments with tailored education, research and related services — with a concurrent shift in the business model, organisation and operations. Reduces offering, builds deep alliances with industry, and streamlines administration.	MI	DI
17					59	Transformers	Private providers and new entrants carve out new positions in the 'traditional' sector and also create new market spaces that merge parts of the higher education sector with other sectors, such as media, technology, innovation, venture capital and the like. This creates new markets, new segments, and new sources of economic value. Incumbent universities that partner with the right new entrants will create new lines of business that deliver much needed incremental revenue to invest in the core business — internationally competitive teaching and research. Wider interpretation of nature of student markets, integrate with external services and industry and outsource administration completely. Focus is on the market and innovation.	MI	CO
18	Huisman et al. 2012	English universities	2025	Demographics, funding, market impact	60	The Return of the Binary Divide	Smaller system with forced mergers by government and voluntary agreement. More private for-profit providers and segregation between research and teaching; research an elite function. Companies offering more in-house training. Demographic issues mean smaller pool of younger students; students seek cheapest option and universities request older students seeking continuing education.	MI	DE
18					61	Grand Design of the Visible Hand	Government takes responsibility for universities to ensure creation, dissemination and exploitation of knowledge is taken from market hands. Higher government funding but tighter control. Some universities closed due to bankruptcy. Three tier university system: Super Six, Grand Universities, Private universities, but small differences in missions.	TI	DI

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Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
19	Inayatullah 2012	Universities in general	2050	Globalisation, virtualisation, democratisation (peer to peer), ways of knowing	62	Wikipedia University	Universities 'flatten' – structures and teaching – the return of medieval Bologna; national accreditation reduces – flatter global universities – Wikipedia University. Elite professors exist, functional hierarchies in universities. Student fees generate income, attracted by star professors. Apps developed ensure spread of WU, with new technologies enabling immersive experiences for students. Traditional universities still exist but are the dinosaurs – can't adapt, still see themselves as experts, and ignore changing society.	MI	CO
19					63	Core-periphery reversed	Focus shifts to Asia, research leads to innovation and creative outcomes (patents). Asian students stay home rather than pay high fees in the West, and eventually Western students join them. Asia becomes education powerhouse, develops Asian 'Bologna'. Rote learning replaced by diverse learning styles. Elite Western professors move to Asia. A Western brain drain follows, but belief in their system means the West reacts too late – Asian universities buy out Western universities in their countries.	TI	DE
19					64	Incremental managerialism – business as usual	Incremental change in the university in response to rise of Asia, impact of technology and global delivery, shifting demographics and need for environmental sustainability. But nothing much changes. Three zones emerge: (i) elite universities with historical brand recognition still attract thought leaders and high fees, education is part of civil society, a 'human right' (ii) mass education, increasingly Asia based, lifelong learning allows Western universities to grow; and (iii) experimentation – niche universities, spaces for new entrants because of technological/economic disruptions and value shifts. Some experiments move to mass market while others stay on the periphery.	MI	CO
21	van Geffen, Niewczas & Bykowska 2013	European universities	Not stated	Social framework (capitalist or humanist), open or closed educational framework (curriculum is academic or student led)	65	The Auto Factory	Not much has changed. Hierarchical structure, top down fiats, no input by students, so curriculum may be inappropriate. Access is open, but students used like raw materials. Public funding (?) Growing dissatisfaction of students and industry.	MI	CO
21					66	The Castle	There have been budget cuts, learning is commodified. Many middle-class people are now unable to access education and are forced to choose other options. The only group that can afford full-time HE are the wealthy. Significant percentages of young people decide to find jobs in the hope that their company will provide them with funds for further education, but only some are successful. This creates demand for other providers. Global and increased mobility have created opportunities for students.	MI	DI

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
21					67	The Fancy Salad Bar	Funding for university comes from the private sector. Access is restricted to the elite; study abroad is common, and brain drain occurs. Striving for excellence underpins learning, leading to competition between students. Students have greater role in designing curriculum, they are prosumers with influence. The consumer is also the manufacturer.	MI	DI
21					68	The Central Park	This university is characterised by open curriculum, access, and inclusion. The university serves social interests and responds appropriately to social needs. Cooperation between students, faculty and administration is high. Funding is public, government is hands off with curriculum and administration but both government and society influence universities.	RI	CO
22	Inayatullah 2012	Malaysian universities	2025	Globalisation, technology	69	Preferred: Industry based university	Research-led university, industry-funded research, produces industry-ready students, win-win situation.	MI	CO
22					70	Integrated: Industry-community based university	Global recognition, university within industry supporting community needs; university grows together with community; café in the library.	RI	DI
22					71	Disowned: Community needs	Community is ignored (focus of universities is elsewhere); lack of support/funding from government and industry, university does not solve community problems; you can't have the cake and eat it too.	MI	DE
22					72	Outlier: Back to the ivory tower	Universities continue but the best students do not enrol; knowledge is neither community nor industry based. University no longer relevant and new actors enter the market – Google, for example.	TI	DE
23	Alexander 2014	American university	2024	Digital technology – online learning etc.	73	Two cultures	Some institutions are operating wholly online, brick & mortar institutions traditional only at first glance, rely on hybrid approaches to learning/research, each institution is unique, residential education remains but market small, hands on learning. Online learning effective & popular because of inherent flexibility for admission and completion, they have lower costs and fees are less. Both have unbundled some services, claim to be learner centred, and offer personalised learning. Both share classes.	MI	CO
23					74	Renaissance	Universities use digital storytelling, social media and computer gaming for creativity and sharing on a global basis, the three 'legs' shape curriculum and life. Computing is ubiquitous – mobile devices are the norm, digital focus in curriculum and career services.	MI	DI
23					75	Health Care Nation	Medical industry employs most students, generates 40% of GDP. Universities focus on academic programs for medical fields. Structures and roles are redesigned to deliver them. Technological	MI	DI

