Wilderness or Working Forest?
British Columbia Forest Policy
Debate in the Vancouver Sun, 1991-2003

by

Mark Christopher John Stoddart
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In this thesis, I use discourse analysis as a tool for examining four distinct environmental policy debates, as they have been represented in the *Vancouver Sun*. I examine the Protected Areas Strategy and the Forest Practices Code, which were introduced by the New Democratic Party government (1991-2001). I also examine the Working Forest and the Results-based Forest Practices Code, which were introduced by the Liberal government (2001-present). Drawing on Gramscian and Foucauldian theory, I argue that the network of power/knowledge constructed by the *Vancouver Sun* limits debate over environmental policy to the hegemonic alternatives of “ecomanagerialism” and “eco-capitalism.” This network of power/knowledge is constructed from three major organizational standpoints: government, industry and environmentalists. The voices of First Nations and labour are marginalized from the media construction of reality, as are environmental discourses that present a radical alternative to the ecological and social justice impacts of the “treadmill of production.”
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Mary Gertrude Euphemia Stoddart (1911-2003), in memoriam. She was a strong spirit. We were lucky to have her for so long.
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

If the consciousness of men [sic] does not determine their existence, neither does their material existence determine their consciousness. Between consciousness and existence stand communications . . . (Mills 1951, 332-333).

Framing the Problem

The news media are an integral part of our communication system. By repeatedly telling us who and what are important to think about, the media help construct our perceptions of the social world beyond the borders of our daily lives (Tuchman 1978). As such, the media are an important force in the creation and maintenance of hegemony, the broad consent of the public for systems of political and economic domination and subordination (Gramsci 1971; Gitlin 1980). Through the news, speakers from government, industry and other “important” news sources work to structure the social world beyond our daily experience. This textual reality consistently privileges a selective group of media sources, while marginalizing countless other voices from public debate. As such, news “offers a perpetual articulation of how society is socially stratified in terms of possession and use of knowledge” (Ericson, Baranek & Chan 1989, 3). In short, a sociological analysis of the news media is important because the discursive reality created by the news is linked both to the maintenance of hegemony and to struggles to transform the political, ideological and economic structures of society (Fairclough & Wodak 1997). As Gaye Tuchman writes, “It seems trite to observe that knowledge is
power. Yet that rationalist dictum is both a tenet of our society and a ruling premise of newswork” (Tuchman 1978, 215).

The media have been central to the social construction of environmental conflict and environmental policy debate. Through the media activism of environmentalists, deforestation, global warming, and recycling have become social problems that cannot be ignored by the state or capital (Hannigan 1995). The media construction of environmental conflict can serve to bring environmental problems and conflict to public attention, or to enlarge the ideological impact of environmental groups. Simultaneously, the media can construct a textual reality that constrains the political impact of the environmental movement. If we wish to understand how environmentalism, environmental conflict, or environmental policy are constructed and disputed, then the news media should be treated as a key site for sociological research.

In the case of British Columbia, forestry conflict has been a lynch-pin of the environmental movement. As George Hoberg writes:

Forests are an essential part of the heritage and identity of British Columbians, and forest policy has long been central to BC politics. In the past several decades, forest policy has become increasingly controversial, and in the early 1990s the issue erupted into one of the most dominant concerns of government (Hoberg 1996, 272).

Beginning from the centrality of forestry conflict, I have examined how the Vancouver Sun has framed parks and forestry legislation, under both the present Liberal government (2001-present) and the previous NDP government (1991-2001). In 1991, the NDP introduced their “Protected Areas Strategy,” whereby twelve per cent of the provincial
land-base was protected as parkland. During their time in power, the NDP also introduced the Forest Practices Code, which increased the regulation of logging on crown land. While there are ecological critiques of both of these policies, they did place meaningful restrictions on the power of resource corporations over provincial forestry resources (M'Gonigle 2000; Wilson 2001; Hoberg 2001b).

By contrast, the Liberal Party has introduced a “results-based” Forest Practices Code, which has created more space for “self-monitoring” by the forest industry. The Liberal government has also introduced plans for “Working Forest” legislation. In a sense, this legislation is the inverse of the Protected Areas Strategy. When implemented, the Working Forest will define forestry as the primary use of all forested Crown land not currently in parks or other protected areas. Originally, the Liberals had planned to initiate the Working Forest in early 2003. However, it was not until October 2003 that the government passed Bill 46, which enables cabinet to bring the Working Forest into law. The Western Canada Wilderness Committee predicts that the Working Forest will not actually be legislated until June 2004 (Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003a). This legislation has severe implications for the status of Crown land in British Columbia. According to the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, the Working Forest legislation makes resource extraction the priority use of crown land and precludes the possibility of creating new protected areas, or protecting watersheds for domestic water use (Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003b). Between the two different policy initiatives, the Liberal government appears to be working towards re-inscribing the control of forestry capital over forest resources.
Overview of the Method

In attempting a paired case study of four distinct environmental policies, initiated under two substantially different provincial governments, I have drawn upon an approach to media analysis used by Herman and Chomsky, although I have not used their methodology (Herman & Chomsky 1988). Instead, I have used a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis. Adopting Foucault's notion of "archaeology," this approach to discourse analysis seeks to chronicle the dominant discourses of a set of texts. It attempts to illuminate how these discourses are mobilized and articulated with each other to form a network of power/knowledge (Foucault 1972; Foucault 1980b; Prior 1997). Through the production and dissemination of discourses, networks of social power are formed, maintained and transformed.

Such a qualitative approach to textual analysis focuses on the latent content of the text, rather than its manifest content. As Babbie notes, manifest content is the "visible, surface content" of a text (Babbie 1995, 312). Manifest content tends to be the subject of quantitative content analysis (Berelson 1971). By contrast, latent content is the "underlying meaning" of textual communication (Babbie 1995, 312). For the purpose of this project, I am less concerned with counting the number of times certain words or phrases appear and am more interested in the meaning embedded in news texts.1

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1 Originally, I had planned to use a mixed-method approach to this project. In the original research design, my primary method was discourse analysis. This was complemented by a simple form of content analysis, in which I coded news sources according to organizational affiliation and gender. I did carry out the content analysis portion of the research. However, due to my own misgivings about the validity and reliability of the results, I have removed the content analysis portion from the main body of the thesis. A description of the content analysis method, results and my own qualifications is included as Appendix II.
Within this approach to textual analysis, the world of the text may be studied as an entity in itself, distinct from the social processes of production and audience reception which go into creating and reading the news. Through an archaeological approach, questions about the production and audience receptivity of texts are bracketed in favour of an exclusive focus on the text. As Prior writes, using this method "we are free to focus on such issues as the rules concerning what can and cannot be thought, the ways in which knowledge can be represented . . . and the rules concerning who is, and who is not entitled to pronounce on the nature of a given phenomenon" (Prior 1997, 77). The choice to focus on the text does not mean that I do not consider other aspects of media analysis unimportant. There are other points of entry into media research that are equally valid, including: the ownership of media, the social processes of news production, and audience receptivity. Ideally, I would have combined textual analysis with interactive research, such as interviews or focus groups, involving news-workers or audience members. Textual analysis allowed me to easily gather and analyze a large set of texts, drawn from over a decade in time. Working as a single researcher with limited resources and time, I was able to get deeper into my subject than if I had attempted to examine the media construction of environmental policy debate through a more interactive research method.

For this study, I have analyzed four separate sets of texts, which focus on specific policy initiatives. Approximately twenty texts were selected for each of the following areas: the NDP protected areas strategy; the NDP Forest Practices Code; the Liberals' Working Forest; and the Liberal Results-based Code. All of the texts were gathered

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2 A complete list of all of the newspaper texts used in this thesis is included as Appendix I.
using key-word searches of the Canadian NewsDisc and Canadian Newsstand electronic databases. For the NDP texts, I gathered texts from the period 1991 to May of 2001. For the Liberal texts, I gathered texts from May 2001 to July 2003. The texts were gathered and coded during the spring and summer of 2003. Coding was done using N6, a computerized software package for qualitative analysis.

Key Findings

Using a theoretical lens derived primarily from Gramsci and Foucault, I would argue that the Vancouver Sun participates in hegemonic practices, not in the crude sense of favouring one political party over another, suppressing dissent, or dictating a “dominant ideology” to news readers. Rather, the Sun encourages uncritical thought about environmental policy debate.

In the NDP years, the news texts construct a government which tries to adopt a middle-ground role as mediator between the two “sides” of the conflict between the forest industry and environmentalists over the status of provincial forests. Under the Liberals, the government is depicted as more explicitly aligned with industry against an environmental standpoint. However, throughout the all four of the textual “archives” examined here, the two sides of the debate are contained within the limits of “eco-managerialism” and “eco-capitalism.” According to Timothy Luke, eco-managerialism takes as its guiding mission the “redefining and then administering the earth as ‘natural resources’” (Luke 1999, 104). Here, the government and environmental science work to transform non-human nature into the “terrestrial infrastructure for global capital” (106). While eco-managerialism implies a more active role for the state, eco-capitalism
emphasizes the importance of "the market" as a tool for solving "even the most serious manifestations of ecological crisis" (Adkin 1998, 318). While eco-managerialism emphasizes the bureaucratic rationalization of nature, eco-capitalism offers "green enterprises, green marketing, green consumerism, and environmental consulting" as solutions to environmental problems (318).

Eco-managerialism and eco-capitalism are forms of environmentalism that are quite compatible with the preservation of the liberal democratic state and with the interests of large-scale forestry capital. This is the environmentalism of "managed scarcity": limited ecological reforms that mitigate against the worst environmental degradation while leaving underlying structures of capitalist production and social inequality untouched (Schnaiberg 1980; Gould, Weinberg & Schnaiberg 1993). By contrast, discourses that seek to radically transform both the anti-ecological logic and the persistent social inequalities of modern capitalism are generally absent from the news discourse. In reading the Sun, we see how a textual network of power/knowledge is created that maintains the hegemony of capitalism as an economic structure and consumerism as a social value. In Gramscian terms, the Sun privileges an environmentalism that is easily contained by the "provisional gains" that characterize "passive revolution" (Carroll & Ratner 1999).