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
							support is strong, and campuses share space with hospitals and clinics.		
24	Drucker 2014	Not specified	Not stated	Not specified but primarily technology.	76	The university as a fully integrated and distributed platform	The university is a fully integrated and distributed platform, socially networked, a mode of production and review, research, and assessment, serving broad communities by providing expertise, training in specific domains, and techniques for designing knowledge. Production of knowledge invites sustained play; universities offer totally immersive experiences (p.328).	RI	TR
25	Blass & Hayward 2015	Universities in General	2025	Need to innovate (innovation main focus), knowledge economy policies, shifts in defining the public good	77	The public academic champions the MOOC	MOOCS dominate learning delivery, companies offer online learning, students focused on value, public academic intellectual (PAI) emerges – uses knowledge from the web, face to face enrolments dropping, new centralised national accreditation body controls enrolment in PAI courses, assessment and certification, universities that survive collaborate, headhunt celebrities to promote MOOCs, publication of ideas is instantaneous, public not peer review.	MI	DI
25					78	Leading knowledge creation	Smaller university sector, undergraduate training is industry based, mainly part-time students. A few niche universities survive as 'castles on the hill' and offer traditional full-time courses (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral) experience for those who can afford it. Everyone else takes vocational learning. Academics are highly privileged, trained and work within the university, doing cutting-edge theoretical research on social problems, new roles to broker knowledge transfer to outside world – highly privileged positions. Largely government funded, University seeks disruptive and transformational innovation.	RI	DI
25					79	Collaborative partners for local sustainability	Regional universities dominate, provide education to anyone. Regional identity subsumes individual university brands, competition between regions, universities become mutually dependent, academic has lower status, less specialised. Knowledge shared widely. Regional networks focused on innovation for a sustainable society, high focus on environment. Becomes embedded in regions and serves knowledge and research needs of industry, public sector, and community groups	MI	DI
25					80	Innovation think tanks for hire	Value of degree has diminished. Employment more important than a degree. Student debt a real concern. Universities shrinking offerings, closures and merging with industry becoming more common. University education now offered in industry, corporate organisations, government departments and professional associations, all of which employed academics as thought leaders, research is published on web, knowledge/skill base more important for academics than a PhD.	MI	DE

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
26	Staley 2019	Universities in general	Not stated	Not specified	81	Platform University	A social platform that facilitates interaction between people; agnostic about the nature of those interactions (e.g. the Athenian agora). Does not have overarching administrative hierarchy so is organised & managed organically, has an amorphous form, decisions arrived via unregulated interactions of teachers & staff. Provides teachers with a place to profess; students find professors to meet their learning needs. No formal admissions processes, students free to come & go; no tenured staff; protocols based on shared values; can change academic focus as needed depending on student needs & teachers available.	RI	TR
26					82	MicroCollege	There are thousands of small microcolleges established by single professors in a wide range of settings from rural farmhouses to cities, with location shaping its teaching and research foundations. Some are located in existing institutions like libraries. The academic focus is a manifestation of the mind and personality of the professor who are accredited by a regional authority. The community work together on research projects, students work at their own pace & peer learning using a mixture of delivery methods – online, lectures, tutorials, peer mentoring.	DI	TR
26					83	Humanities Think Tank	Staffed and led by scholars from humanities disciplines – they ask questions of interest to wider public and contribute to public discussion – knowledge is intended to influence policy making – its audience is a specific public – and produce change in the world.	RI	CO
26					84	Nomad University	A university not grounded in a specific site, shifting locations around the world from course to course, from year to year in a series of gap-year experiences – students experience a series of 8-10 year courses as the university experience. Students work on a site under the guidance of a faculty member for 8-10 months, and then disperse to other sites.	MI	DI
26					85	Liberal Arts College	Centred on skills rather than subjects, concentrating on what's necessary to participate in the modern economy. Curriculum based on problem solving, sense-making, making, imagination, multimodal communication, cross-cultural competency, and leadership. Students are placed in apprenticeships to develop each skill and often gain employment in these organisations.	RI	CO
26					86	Interface University	Based on the idea that future of cognition will be a mixture of AI and human intelligence. Humans and machines work together to do things neither could do alone. All students learn to partner with algorithms and how to think with computers, using them as an extension of human cognition.	DI	TR