Through the Vancouver Sun's selection of sources and repeated use of dominant discourses, a web of power/knowledge is constructed that helps define the meaning of environmental policy debate for those who cannot learn about it through first-hand experience. In the Sun, there are only a few official positions that allow entrée into public debate. Environmental policy news is dominated by government (whether the
NDP or the Liberal party); environmentalists (from more "mainstream" organizations); and industry. These are the organizational identities which give media sources the power to define social reality. Environmentalists speaking from deep ecology, ecofeminist, or social ecology standpoints are rendered silent. Likewise, while forestry workers and First Nations people may be talked about, they rarely appear in news texts to speak for themselves. The result is that debate over the meaning of environmental policy is narrowed. A range of options is rendered invisible through the silencing of the multitude of voices who do not gain access to the news construction of reality. These patterns of invisibility contribute to the hegemonic role of the Sun as much as anything contained within the texts. Foucault writes of the need for genealogical analysis of texts, of the need to resurrect subjugated discourses (Foucault 1980b). There are many voices, many discourses, which are subjugated in the media construction of environmentalism. Their genealogical insurrection would be a key element of a truly counter-hegemonic environmental discourse.

Prior Research on Mass Media and the Environment

Before concluding this chapter, I wish to locate this research project within the existing literature on environmental discourse and the media. Several authors have examined forestry conflict and the media in British Columbia. For example, Doyle, Elliott and Tindall use Goffman’s notion of “frame analysis” to examine the attempts of the Forest Alliance, a forest industry front group, to produce a hegemonic discourse through the mass media (Doyle, Elliott, & Tindall 1997). The authors note the failure of the Forest Alliance to construct such a hegemony, writing that the “Alliance’s role as a
mouthpiece for the forest companies...[was] quite transparent” (Doyle, Elliott & Tindall 1997, 263). Despite its role as a proxy for capital, the Forest Alliance has been unable to substantially influence media framing of environmental conflict in British Columbia. At the same time, the authors conclude that the dominant news frame of forestry conflict tends to “focus on spectacle,” thereby simplifying debate and translating it into a “trees versus jobs” frame (265). By simplifying forestry debate for media audiences, the media “may inhibit the complex discourse needed to displace the ‘common sense’ of trees versus jobs” (266). The invocation of the “trees versus jobs” discourse works against the formation of alliances between environmentalists and forest industry workers. It also mystifies the role of forestry capital as the object of environmental activism.

In The Missing News: Filters and Blind Spots in Canada’s Press, the authors also examine the media coverage of environmental issues in British Columbia (Hackett, Gruneau, Gutstein, Gibson, & NewsWatch Canada 2000). Like Doyle, Elliot and Tindall, the authors note that news coverage of forestry conflict in BC is dominated by a simplistic, dichotomous “loggers” versus “environmentalists” frame, which silences alternative voices (Hackett et al. 2000, 170). Furthermore, the authors argue that while dramatic environmental events (such as forestry protests) do receive a great quantity of coverage, the media tends to ignore the “systematic and ongoing connections between global environmental degradation and the ordinary every-day workings of the economy, including the pursuit of corporate profit and the promotion of consumerism and materialism as the path to personal fulfillment” (Hackett et al 2000, 169).
Arvai and Mascarenhas also examine the media framing of the environmental movement in British Columbia (Arvai & Mascarenhas 2001). Using the quantitative approach of Content Analysis, the authors examine the hypotheses that environmental news coverage has declined and that media framing of environmentalism has become increasingly negative. This research question arises from the decreasing public support for environmentalism shown in opinion polls published from 1993 to 1997. Taking the years of 1993 and 1997 as their sample frame, the authors examine the amount of coverage given to the environmental movement in the *Vancouver Sun*. The authors find no support either for the hypothesis that environmental coverage has declined, nor for the claim that environmentalism has become subject to increasingly negative framing. Instead, they note the increase in articles with a pro-forestry frame, which they attribute to the work of the Forest Alliance and the success of the NDP at creating forestry-reform policy (Arvai & Mascarenhas 2001, 713).

While not concerned explicitly with the media, Lorna Stefanick offers an interesting look at the discursive construction of environmental conflict in the case of Clayoquot Sound, the archetypal example of forestry conflict in British Columbia (Stefanick 2001). Like Doyle, Elliott and Tindall, Stefanick draws on the concept of framing to describe forestry conflict. For Stefanick, this conflict is defined by two competing ideological frames. The “forest harvest” frame is promoted by forestry corporations and their allies. It is grounded in a belief in the value of “free market economic theory” and “neoconservative thought” (Stefanick 2001, 47). According to this frame, environmental resources exist primarily for human economic development; they are a means to “maximize self interest,” which is defined as a basic element of “human
nature" (47). The conservation frame, by contrast, focuses on the inherent value of "biodiversity, wildlife and wilderness, forever" (Wilderness Committee qtd Stefanick 58).

Remaining on the topic of environmentalism in British Columbia, Schreiber, Matthews and Elliot provide a fascinating analysis of public discourse about the salmon farming industry in B.C. (Schreiber, Matthews, & Elliot 2003). Drawing on a Gramscian theoretical framework, the authors describe hegemonies as the underlying common-sense social norms and values that both salmon farming proponents and critics must rely on to engage in meaningful public discourse. As a result, both proponents and critics of fish farming mobilize dominant discourses of "economic efficiency," "technology" and the "product" to translate salmon-as-nature into salmon as a social-nature hybrid. Thus, "environmentalists and salmon farmers alike are hegemonized into framing aquaculture in ways that tap into certain bodies of common-sensical knowledge, particularly those relating to rationality and the importance of efficiency, production and technology" (Schreiber, Matthews, & Elliott 2003, 165). The result is that "nature" is constructed using these hegemonies, rather than understood "directly, as a distinct entity" (165). That is, through public discourse, salmon are constructed as a signifier in public discourse about salmon farming.

David Ralph Matthews also examines environmental conflict over fish as an ecological resource (Matthews 1996). In a 1996 paper, he analyses the Canadian government's use of ecological discourse to legitimize its "turbot war" against Spain. Matthews' analysis is based on textual analysis from several different newspapers,
Maclean's magazine, and the federal Hansard. Matthews concludes that the Canadian state has mobilized discourses of ecological risk and species preservation to provide moral grounding to a legally questionable action: the seizure of a Spanish fishing ship outside national jurisdiction. Here, ecological discourse is articulated with government action to ground claims about national sovereignty over ecological resources. One of the limitations of this article (for my own purposes) is that media are used as a resource, rather than a topic for research in its own right. That is, Matthews draws on the media as a data source, to explore how the government mobilizes ecological discourses to legitimize its actions. However, he does not problematize the media as a site of social interaction; he does not ask how media texts work to reinforce or challenge government's attempts at constructing ecological legitimacy.

Two different quantitative studies have examined media constructions of the nuclear power debate. Michael Clow did a content analysis of four Canadian daily newspapers, examining patterns of over-representation and under-representation in the nuclear power debate over the period from 1973 to 1983 (Clow 1992). From this study, Clow concludes that the media is marked by "a vulgar version of elite pluralism," wherein nuclear power stories are dominated by government and industry sources, while anti-nuclear news sources appear much less frequently (Clow 1992, 170). In conclusion, Clow claims that by marginalizing critics of nuclear power, "newspapers posed a number of significant obstacles to efforts by the anti-nuclear movement to stimulate social and political change" (171). Therefore, Clow's study provides a picture of the news as an essentially hegemonic institution, concerned with maintaining existing structures of power.
In an earlier study of nuclear power debate in America, Gamson and Modigliani undertook a content analysis of print and electronic news stories on nuclear power (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Drawing on Goffman’s notion of frame analysis, the authors coded the texts for their dominant themes. One of the findings is especially relevant here; the claim that news texts generally dichotomized debate about nuclear power. A complex array of discourses critical of nuclear power tend to be simplified into a single oppositional discourse (Gamson & Modigliani 1989, 30). Thus, a range of critical discourses may be marginalized, while the news media maintain a semblance of “balance.” This conclusion is consistent with the analyses forestry issues discussed above.

Finally, I would like to discuss Andrew Szasz’s book, EcoPopulism. In this book, Szasz dedicates a chapter to a discussion of the way in which the media coverage of Love Canal and other hazardous waste protests was used to turn toxic waste into an environmental public issue (Szasz 1994). For Szasz, the news media can be used as a tool by environmental movement groups to galvanize public opinion, to police corporate behaviour and to spur politicians into action. For Szasz, an essential part of the successful creation of a public issue out of toxic waste lies in the creation of a media icon. Furthermore, such an icon must suitable to the structure of modern media. While the politics of iconography can raise public awareness and concern about environmental problems, it can also produce a form of public concern that is shallow and short-lived (Szasz 1994, 63-64).

The importance of the news media as a resource for environmental activism is a theme echoed by Krajnc in her essay on environmentalism’s tactics of “political education” (Krajnc 2000). Elsewhere, Gamson and
From this cursory review of the literature, we get an image of the media in which coverage of environmental issues constructs a reality that tends to simplify environmental debate. In British Columbia, forestry debate is simplified into the dichotomy between "environmentalists" and "loggers"; between a "harvest frame" and a "conservation frame." A similar process of simplification is noted in Gamson and Modigliani's study of nuclear power. As I shall demonstrate, the results of my own research are consistent with the notion that the media tend to simplify environmental debate.

There appears to be less consensus within the literature on the degree to which the media constructs a hegemonic textual reality about environmental issues. Most of the works reviewed here claim that environmental voices may be marginalized, or may be presented in a simplistic manner. However, Szasz argues that the news media are a resource for environmental movement mobilization and outreach. Similarly, Arvai and Mascarenhas find no support for the claim that the B.C. environmental movement is subject to particularly negative framing. My own research shows that environmentalists are important participants in the news construction of forest policy debate in British Columbia. As such, the news appears to be an important resource for environmentalists. However, the range of possible environmental discourses is certainly narrowed. Moreover, the environmentalism which is represented in the media is easily articulated with the structures of a capitalist economy and the politics of parliamentary democracy.

Wolfsfeld describe the relationship between social movements and the mass media as one of "asymmetrical dependency" (Gamson & Wolfsfeld 1993). According to the authors, the mass media and social movements engage in a symbiotic relationship, where each needs the other. Social movements depend on media access to mobilize public support, validate their own work through public recognition, and enlarge the scope of social movement conflict. At the same time, social movements provide dramatic and visual content for the media. However, as there are other news sources who can fill this need, the media have more power than social movement groups in this relationship.
Layout of the Thesis

To conclude this chapter, I will outline the remainder of this thesis. In the next chapter, I will provide an overview of the main organizational actors who are involved in forestry and parks policy debate in British Columbia. I will provide an introduction to the BC environmental movement; the provincial NDP and Liberal parties; the forest industry and forestry unions in British Columbia; and B.C. First Nations. I will also attempt to provide some background information on the Vancouver Sun, which is the site of this research project. This chapter will serve to contextualize my research.

In the third chapter, I will develop the theoretical lens that will be used in my data analysis and discussion. I will attempt to bring several disparate theoretical strands into dialogue with each other. I will develop a theoretical lens based primarily on the “Gramsci-Foucault nexus,” but which is also informed by theoretical work in environmental sociology. The Gramsci-Foucault nexus is a useful theoretical lens for moving beyond the tension between critical and postmodern theory in media sociology, and beyond the political ecology-environmental constructivism dichotomy in environmental sociology. In conclusion, I will explore several points of tension inherent in the Gramsci-Foucault nexus.

In the fourth chapter, I will review the methodology used in this project. I will engage in a detailed discussion of Foucauldian discourse analysis and its key concepts of “archaeology” and “genealogy.” I will also examine the benefits and limitations of textual analysis for media research, in comparison with more interactive forms of
qualitative research. In this chapter, I will also engage in a process of self-reflection about the research method, the research process and my standpoint as a researcher.

The fifth chapter will present the results of my research. First, I will discuss the texts dealing with the NDP Protected Areas Strategy. This will be followed by a discussion of the Liberal Working Forest initiative. Third, I will discuss the NDP Forest Practices Code. Finally, I will then examine the Liberals' Results-based Code.

In the final chapter, I will synthesize the results from all four groups of texts. I will also theorize the results, drawing on the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 3. I will also discuss the "patterned silences" contained in the Vancouver Sun's construction of environmental policy debate. Following Foucault's call for a genealogical "insurrection of subjugated knowledges," I will illustrate some of the discourses that have been silenced within the textual world of the Sun, including those produced by First Nations, labour, and the more "radical" environmentalisms of deep ecology, eco-feminism and eco-socialism (Foucault 1980b, 81). I will conclude by discussing some of the possibilities for further research that arise from this project.
CHAPTER II: CONTEXT

In this research project, I have examined the Vancouver Sun’s coverage of four distinct environmental policy initiatives. Each of these policy initiatives represents an episode in the continuity of environmental politics in British Columbia. These episodes include: the “Protected Areas Strategy,” introduced in 1991; the Forest Practices Code, introduced in 1995; the “results-based” Forest Practices Code, introduced in 2002; and the “Working Forest,” initiative, which will likely be passed into law in early 2004. The newspaper texts that address these policy debates should be located within a specific social-historical context. In this chapter, I will contextualize my analysis of the Sun’s coverage of environmental policy debate. I will introduce the main organizational actors who appear in the Sun: forestry capital, the British Columbia environmental movement, and the BC NDP and Liberal parties. While British Columbian First Nations and organized labour are often marginalized from the Sun’s environmental policy coverage, they remain important collective actors. These groups will also be introduced in this chapter.

In this chapter, I will also examine the history Vancouver Sun during the period under analysis (1991-2003). I will describe the Sun’s position of dominance in the BC media market and the changes in ownership which have occurred since 1991. It would take more space than is available here to do justice to the task of discussing the history of each of these social groups. Therefore, I will not attempt to present an exhaustive history of any of these groups. Rather, I hope to simply provide an introduction to British Columbia’s key forest policy actors, in order to contextualize my own discourse analysis.
Forestry Capital and Labour

Since the emergence of “British Columbia” as a distinct political entity, forestry has been a central component of the economy. From its origins until the first World War, the forest economy was marked by the co-existence of many small operators and large forestry companies. The forestry of this era was characterized by rapid liquidation; logging companies worked as quickly as possible to log out valleys and make quick money (Marchak 1983, 33). This was a period of “competitive capitalism,” where lumber speculation played a prominent role in the provincial economy (Rajala 1998, xix).

As Marchak writes of the early forest industry: “The history and the folklore of the industry is replete with countless stories of harsh bosses, bad working conditions, a complete lack of regard for the environment or the future forest as small business men competed to fell record quantities of timber” (Marchak 1983, 33). Rajala’s description of this era is similar; he notes that “overproduction, waste, and ruinous competition” were the norm (Rajala 1998, xviii). According to Wilson, this period of competitive capitalism was also characterized by the dominance of a “liquidation discourse,” wherein forests were defined simply as “stockpiles of timber” (Wilson 1998, 13). Here, public debate was concerned only with “the frontier challenges of how to get at this wealth and translate it into benefits for society” (13).

A turning point in the forest industry came with the second World War. In response to agitation from the provincial CCF party for the nationalization of the industry, the provincial government initiated a Royal Commission to examine the sustainability of the forest industry (Marchak 1983, 36). During this period, we see the emergence of a public discourse of “sustained yield,” which Wilson also describes as a
“liquidation-conversion” discourse. Here, we see the increasing prominence of the idea that “forest liquidation practices should be tempered by measures designed to promote conversion to a new, second growth forest,” thereby permitting the logging industry to continue operating in perpetuity (Wilson 1998, 13). However, Rajala notes that sustained yield was largely defined by policy-makers as “continuous clearcutting” matched by the development of “artificial reforestation techniques permitting immediate restocking... with desired species” (Rajala 1998, 168). The result is that the policy changes of the 1940s simply provided “legitimation of existing cutting practice” rather than a substantive move towards sustainability (204). Old growth remained “a source of profit to be swept from the land as cleanly and quickly as modern technologies would permit” (204). Thus, the sustained yield discourse was successfully articulated by the state and capital with an economic shift towards “larger timber holdings and longer-term harvesting rights” (Marchak 1983, 37). The “conservationist” discourse of sustained yield was simply mobilized to facilitate the move from competitive capitalism to increased corporate concentration in the forest industry.4

This pattern of increasing corporate concentration persisted from the 1950s well into the 1970s, with more and more of the forest coming under the control of fewer corporations (Marchak 1983, 54-55). During this period, we see a further change in the dominant discourse of the industry, as “sustained yield” is increasingly challenged by an

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4 This account of the emergence of the “sustained yield” policy of forestry management is disputed by Peter Aylen (1984). Adopting a deterministic Marxist framework, Aylen argues that structural factors prompted the government to reform forestry management in the interest of long-term economic stability. The version of “sustained yield” that was instituted by the government often conflicted with the expressed interests of forestry capital. Furthermore, Aylen argues that “sustained yield” was not responsible for the increasing concentration of the forest industry after the second World War. Instead, he invokes Marx’s model of economic development under capitalism to argue that the emergence of an oligopoly is the inevitable result of corporate concentration (Aylen 1984). While Aylen provides an intriguing counter-point to the work of Marchak, Rajala and Wilson, I believe that his analysis is overly structuralist and simplistic.
oppositional discourse of "multiple use." According to Wilson, multiple use promotes "recognition of forests as sources of recreational and environmental values" (Wilson 1998, 14). While the multiple use discourse was grounded in more of an environmental sensibility than the sustained yield discourse, it did represent a continuation of the "cognitive hegemony of 'resourcism,'" wherein forests resources are viewed solely in terms of their utilitarian value for human communities (15). By contrast, the environmental discourses which emerged in the 1960s and 1970s presented a more radical challenge to the hegemonic project of forestry development which has been characteristic of the political economy of BC.

By the early 1980s, the forest industry in BC could be described as an oligopoly, where the industry was dominated by a small group of corporations. The theme of corporate concentration also characterizes contemporary descriptions of the BC forest industry (Marchak 1995; Wilson 1998). Marchak notes that corporate concentration has been encouraged by the provincial governments of BC, as large corporations are viewed as "more reliable . . . more responsible . . . and more profitable" (Marchak 1983, 30). However, a hidden cost accompanies such a high degree of corporate concentration. Marchak argues that it is very difficult for any government to act against the interests of forestry capital, once it has become such an integral part of the provincial political economy. To attempt to limit the power of forestry capital would "jeopardize the security of communities and workers" (31).

In a similar vein, Rajala describes the state-capital relationship in the Pacific Northwest (British Columbia, Washington and Oregon) as one of provincial "client states" who are too dependent upon the presence of forestry capital to do anything but
“define the public interest in terms of the corporate interest” (Rajala 1998, 84; also see Wilson 1998). As a result, forestry reforms tend to be symbolic, rather than substantial. Finally, Marchak notes that the dominance of a few large corporations within BC’s forest economy represent a form of control over environmental resources based outside of BC. As she notes, “The locus of control for most BC companies is not in British Columbia”; rather, the “social and economic conditions for residents of BC are made in Toronto, Montreal, New York, San Francisco and Tokyo” where forestry shareholders are located (Marchak 1983, 112). Writing about the state of the forest industry in the late 1990s, Burda and Gale describe an industry focused on the production of lumber and pulp, rather than finished products, that is primarily exported to the United States, Europe and Japan (Burda & Gale 1998).

Marchak also offers a useful discussion of the dominant forestry unions in British Columbia. In particular, Marchak focuses on the differences between the International Woodworkers of America (IWA), which is the largest forestry unions in BC, and the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada (PPWC), which originated as a “breakaway” union in the pulp and paper sector. According to Marchak, the IWA has generally been less militant than the PPWC, which has made them the preferred union among forestry management (Marchak 1983, 45-46). The IWA has also supported the concentration of forest resources among an oligopoly of large corporations, asserting that larger companies “are best able to provide workers with job security, high wages and a safe health environment” (61). The IWA stance on corporate concentration has been a point of tension between the union and the New Democratic Party, which has argued that forest resources should be more decentralized.
Marchak also notes that the IWA position on corporate concentration has given the union a shared interest with capital in logging out the province’s forests. Thus, the union has frequently mobilized a jobs discourse to challenge ecological critiques of forestry (Marchak 1983). By contrast, Alexander Simon has documented the willingness of the PPWC to work with Greenpeace and other environmental groups on issues such as raw log exports and the release of toxins into aquatic ecosystems through pulp mill effluent (Simon 2000). Thus, the PPWC appears more willing than the IWA to engage in political activism which links labour and environmental concerns.