Item #	Author & Year	Context	Time Horizon	Changes	Scen. #	Title	Future University	Idea	AT
26					87	The University of the Body	Exists in a world of external media, information has moved off electronic screens and into surrounding environment. Symbols and information in this work come to us via all our senses such as distinct smells or skin sensations. The university builds literacy skills in students so they can decode and compose in a world of external media.	DI	TR
26					88	Institute for Advanced Play	Generates new and novel knowledge, imagination is valued more than knowledge. Play is regarded as a sophisticated cognitive activity, where adults can engage in serious play, where unplanned and unexpected insights are the results.	RI	TR
26					89	Polymath University	Offers majors in three disciplines – students have to demonstrate mastery of all three – science, arts or humanities and a professional area. Innovative and creative ideas emerge at the boundaries between different fields, and students learn to negotiate those boundaries.	RI	CO
26					90	Future University	Students live in the future, visualising it in order to better design and build that future. Theoretical and applied futuring is undertaken, so that change can be anticipated.	RI	TR
27	St. Amour 2020	Universities in general	Not stated	Technology, university structures, student preferences, credentials	91	Future of the Academy	Groups develop around problems not departments, building academic communities, focus on developing minds, academics create curricula as opposed to following central mandates like student centred learning, students design major around an idea, technology is an enabler. The focus is on developing meaning through discussion and protecting the academy is paramount, not the university.	RI	CO

Appendix 5: List of Publications & Presentations

A5.1 Publications

Conway, M 2020. 'Contested Ideas and possible futures for the university', *On the Horizon*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 22-32.

A5.2 Conference Presentations

Anticipation 2017 Conference: presentation on the futures conversations framework developed for the research, November 2017, London

Anticipation 2019 Conference: presentation on the research with a focus on new ways of engaging with the future, October 2019, Oslo

UNESCO Global Futures Literacy Design Forum: workshop with a focus on the four contested ideas of the university, December 2019, Paris

Association for Tertiary Education Management Admissions Conference: Keynote presentation [Virtual] on possible futures for the university and the admissions office, August 2020, Melbourne

A5.3 Other Presentations

W Futurismo (Brazil), Masterclass [Virtual]: Many Perspectives, Many Universities, September 2020, Melbourne

Think Beyond (New Zealand), Presentation [Virtual]: A Causal Layered Analysis of the Ideas and their Possible Futures, September 2020, Melbourne

Appendix 6: Field Testing the Futures Conversation Framework

Chapter 8 defined a new futures conversation framework which can be used by people in universities to expand and deepen their understanding of possible futures available to the university. This appendix details how that framework was 'field tested' throughout the research. All presentations detailed in this appendix will be provided upon request.

The framework in an early form was presented at the **Anticipation 2017 Conference** as part of a panel presentation on Human Centred Futures, and at the **Anticipation Conference 2019** as part of a broader presentation on the research. Feedback at both conferences was informal and general in nature, although comments at the 2019 Anticipation Conference about the importance of the university's history prior to 1800 resulted in Section 5.3.2 – A Nod to the Past – being written.

A two-hour workshop was held at the **UNESCO Global Futures Literacy Design Forum** in December 2019 where participants were first introduced to the ideas and then asked to self-identify with one idea. Notably, all participants chose either the Reframed or Dismissive Ideas – which suggests that the universities of the past and present are not considered as fit-for-purpose. Two groups were then formed to discuss the future of the university grounded in each of the two ideas, before rearranging the groups to have a mixture of the two ideas – in these latter groups, people holding a particular idea had to argue for their ideas assumed future for the university. Feedback was informal and part of a final reflection session on the workshop; comments were generally positive. Notably too, there were two people in each of the latter groups who had great difficulty accepting the Dismissive Idea and the idea that a university may not exist – an example of varying degrees of cognitive openness to future.

During 2020, aspects of the framework has been presented virtually to the following groups:

- The **Association for Tertiary Education Admission Conference** where a question was posed – does the university of the future need an Admissions Office? – with participants asked to explore how admissions might be conducted in a university implied in the archetypal futures generated by the ideas;

- **Thinking Beyond**, a New Zealand futures company, which was mentoring a group of students enrolled in an online futures studies course run by Metafuture; here the four ideas were presented in a Causal Layered Analysis framework which the students were studying at the time; and

- **W Futurismo**, a Brazilian futures company that ran a Masterclass on the university's possible futures; here the four ideas and possible futures were introduced, with the questions posited in Chapter 8 used to indicate the type of thinking needed when considering university futures.

These presentations were designed to share new ways to think about the university's futures in time constrained situations, and there was no structured process for gathering feedback. As an indication, however, the following comments were received via email from two hosts:

Thinking Beyond: "Thanks so much for sharing your thoughts so generously with us last week. The Futures 101 group was buzzing and really gained a lot from your session."

W Futurismo: "Amazing class".

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