While Marchak focuses on the stance of the IWA in relation to the concentration of the forest industry, Rajala is concerned with the role of the IWA in relation to the technological evolution of forestry in British Columbia. Drawing on Marxian theory, Rajala argues that technological change has created a forest industry which has become increasingly factory-like, where “human labour power . . . [has been] cheapened as much as possible, and pushed for all it was worth” (Rajala 1998, 49). Over time, technological change has worked to mechanize and de-skill forestry workers. It has been essential to removing control over the process of production from workers and increasing the power of forestry capital. As part of his analysis of this process, Rajala argues that the IWA has largely failed to challenge the pace of technological change. He concludes that “the corporate search for efficiency in west coast logging achieved remarkable . . . success in subordinating workers and nature to the imperative of capital accumulation” (6).

A central part of the move towards “efficiency” in the forest economy has been the “restructuring” of the industry towards a more “flexible” labour market since the 1980s. Forestry companies have also moved towards contracts with smaller companies
as a source of labour, which has led to a 43 per cent decline in IWA membership from 1980 to 1995 (Marchak 1995, 99). According to Barnes, Hayter and Hay, this shift may be understood as a transition from Fordism to post-Fordism in the BC forest industry. Here, Fordism is characterized by the “mass production” of “standardized products” by a “predominantly male, highly unionized work-force” (Barnes, Hayter & Hay 1999, 782-783). During the Fordist era, the forest industry “featured a dispersed pattern of production sites [and] a set of single-industry communities scattered across the province that were organized around the ‘core’ centre of Vancouver” (783).

By contrast, forestry in the post-Fordist era is characterized by a smaller, specialized workforce, equipped to operate the “new flexible machines” that turn out specialized products, such as “particular kinds and dimensions of lumber for the Japanese construction industry, or ‘hi-brite’ paper for magazines and advertising supplements” (783). This shift towards “flexible mass production” and “flexible specialization” has had resulted in substantial job loss and worker dislocation from resource communities (Hayter & Barnes 1997).

The Environmental Movement in B.C.

While forestry capital has been a central component of the political economy of British Columbia, environmentalism has emerged over the past thirty years as a major political force in the province. In Talk and Log, Jeremy Wilson describes the emergence of environmental values onto the BC political landscape during the 1960s. Wilson writes:
In BC, as across North America, increased leisure time and mobility contributed to a surge in outdoor recreation activity and to increased interest in the environment. Increasing levels of education, affluence, and economic security contributed to the spread of... 'postmaterial' values. These values... translated into shifts in political priorities and behaviour, one manifestation of which was the rapid growth of environmental activism (Wilson 1998, 79).

Early challenges to the "liquidation-conversion project" in forestry were met by the government and industry by the "symbol laden" response of the "sustained yield" discourse, which "became a kind of security blanket for British Columbians," but did not offer any substantial changes in forestry practices (90). Since the emergence of environmentalism in BC, the province's forest resources have remained a central object of social conflict.

Wilson offers an instructive portrait of the modern environmental movement in BC. He describes the diversity of British Columbia environmentalisms, which include "fish and wildlife clubs," naturalists' organizations, outdoor recreation groups, and "environmental advocacy" groups. Wilson further notes that environmental advocacy groups range from "organizations with province-wide, multi-issue perspectives... [to those] with local or regional foci" (Wilson 1998, 43). This diversity may be viewed as a political strength, even though it has often translated into political disunity.

Salazar and Alper also discuss the diversity of environmentalisms in British Columbia (Salazar & Alper 2002). First, "alienated ecocentrism" is characterized by the centrality given to ecological politics and a sense of "alienation from Canadian political economic institutions" (Salazar and Alper 2002, 545). By contrast, "civic
communitarians” show a “commitment to grass-roots and local processes” and are willing to “work with political opponents” (547). Third, “insider preservationists” believe in the power of “private enterprise” and the market to solve environmental problems (549). Finally, “green egalitarians” demonstrate a concern for social justice and ecological health (551). Through this typology, we see that environmental politics in BC has no necessary relationship with a more traditional leftist, class-oriented politics. In fact, the authors argue that an attachment to leftists politics is not nearly as important to environmentally-minded British Columbians as is the broader commitment to an open democratic process as an essential part of environmental politics (Salazar & Alper 1999, 30).

Blake, Guppy and Urmetzer offer a description of environmentalism in BC that contrasts with the previous accounts (Blake, Guppy & Urmetzer 1996-1997). Drawing on survey data, the authors argue that environmental concern is correlated with gender, age and political party affiliation. In brief, women are more interested in environmental values than men; middle-aged British Columbians are more environmentally-concerned than either younger or older people; and those with Green Party or NDP affiliations are more environmentally-concerned than those with other party affiliations. According to the authors, education and income do not correlate with environmental concern.

Wilson also notes that BC environmentalism has been exceptionally “wilderness”-focused (Wilson 1998). The salience of “wilderness” for BC environmentalism is embodied by Clayoquot Sound. The opposition to old-growth logging in this region of Vancouver Island produced the largest mass-arrests in British Columbian history (Gibbons 1994; Hatch 1994). However, while the focus on wilderness
has proven politically appealing, it may also be a limitation. As Wilson writes, “other serious environmental issues, such as those relating to atmospheric pollution, the degradation of wetlands and grasslands, and the quality of the urban environment, have received less attention than they deserve” in British Columbian environmental discourse (Wilson 1998, 49).

The “wilderness” discourse constructed by environmentalists can also work as a colonizing narrative in relation to First Nations people. For example, Willems-Braun argues that BC First Nations have often been enveloped in a field of environmental discourse that perpetuates neocolonial relations. By focusing on questions about the appropriate corporate-state managerialism of forest resources, environmentalist discourse has often left core questions of First Nations sovereignty and claims to land unexamined (Willems-Braun 1997; see also Willems-Braun 1996-1997). Elsewhere, Torgerson argues that environmentalists are not only engaged in the protection of particular wild areas; they also create, perpetuate, and are embedded in particular “constructions of place” (Torgerson 1999). Through an analysis of Clayoquot Sound, Torgerson illustrates how environmentalist constructions of place may unwittingly “colonize” the constructions of place of other groups, such as local First Nations people.

Timothy Luke also problematizes the wilderness focus of the BC environmental movement (Luke 2002). In a study of the Clayoquot Sound conflict, Luke notes that wilderness politics includes a push for an economic shift from “extractive” to “attractive” economic activity, from forestry to eco-tourism (Luke 2002, 92). In the Clayoquot Sound conflict, there is an important point of articulation between environmental politics and
"attractive" economic interests which is not made explicit. Here, the construction of a universalizing ecological discourse renders the interests of attractive business owners invisible from the environmental conflict. Thus, the Clayoquot Sound which is constructed through public environmental conflict becomes an "envirotisement" for ecotourism (102). As Luke writes:

The natural environment of Clayoquot Sound can be preserved, but not purely as such for its own sake. Instead, it is being transformed via deindustrialization into a renaturalized rural postmodernity that coexists with postmodern cities whose residents have certain expectations about the places they visit or occupy (Luke 2002, 108).

Luke's analysis of Clayoquot illuminates an important and under-theorized dimension of environmental conflict, namely that the universalizing, scientific discourses of a wilderness-centred environmentalism may work to mystify the material interests of environmental actors.

In a similar vein, Catriona Sandilands locates the Clayoquot Sound conflict within a postmodern system of "image exchange" that pervades globalizing capitalism (Sandilands 2002, 141). For Sandilands, much of BC wilderness politics is guilty of producing a simulacrum of nature for consumption by the tourist gaze within postmodern capitalism. Through the discursive construction of wilderness, Clayoquot (like other wilderness areas) is simply re-packed for a different form of consumption, without challenging the underlying commodification of nature by capital. Ultimately, Sandilands seeks a rejection of "extractive and wilderness views" in favour of "a more nuanced and reflective stance . . . from all participants in [environmental] conflict" (Sandilands 2002,
The discussion and critique of the environmental movement provides a good picture of both the strengths and limitations of environmentalism in British Columbia.

The State: The NDP and the Liberals

The period under study has seen a dramatic shift in the political life of British Columbia. In 1991, the NDP were able to take advantage of the collapse of the right-wing Social Credit government (the Socreds) and form the provincial government for the first time since the early 1970s. While navigating the tension of being a social democratic party in a capitalist economic system, the NDP remained in power through a decade and three premiers.

Prior to the 1991 election of the NDP under Mike Harcourt, the party articulated a platform that attempted to embrace the concerns of organized labour and environmentalism. Wilson notes that the NDP committed to “pursue the 12 per cent [protected areas] goal, work towards a just and honourable settlement of Aboriginal land claims, and create economic security for forest workers and forest-dependent communities” (Wilson 1998, 263; also New Democratic Party of BC 1990). However, the government largely failed to address the points of tension between these two perspectives.

While the NDP tried to balance the interests of labour, First Nations and environmentalists, the labour-environmental tension within the NDP proved to be a persistent problem. In his memoir, Mike Harcourt boasts of the his government’s success in creating both labour and environmental policy, citing the Labour Accord, the Protected
Areas Strategy and the Forest Practices Code. Still, he is conscious of the tension between the “green” and the union wings of the party. For example, he writes:

What I also know was that Clayoquot could be the issue to split the New Democratic Party. We were already divided between workers and environmentalists . . . and I could see the enviro-rads making hay at the NDP convention coming up in March 1994. It would be a real test of the balanced approach we were taking to eruptive issues (Harcourt & Skene 1996, 112).

Daniel Gawthrop’s book on the Harcourt government also lauds the NDP’s environmental record, with particular emphasis on the creation of new protected areas (Gawthrop 1996). At the same time, Gawthrop describes the environmental-labour tension inherent within the NDP in the 1990s. He writes: “As the New Democrats discovered once in power, the interests of forest workers, environmentalists and First Nations people were not so easy to reconcile,” despite attempts to adopt a role as a mediator in environmental conflict (Gawthrop 1996, 160). The desire to appeal to both labour and environmentalists, without alienating either group became a “special challenge” for the party once it gained power (Harrison 1996, 309).

Wilson also provides a useful discussion of the first-term forestry agenda of the NDP (Wilson 1998). Here, we see that the Protected Areas Strategy, the policy designed to protect twelve per cent of the province as parkland, is included among the NDP’s core environmental policy initiatives. Other key initiatives included public input processes for land use planning, such as the Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE); as well as Forest Renewal BC, a sort of “forest industry Keynesianism” designed to help
workers cope with the fallout from forest industry restructuring (Wilson 1998, 274). Wilson's discussion of the Protected Areas Strategy portrays the Harcourt government's commitment to compromise, public process and the politics of moderate progressivism. At the same time, more sensitive and substantive issues, such as the question of forest tenure reform, were removed from discussion. As Wilson writes, "The Harcourt government chose to concentrate on the moderate reform parts of this platform . . . Tenure reform and community control were left to cool on the back burner" (264). Also, there was a sense that the forest industry would be compensated for the NDP's protected areas agenda, through the creation of areas "designated for high-intensity resource development" (Wilson 2001, 42).

The Forest Practices Code was another keystone in the NDP's agenda for forestry reform. The Forest Practices Code was introduced largely in response to the environmental movement's international campaign against BC forestry practices. The Forest Practices Code did have some real implications for forest practices; however, it also had serious ecological limitations (Hoberg 2001a; Hoberg 2001b). For example, the impact of the code was limited in that it could not result in more than a six per cent decrease in the annual allowable cut (Wilson 1998, 310). Essentially, the code worked as a green legitimation strategy for the state and the forest industry, while introducing limited ecological reforms. In evaluating the Harcourt government's environmental record, Wilson notes that "critics see the Harcourt initiatives as a . . . relegitimatization strategy" for capital (338). While the government did offer "some deep bows in the direction of the ascendant biodiversity discourse," the NDP ultimately left the forest
industry “in a stronger position to pursue the remaining stages of the liquidation project” (338).

The failure of the NDP to substantially challenge the power of large forestry companies is consistent with Sigurdson’s description of the inherent limitations of social democratic politics within a capitalist economy. For Sigurdson, there are structural barriers to what any social democratic party can accomplish. Due to the allocation of economic power within capitalist economic systems, any “bold” challenge to class power “would be electoral suicide” (Sigurdson 1996, 319). As a consequence, “politicians must be able at least to give the impression that their policies are creating employment opportunities and economic prosperity, both of which depend . . . on continued private investment and expansion of production” (319). When weighed against these structural limitations, the Harcourt NDP appears to have done fairly well. For Sigurdson, the NDP did make a difference for the province’s poor, First Nations people and the environment, while juggling the labour-environment tension and facing opposition from capital (Sigurdson 1996).

Several authors have noted the dramatic shift in the NDP which accompanied the ascension of the Glen Clark government in 1996. Both Sigurdson and Wilson describe Clark’s move away from environmentalism and his more explicit alignment with organized labour (Sigurdson 1996; Wilson 1998). During the Clark era, environmentalists struggled to re-focus the Protected Areas Strategy to include the notion of “ecorepresentation,” the inclusion of twelve per cent of each distinct ecosystem, rather than twelve per cent of the overall land base. In moving away from the notion of ecorepresentation, the NDP created a protected areas system in which the economically
marginal alpine tundra ecosystem was over-represented, while economically valuable old-growth ecosystems were under-represented (Wilson 2001, 54-55). In a similar vein, the Clark government revised and relaxed the Forest Practices Code, which alarmed environmentalists. While the forest industry welcomed the preliminary move towards a “results-based” code, environmental groups perceived an attack on “their ability to act as a watchdog on the industry and government” (Hoberg 2001b, 85). Wilson sums up the political shift that characterized the Glen Clark era. He writes, “For environmentalists, the political context after 1996 was discouraging” (Wilson 2001, 49).

In 2001, the Liberal Party assumed power after a provincial election that devastated the NDP, leaving the party with only two representatives in the legislature. Instead of acting as a moderator in environmental conflict, the Liberals have aligned themselves more explicitly with industry. Whereas the NDP produced the Protected Areas Strategy, the Liberals have offered the Working Forest, a policy initiative which defines forestry as the dominant use of all unprotected forested Crown Land. Whereas the NDP attempted to increase the regulation of forestry through the Forest Practices Code, the Liberals have continued the deregulation of the code, started by Glen Clark, through the introduction of their Results-Based Code.

The provincial Liberal Party emerged as the new “free enterprise” party and as a dominant political force following the collapse of the Socreds in the 1991 election (Blake & Carty 1995-1996; Ruff 1996). Liberal policy and discourse is consistent with the major themes of “neo-liberalism” as a political ideology. In general, neo-liberalism may be defined as the ideological corollary of the increasing globalization of the modern capitalist political economy (Gill 1995; Rupert 2000; Teeple 2000; McBride 2001). Neo-
liberalism emerged as an important force in Canadian politics in the 1970s, as an alternative to the post-war Keynesian welfare state (Teeple 2000). Stephen McBride offers a useful definition of neo-liberalism. He writes:

The essential features of neo-liberalism . . . rest in its determination to reduce and alter the role played by the state in human affairs. Instead, neo-liberalism emphasizes market mechanisms and individual rather than collective approaches to solving or handling economic and social problems. Neo-liberalism thus restricts the scope of “politics,” preferring more issues to be settled by individuals themselves or by individuals interacting in the marketplace (McBride 2001,14).

Teeple also outlines several of the overarching themes that define neo-liberalism. These include the following: the primacy of private property rights and the “free market”; economic deregulation; the privatization of Crown corporations; debt reduction; the downsizing of government; the dismantling of the welfare state; and the limitation of union power (Teeple 2000). These are themes that are echoed in Liberal government policy and discourse.5

Gordon Campbell, the current party leader and premier of BC, took control of the Liberals prior to the 1996 election. Campbell was not a long-term party member. He joined in order to run for the leadership and brought many new recruits with him, most of whom were former Socreds. His leadership victory represented a substantial swing to the right for the party when compared with the leadership of Gordon Wilson (Blake & Carty 1995-1996). The Liberals’ election platform in 1996 focused on promised tax cuts and “a

5 For example, see the BC Liberals website: http://www.bcliberals.com (BC Liberal Party 2004).
policy mix of concern for mounting government debt together with Reform-style institutional reforms” (Ruff 1996, 17).

As an opposition party, the Liberals were not always consistent on questions of environmental policy. For example, the Liberals argued that NDP “pulp mill regulations and [the] Forest Practices Code [were] too harsh on business” (Harrison 1996, 305). Likewise, the Liberals critiqued the NDP plan to protect the Tatshenshini Wilderness by arguing that continued mining was consistent with the ecological goals of a protected area (301). At the same time, the party made a surprising break from the business community in opposing the Kemano Completion Project, a hydro-electric development (Harrison 1996). In Gawthrop’s view, Campbell’s attempt to articulate an environmental discourse with his own neo-Liberal politics was calculated to “soften his corporate, right-wing image” (Gawthrop 1996, 200).

The 2001 Liberal election platform continued the major themes articulated by the party while in opposition. The dominant discourses invoked by the Liberals include themes of financial accountability, tax cuts, deregulation and economic “revitalization” (BC Liberal Party 2001). From the Liberal perspective, the NDP are constructed as poor economic managers; they are incompetent and unaccountable to the citizenry of BC. However, the Liberals also claim to represent a new era of “sustainable forestry” and environmental stewardship (BC Liberal Party 2001, 12-13). Therefore, the Liberals are not explicitly anti-environmental. The discourse of environmentalism is articulated with the discourses of business and neo-liberalism in the construction of an “eco-capitalist” public self.
Since coming to power, the Liberals have released a Forest Revitalization Plan and a discussion paper on the “Working Forest.” The Forest Revitalization Plan repeatedly emphasizes the importance of the forest industry to BC. Forestry reforms are framed as part of the Liberal plan to “revitalize” the BC economy in the public interest of “all” British Columbians (British Columbia Ministry of Forests, n.d.). Thus, we see how the Liberals work to articulate the interests of the public with those of forestry capital. Likewise, the Working Forest discussion paper is marked by a dominant discourse of providing “certainty and stability” for logging corporations (British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management 2003). This will be accomplished by providing legal protection for forestry tenures that is similar to the legal protection provided for protected areas. The discussion paper attempts to counter environmental claims that the Working Forest will hamper land claims settlements and preclude the creation of new protected areas. However, the document fails to answer the environmentalist question of what the forest industry needs “certainty and stability” from, if not from the threat of land claims and protected areas campaigns (Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003b).

First Nations and Forest Policy in B.C.

As I will demonstrate, the three main actors in the Vancouver Sun’s coverage of forestry policy debate are the state, the forest industry and environmentalists. However, several authors have described First Nations as key players in forestry debate in BC (Marchak 1995; Hoberg 1996; Salazar & Alper 1996; Wilson 1998; Howlett 2001; Prudham & Reed 2001; G.C. Shaw 2002; K. Shaw 2002). The lack of First Nations voices in the Sun is a major patterned silence that I will explore later. In this section, I
wish to provide a brief discussion of the place of First Nations in British Columbia forestry conflict and public debate. One of the main problems in attempting such an introduction is the tendency to essentialize “First Nations” identity and politics. In constructing a “First Nations” standpoint on forestry, the reader should be aware of the diversity of perspectives that is homogenized into a generalized construction. The “First Nations” perspective defined here is an ideal type that simplifies a complex reality.

In 1991, a document on “Native Forestry” was produced by a Native and Non-Native “task force,” under the auspices of the federal government (Task Force on Native Forestry 1991). While this document essentializes “First Nations” identity, it is useful for beginning to formulate a “First Nations” standpoint regarding BC forestry policy. The Task Force locates the First Nations interest in forestry within political struggles around land claims and the question of tenure: who actually owns the forest resources of British Columbia? Mary Thomas, of the Intertribal Forestry Association, is quoted as follows: “When 86% of the forest is concentrated in 20 companies something is seriously wrong. the [sic] tenure system must be reformed as soon as possible to free up forest resources to Native Bands, communities and woodlot operators” (Thomas qtd Task Force on Native Forestry 1991, 86). Furthermore, the document emphasizes the importance of forestry to the economic and cultural life of First Nations people. George Harris, of the Chemainus First Nation, is quoted as saying:

In our Native culture we place extreme importance in the forests. Our culture and our forests cannot be separated. The forest is our cathedral, a place where we do our sacred, spiritual and traditional ceremonies. The forests provide us with our basic traditional foods . . . We do not want planning for just the trees, but we want emphasis on the environment and
on values other than economic ones (Harris qtd Task Force on Native Forestry 1991, 71).

A similar document, produced by the Scientific Panel for Sustainable Forest Practices in Clayoquot Sound, focuses on the Nuu-Chah-Nulth nation, whose traditional territory was the site of the Clayoquot Sound protests of 1993 (Scientific Panel for Sustainable Forest Practices in Clayoquot Sound 1995). This text echoes many of the themes covered by the Task Force, including: the historic marginalization of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth from the forest economy; the desire of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth to engage in forestry on their own terms; the potential for traditional knowledge to re-shape forestry; and the compatibility of environmental protection and economic subsistence for First Nations. The role of First Nations spirituality is frequently cited as a key to achieving a sustainable forest economy. For example, the authors of the report write: “The Nuu-Chah-Nulth believe that all things are sacred and deserve to be treated with respect. All entities used as resources (such as a tree, bear, deer, or salmon) are to be treated as gifts from the Creator. Mass degradation of the landscape is unthinkable” (Scientific Panel for Sustainable Forest Practices in Clayoquot Sound 1995, 6). Both the Task Force and the Scientific Panel present a discourse of First Nations that links environmental, spiritual and social justice values. Drawing upon these two reports, we may conclude that First Nations voices should be an integral part of any public debate on forestry policy in British Columbia.

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6 Gary Shaw provides a more critical analysis of the use of First Nations “traditional environmental knowledge” in the Clayoquot Sound conflict. He notes that discourses of consensus and embracing “traditional environmental knowledge” were mobilized, while the dominance of “legitimate science” was maintained in a re-creation of the colonial relationship (Shaw 2002).
Bruce Willems-Braun provides an valuable counter-point to the construction of First Nations presented by the Task Force and the Scientific Panel (Willems-Braun 1996-1997; Willems-Braun 1997). He rejects the notion that we have arrived at a state of “post-colonialism” in British Columbia. Rather, he argues that “streams of the past still infuse the present” in a form of “neocolonial relations” (Willems-Braun 1997, 3). Using the case of environmental conflict over BC rainforests, Willems-Braun examines the way in which public discourse has focused primarily on the oppositional dichotomy of the forest industry and environmentalists. Other voices, including those of First Nations, are marginalized. Furthermore, where BC First Nations do appear in public discourse, they are enveloped in a field of environmental discourse which dichotomizes nature and culture, and which articulates First Nations identity with the “natural,” rather than the “cultural” (20-24). Where environmentalists have limited their own public discourse to questions about the appropriate forms of forestry management by the state and capital, they have often failed to examine the core questions of First Nations sovereignty and land claims. From this analysis, Willems-Braun concludes: “From an anticolonial perspective, extractive capital and environmentalism are in many ways mirror images, sharing common elements of a culture of nature” that perpetuates neo-colonial relations of social power (25). That is, public debate over forestry resources fails to recognize the essential fact that the forest economy, “rather than operating without and apart from Native participation, operates on the basis of their absence and, further . . . this absence was accomplished through the production of colonial spatialities” (Willems-Braun 1996-1997, 19; italics in original).
The results of my own research are consistent with Willems-Braun's analysis. The textual reality constructed by the Vancouver Sun renders First Nations voices silent. It also leaves the neo-colonial relations which underlie the BC forest economy unacknowledged. However, in contrast to Willems-Braun, I would argue that there are examples of environmental discourse beyond the Sun that do acknowledge the importance of First Nations sovereignty, even if this discourse is not admitted to the media construction of reality. This is a point of discussion I will return to in the final chapter of the Thesis.

The Vancouver Sun

The history and ownership of the Vancouver Sun is an important factor to consider in contextualizing this research project. According to Bagdikian, and to Herman and Chomsky, the ownership structure of media has important ramifications for the ideological character of media content (Herman & Chomsky 1988; Bagdikian 1992). For these authors, the monopolistic control of mass media by a handful of large corporations limits public debate and results in a homogeneity of ideas. According to Bagdikian, the reliance upon advertising for profitability is also central to the historical shift away from the newspaper as a forum of public debate. Instead, the needs of advertisers dictate a move towards bland news that appeals to as many affluent consumers as possible. While Bagdikian does not posit a simple, unilinear relationship between the ideology of capital and media content, the political economy of modern media ownership is said to result in homogeneity and the lack of meaningful public debate. Put another way, it creates a

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7 For example, see the Western Canada Wilderness Committee’s online publications regarding the Working Forest initiative (Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003b; 2003c).
news environment where "increasing amounts of 'life-style journalism,' 'infotainment,' and celebrity-focused 'junk food news'" are the norm (Hackett et al 2000, 66).

While Bagdikian's analysis focuses on American mass media, the Canadian media market is also characterized by a high degree of corporate concentration. Throughout the period under analysis (1991-2003), the Vancouver Sun has been part of the Canadian media oligopoly. In 1991, the Sun was owned by Pacific Press, a "holding company owned by the largest newspaper chain in Canada, Toronto-based Southam Inc." (Edge 2001). According to Marc Edge, the Sun of the early 1990s was a newspaper in a slow decline, far from the flagship newspaper of BC that it had been. In 1991, Pacific Press moved the Sun from its afternoon publication to morning publication in an attempt to revitalize the paper. However, as Edge writes:

The Vancouver Sun's move to morning publication could only slow the daily's declining circulation . . . After bottoming out at 210,000, in 1991, Sun sales blipped up with morning publication . . . but again began dropping sharply until by 1996 six-day average circulation of the Pacific Press flagship had dipped below 200,000 (Edge 2001, 381).

Even with declining readership, the Sun remained the major daily newspaper in British Columbia. The only other daily with provincial distribution was the Province, which was also owned by Southam. Thus, even with declining circulation, Southam retained a dominant position in the British Columbia print media marketplace of the early 1990s. Furthermore, a quantitative picture of declining readership does not necessarily tell the whole story. As the Canadian Newspaper Association boasts, newspapers remain the
medium of choice to “deliver upscale adults,” a very “attractive and affluent” group of consumers, to advertisers (Canadian Newspaper Association 2002b).

In 1992, Conrad Black acquired Torstar’s interest in Southam. This gave Black and his company, Hollinger Inc., “complete control” of the Southam papers, including the Sun (Edge 2001, 383). The acquisition of Southam added greatly to Hollinger’s media empire. As Siklos notes, Hollinger gained a controlling interest in “seventeen daily newspapers with a combined circulation of more than 1.5 million” (Siklos 1995, 312). In addition to owning newspapers in England, the United States and Israel, Black became the largest single owner of newspapers in Canada. As Barlow and Winter write, “Through Southam alone, Black controlled more than thirty dailies . . . In total, he owned sixty out of 105 Canadian daily papers . . . Their cumulative circulation was 43 percent of that of all Canadian dailies, and 50 percent of English-language circulation” (Barlow & Winter 1997, 10).

Much has been made of Conrad Black’s commitment to right-wing politics and his willingness to use his ownership status as an ideological-political tool (Barlow & Winter 1997; Hackett et al. 2000; Edge 2001). For example, Hackett et al write: “In the world according to Conrad Black, trade unions, human rights legislation, Aboriginal self-government, social democracy . . . are signs of stupidity, vested interest, or social and moral weakness” (Hackett et al 2000, 55). Speaking about the pre-Hollinger Sun, Black derisively describes the paper in the following terms: “Let’s face it, the Vancouver Sun . . . if you read it you’d conclude it was a paper written chiefly for the benefit of the gay community, the militant gays and the militant native people” (Black qtd Barlow & Winter 1997, 89). As Barlow and Winter note, Black was able to “rectify this situation” after his
acquisition of the paper (89). Black’s strategy for ensuring a certain degree of ideological cohesion is to hire editors with a shared world-view. In his own words, “the best course, in my judgment . . . is to hire editors with whom the principle shareholder is in general agreement, to minimise [sic] internal frictions” (Black qtd Siklos 1995, 320).8

In 2000, the Sun changed ownership again. This time, CanWest Global bought the paper as part of a large-scale acquisition of newspapers from Hollinger that included fourteen major Canadian papers (CanWest Global Communications Corp. 2003). CanWest Global originated with the creation of a Winnipeg television station in 1974. Since then, CanWest has dramatically increased its reach in both electronic and print media. By the time the company purchased the Hollinger newspapers, it had become a large media corporation with international holdings in television, radio, internet and print media (BMO Nesbitt Burns 2001; CanWest Global Communications Corp. 2003). In addition to the Sun, CanWest owns the Vancouver Province, the other newspaper with provincial distribution. The company also owns the National Post, one of Canada’s two national daily newspapers; as well as daily papers in Ottawa, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton and Victoria.

CanWest Global exemplifies the current trend in mass media ownership towards “convergence,” the production of cultural texts in several different communication media (Chen & Graves 2002). Leonard Asper, the President and CEO of CanWest Global, argues that convergence is essential if Canadian media corporations are to survive in a globalizing media market (Asper 2002; Asper 2003). According to a report by BMO Nesbitt Burns, there are several benefits to media convergence, from the perspective of

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8 Black uses his autobiography to revel in the degree of media concentration he enjoys. He writes, “Newspapers, especially quality newspapers, remain powerful outlets for advertising and information (and political influence)” (Black 1993, 504).
investors (BMO Nesbitt Burns 2001). These include the ability to provide cross-promotion across several media and to create an economy of scale for advertisers (BMO Nesbitt Burns 2001, 3). The same report notes that CanWest Global’s strengths include a high level of television-newspaper convergence, a large potential for cross-marketing for advertisers, and a national audience reach. By contrast, one of the company’s main weaknesses is its dependence on advertising revenue for ninety-five per cent of its income (19). It would not be far-fetched to infer that CanWest’s commitment to serving its audience might take second place to its commitment to advertisers, due to this extremely dependent relationship.

The report by BMO Nesbitt Burns also raises concerns about the general decline of the Canadian newspaper industry. However, while newspapers are “in decline,” they continue to take in a very large share of advertising revenue and provide a larger share of advertising space than many other media (BMO Nesbitt Burns 2001, 6). The continued salience of newspapers, from the perspective of advertisers, seems to support the claims made by the Canadian Newspaper Association about the success of newspapers in reaching affluent consumers, arguably the most important audience for advertisers (Canadian Newspaper Association 2002b). Finally, claims about the decline of the newspaper industry are contradicted by the 2002 report from the Canadian Newspaper Association, which reports that “modest increases have been made in readership over the last five years” (Canadian Newspaper Association 2002b). For example, where Edge

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9 Still, the notion that newspaper readership has generally declined over the period under study does raise the question of whether or not newspapers are the most salient site for media research. If we are interested in how media texts work to construct social reality, media with a broader audience reach might be a more appropriate research site. Alternately, the decline of newspaper readership could point to the need to do more comparative research on how different media forms produce different systems of power/knowledge.
claims that the Sun’s circulation dropped below 200,000 in 1996, the average daily circulation in 2002 was close to 202,000 (Canadian Newspaper Association 2002a).

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced several of the key players in forest policy debate in British Columbia. I described the history of the BC forest economy, noting both the central role of forestry capital to the provincial political economy and the evolution of the industry towards a state of oligopoly. I provided a brief introduction to forestry labour, focusing on the IWA, who have generally encouraged the corporate concentration of the industry and who have aligned themselves with capital in opposition to the environmental movement. I described the emergence of the British Columbia environmental movement over the past three decades and have discussed the strengths and weaknesses of environmentalism in BC. Among the movement’s strengths are its diversity and ability to appeal to a broad range of British Columbians. Its potential weaknesses include a narrow focus on “wilderness” preservation which often fails to engage with a critique of the processes of capitalist production that render the protection of “wilderness” a necessity to begin with.

I reviewed the history of the NDP’s rise to power in 1991, following the collapse of the long-ruling Socred party. I described the tension inherent in the NDP between its “green” and its union based wings, as well as the limits which the government faced as a social democratic party in a capitalist economy. I also described the election of the Liberals in 2001, which marked a turn to the political right and the ascendance of a dominant discourse of neo-liberalism. I then described the role of First Nations in forest
policy debate. For many First Nations, access to forestry resources is integral to achieving social justice. Finally, I reviewed the ownership history of the Vancouver Sun during the period under analysis (1991-2003). While the Sun changed hands from Southam Inc., to Conrad Black’s Hollinger Inc, to CanWest Global, it has consistently remained part of the Canadian media oligopoly.

In the next chapter, I will construct a theoretical lens for analyzing the Vancouver Sun’s coverage of environmental policy debate. I will examine theory from both media sociology and environmental sociology, paying particular attention to the tension between critical and postmodern approaches to each of these research areas. I will then suggest that a theoretical lens devised from the intersection of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault provides a useful framework for an analysis of both the media and environmental conflict.
CHAPTER III: THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

This research project builds upon two distinct bodies of theoretical work. First, my concern with the news media as a site for research grows out of a broader interest in media sociology. Second, this project is also grounded in an interest in environmental sociology. In developing an analysis of how environmental policy debate is constructed in the Vancouver Sun, it is necessary to draw upon sociological theory in both of these areas. I will begin this chapter by outlining noteworthy key concepts within each of these theoretical areas. I will also explore theoretical points of tension between more “critical” and more “postmodern” approaches within both of these sub-disciplines.

From this point of departure, I will attempt to construct a theoretical lens grounded in the work of Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) and his successors. Elsewhere, Carroll and Ratner have argued that the Gramscian concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony provide an innovative “middle ground” position for critical theory (Carroll & Ratner 1994). It avoids both the “class reductionism” associated with much critical theory and the “fragmentary relativism” that characterizes much postmodernist work (Carroll & Ratner 1994, 7). My use of Gramscian theory will be linked to the theoretical work of Michel Foucault (1926-1984). I believe that Foucault’s work is essentially compatible with a Gramscian orientation. Foucault’s notions of power/knowledge and discourse provide useful tools for analyzing the mechanisms for reproducing hegemony at specific social-historical sites (Foucault 1980b). A theoretical lens constructed at the “Gramsci-Foucault nexus” is essentially critical, but also appreciates the subtlety and fluidity of the social world as it is described in postmodern theory. Such a theoretical
orientation may add depth and complexity to the study of environmental conflict and the
mass media. Thus, the Gramsci-Foucault nexus provides an overarching theoretical
framework that goes beyond the limitations of the critical theory-postmodern dichotomy
in both media and environmental sociology. However, an attempt to work at the
intersection of Gramsci and Foucault carries its own points of tension, which I will also
explore.

Media Theory

Sociological theories of the mass media have tended to fall into either the
category of “critical theory” or “pluralist theory.” Where critical theory asserts that the
mass media is a vehicle for the dissemination of elite ideology, pluralism emphasizes the
importance of mass media as a forum for public debate (Gitlin 1978; Hackett 1991;
Grenier 1992). While pluralism asserts that the mass media may work as a socialization
agent, it is not seen as a tool for the active perpetuation of social inequality. While the
disjuncture between critical theory and pluralism has historically been the core theoretical
divide in media sociology, I am more interested in the contemporary tension between
critical media theory and a more postmodern orientation to the media. I believe both
perspectives offer something of value, while they also illuminate each other’s
shortcomings.

Critical theory asserts that the mass media are ultimately a tool for the
socialization of subordinate classes into the values and ideologies of the ruling elites.
Within this general perspective, there are several distinct approaches. For example, Gaye
Tuchman organizes her media analysis around the concept of the “news frame”
Building upon Goffman's notion of "frame analysis," Tuchman describes the news frame as a partial piece of reality which is captured and translated by media workers for their audience; frames "both produce and limit meaning" (Tuchman 1978, 209). Tuchman's main argument is that media texts work to construct social reality. They are not, as many news workers might believe, a "mirror" of reality. News-workers build a "news net," constructing a partial social reality through choice of topics and sources to represent (21). As she writes:

The anchoring of the news net shapes access to the news as a stratified social resource . . . The news media are more accessible to some social movements, interest groups, and political actors than to others. Those who hold recognized reins of legitimated power clearly have more access to the media than those who do not (133).

The construction of news frames and news nets work towards the construction of a media reality that ultimately reinforces the status quo (215-216).

Likewise, Todd Gitlin asserts that journalism ultimately works to "honor the political-economic system as a whole" (Gitlin 1980, 258). This is accomplished through the routine production of texts that favour "social stability" (266). For Gitlin, the hegemonic function of the media is accomplished through the socialization of individual news-workers into a journalistic culture. Furthermore, Gitlin notes that media hegemony within capitalist democracies contains a basic point of tension. These societies are premised upon the tripartite social values of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"; or, "liberty, equality and fraternity" (256). Where these core social values are in conflict
with each other, the tension between them may be used by counter-hegemonic groups to press for social change.

Finally, Qualter emphasizes the “agenda-setting” power of the media (Qualter 1989, 140). Qualter describes the media’s potential for bringing new social issues to public consciousness. At the same time, the mass media have the ability to limit and shape the terms of public debate through the allocation of news-space to different issues. For Qualter, what is left off of the media agenda is as important to the formation of social consciousness as what is included. Qualter also argues that the present media age is characterized by an unprecedented degree of “elite dissemination” and “mass reception” (143). Therefore, the mass media is the bridge between elite groups and the mass of society. Like Gitlin, Qualter argues that the media work as an institution of social control in that they consistently mobilize narratives of “stability and consensus,” rather than stories of “controversy” and social conflict (143). While the mass media is open to “minor” forms of dissent, these are incorporated into predictable news narrative that do not challenge elite power. As Qualter writes, “When the dissent poses no serious threat to the stability of the system, tolerating it is socially functional” (151).

Postmodern theories of the media are reminiscent of the earlier pluralist approach in that the mass media is seen as a social realm characterized by a diversity of voices, rather than by elite domination. However, postmodern perspectives depart from a simpler form of pluralism in that they emphasizes the openness of the meaning of media texts. Here, the ideological intent of media producers is not the main factor in the relationship between the audience and mass media. Postmodern approaches refuse to see
audience members as easily brainwashed by a dominant ideology. Rather, audiences
work to actively construct the meaning of cultural texts (Fiske 1987). According to
Fiske, there is a cultural economy that is distinct from the financial economy of class
power. Within this parallel economy, "the cultural commodity cannot be adequately
described in financial terms only . . . What is exchanged and circulated here is not wealth
but meanings, pleasures, and social identities" (Fiske 1989, 311). Within the cultural
economy, the "power of audiences-as-producers . . . is considerable" (311). Fiske argues
that there "a huge multiplicity of points and forms of resistance, a huge variety of
resistances" to the dominant meanings attached to cultural texts (316). The ability of
audience members to construct textual meanings "are the social points at which the
powers of the subordinate are most clearly expressed" (316). Postmodern theory of the
media is essentially optimistic; it focuses on the power of audiences, rather than the
domination of elites.

The postmodern orientation to the media offers a necessary counterpoint to
critical theory. A critical theory which depends upon a simple, unidirectional model of
ideological domination fails to grasp the complexity of the mass media world of
contemporary capitalism.10 At the same time, this perspective is open to criticism.
Mumby argues that the postmodern perspective uncritically celebrates the counter-
hegemonic potential of audience members (Mumby 1997). For example, while John
Fiske shows that it is possible to read against the intended meanings of media texts, his
model of audiences is almost too active; it appears to bear little resemblance to what goes

10 Neither Tuchman nor Gitlin argue in favour of such a simple "ideological domination theory." Both of
these authors note that, in Hackett's words, "there are "cracks in the monolith" that may be exploited by
social movement groups (Hackett 1991). This depiction of critical theory is an ideal type.
on in the day-to-day practice of media consumption. As Mumby notes, Fiske tends to displace a “dominant ideology” perspective with “a similarly totalizing theory of resistance” (Mumby 1997, 354). The postmodern perspective of the media, while offering insight into the potential for audience resistance, does tend to “minimize the ways in which media institutions have the cultural, political, and economic capital to privilege certain realities over others” (354). In a 1980 essay on the media-audience relationship, Stuart Hall makes a similar point. Hall challenges the notion that audience “decoding” of media texts is unrelated to the “encoding” process that media creators engage in. He writes:

Unless they are wildly aberrant, encoding will have the effect of constructing some of the limits and parameters within which decodings will operate. If there were no limits, audiences could simply read whatever they liked into any message. . . . But the vast range [of messages] must contain some degree of reciprocity between encoding and decoding moments, otherwise we could not speak of an effective communicative exchange at all (Hall 1980, 135-136).

In this excerpt, Hall identifies the main problem with postmodernism’s assertion of an “active audience.” It is more plausible to assert that texts really do set “limits” to potential audience interpretations, especially when the same set of messages is repeated incessantly, in an ongoing, intertextual media reality. In other words, while it is integral to recognize that audience members to construct meaning from media texts, it is also
important to recognize that they do so while immersed in a broadly hegemonic cultural environment.\textsuperscript{11}

To summarize, I have outlined the theoretical tension between the critical and postmodern strands in media sociology. Critical theory is appealing in that it recognizes that the “elite dissemination and mass reception” of media products has ideological implications (Qualter 143). Critical theory seems correct in asserting that the mass media can work to integrate audiences into the social values of a modern capitalist political economy. At the same time, it is unrealistic to accept that the media exist only to provide a unidirectional flow of ideology from the capitalist class to its subordinates. The postmodern notion that textual meaning can be negotiated by audience members is important to retain. I believe that this theoretical tension can be resolved through an engagement with a theoretical lens developed from the work of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault. In the following section, I will discuss a similar theoretical disjuncture within environmental sociology.

Environmental Sociology

The sub-discipline of environmental sociology is a relative new-comer to the academic field. From its emergence in the 1970s, environmental sociology has been

\textsuperscript{11} To take one particularly salient example of how processes of encoding and decoding can play out in relation to environmental new, Dunk draws on interview data with forestry workers in northwestern Ontario to examine how the “jobs versus environment” is interpreted among actual forestry workers (Dunk 1994). Dunk claims that the “image of environmentalists is framed . . . by the jobs-versus environment narrative of media reporting. But [workers’] interpretation goes beyond this . . . . The imagery has a clear class connotation, specifically denotes a spatial relationship, and alludes to the question of knowledge . . . . They are . . . representations of the dominant forcers against which local workers . . . define themselves” (Dunk 1994, 28). In this article, Dunk illustrates the importance of the media in shaping social reality, as well as the active role of a particular audience in interpreting the textual realities of the media.
distinct in its willingness to take seriously the relationship between society and the physical environment (Dunlap & Catton 1979). During the development of environmental sociology, key research areas have included: the social dimensions of environmental conflict, land use planning, environmental risk, and environmentalism as a social movement (Dunlap & Catton 1979). According to Buttel, one of the major fault lines in contemporary environmental sociology is the separation between work grounded in the Marxist, political economy tradition and work which is grounded in a social constructivist approach (Buttel 1996). For Buttel, this theoretical disjunction raises a fundamental question of whether to focus on the political economy of environmental conflict, or on the cultural and ideological nature of environmental conflict. Thus, just as media theory may be characterized by the dichotomy between critical theory and postmodernism, so may environmental sociology be characterized by an analogous point of tension between political ecology and environmental constructivism.

Political ecology is rooted in the Marxian theoretical tradition and locates environmental conflict within a broader understanding of social inequality. Here, the dependence of capital on the colonization and depletion of natural ecosystems is seen as an theoretical blind spot in sociology. Allan Schnaiberg and John Bellamy Foster each provide a fascinating example of theoretical work within a political ecology framework.

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12 By contrast, Lidskog defines the main fault line in environmental sociology as the divide between environmental realism and environmental constructivism (Lidskog 2001). Here, the differences are more epistemological and ontological, concerned with the nature of the environment as an object of study. Within Lidskog's framework, political ecology would fall under the "realist" umbrella. As I feel ill-equipped to adequately resolve the epistemological and ontological differences between political ecology and environmental constructivism, I will bracket an analysis of these questions. Instead, I will focus on how their respective orientations towards the economic and the cultural may be brought into dialogue with each other, through an engagement with a broader Gramscian-Foucauldian framework.
Allan Schnaiberg’s work in environmental sociology provides several useful key concepts, such as the “treadmill of production,” “managed scarcity,” and “ecological synthesis” (Schnaiberg 1980; Gould, Weinberg & Schnaiberg 1993; Gould, Weinberg & Schnaiberg 1995; Schnaiberg 2002; Buttel 2003). Schnaiberg defines the “treadmill of production” as the ensemble of social groups who have a stake in the ongoing depletion of natural resources which underlies capitalist production. While capital obviously benefits from the smooth working of the treadmill, through the accumulation of profit, other groups benefit as well. Workers are integrated into the treadmill, both as wage earners and as consumers of the goods and services provided by capital. Likewise, the state is integrated into the treadmill because it is dependent upon the continued good-will of capital and because it must maintain the consent of the governed.

However, as the treadmill comes up against ecological limits to production, there are two choices available to society: managed scarcity or ecological synthesis. Managed scarcity involves making the minimum change necessary to mitigate against environmental problems while preserving the integrity of the treadmill. Under managed scarcity, environmental health and pollution are allocated according to existing structures of economic power. By contrast, ecological synthesis involves a radical re-orientation of the treadmill according to environmental and social justice values (Schnaiberg 1980; Gould, Weinberg, & Schnaiberg 1993).

John Bellamy Foster also demonstrates a political ecology perspective. Like Schnaiberg, Foster is concerned with themes such as: the inherent incompatibility of capitalism and ecological sustainability; the critique of “sustainable development” as an
ecocapitalist ideology; and the need to link environmentalism and social justice (Foster 2002). In his analysis of the conflict over the old-growth forests of the American Pacific northwest, Foster concludes that capital and the state have worked to split labour and environmentalists by mobilizing a dominant ideology of "trees versus jobs" (Foster 1991; Foster 1993). This dominant ideology conflates the interests of labour and the interests of capital, thereby enhancing the strength of capital in the conflict over control of forest resources. For Foster, it is imperative that environmentalists challenge this dominant ideology. He writes: "An ecological movement that stands for the earth alone and ignores class and other social inequalities will succeed at best in displacing environmental problems, meanwhile reinforcing the dominant relations of power in global capitalism" (Foster 1993, 12).

While the political ecology perspective is useful, it is also problematic in that it often fails to provide sufficient attention to the cultural realm of environmental conflict and the ways in which "the environment" is constructed through social interaction. For example, while Schnaiberg perceives the mass media and consumerist advertising as a "barrier" to environmental consciousness and "consumer autonomy," the importance of cultural facets of environmental politics are given very limited attention within his work (Schnaiberg 1980, 179; also see Hannigan 1995). Likewise, where Gould, Weinberg and Schnaiberg discuss the increasingly global reach of the treadmill, they neglect the corollary emergence of a "sustainable development" discourse that legitimizes the spread of an ecologically-destructive political economy (Gould, Weinberg, & Schnaiberg, 1995). Also, while Foster does turn his attention to the "cultural" realm of ideology, his use of
the concept seems overly simplistic. His analysis seems vulnerable to the postmodern
critique of the dominant ideology position in critical media theory.

Environmental constructivism takes a more postmodern view of the society-
environment relationship. Here, the "cultural" realm of environmental conflict tends to
be privileged over an analysis which locates environmental conflict within the political
economy of a society. One of the major arguments of environmental constructivism is
that ecological science cannot be taken as an unproblematic description of reality.
Instead, environmental problems -- and the "environment" itself -- are constructed by a
broad range of social actors that includes scientists, activists, politicians and writers.
While something of the natural environment lies beyond the horizon of the social, once it
is brought into the realm of public debate, it is inevitably translated into a social
construction (Macnaghten & Urry 1998). From this perspective, the forests which are the
subject of forest policy debate are essentially social entities. As Macnaghten and Urry
write, "There is no nature simply waiting to be conserved, but, rather all forms of its
conservation entail judgments as to what indeed is nature" (Macnaghten & Urry 1998,
23).

John Hannigan's work is concerned with the ways in which environmental
problems are socially constructed through the claims-making activity of environmental
activists (Hannigan 1995). Hannigan offers a model for the successful construction of an
"environmental problem." For example, environmental claims-makers must invoke
scientific authority to legitimize their claims. There must also be environmental
spokespeople who can translate scientific knowledge into public common sense. Finally,
environmental claims-makers must be able to reach the public through the media. Through public claims-making, environmental activists work to construct a social reality about the environment and our relationship with it. The mass media are a key site where environmental claims-makers try to convince the public that an environmental problem is “novel and important” (Hannigan 1995, 55).

Catriona Sandilands also provides a more constructivist approach to theorizing the environment-society relationship. In The Good Natured Feminist: Ecofeminism and the Quest for Democracy, Sandilands explores issues of identity construction, authenticity and political representation in ecological and ecofeminist politics. She espouses an ecological politics which eschews essentialism and universalism in favour of the particular (Sandilands 1999). Sandilands also problematizes the notion of authenticity: the claim to be able to speak on behalf of “nature.” As she notes, the “nature” produced by environmentalists or environmental scientists is inherently social; it is transformed in its translation into discourse (Sandilands 1995).

The notion that “nature” is produced through social interaction is also found in William Cronon’s analysis of wilderness politics. Cronon argues that the “wilderness” that is the object of environmental politics is a culturally and historically embedded social construction, with roots in European romanticism and American frontier mythology. Without de-legitimizing the importance of preserving “wildness,” he argues that “wilderness” has generally been a counter-productive construct for the environmental movement. Wilderness perpetuates dualisms between the human and non-human, between nature and civilization, that divert us from questions of how to live within
nature. Instead, "wilderness" tends to lead to a politics based on questions of how to parcel out parts of nature for "protection." As he writes: "The wilderness dualism tends to cast any use as ab-use, and thereby denies us a middle ground in which responsible use and non-use might attain some kind of balanced, sustainable relationship" (Cronon 1995, 85). Furthermore, this construction of nature leads us to idealize a "distant wilderness" at the expense of appreciating "the landscape that for better or worse we call home" (85).

The question of how to engage in a politics of environmental protection that recognizes the socially-constructed nature of "nature" is addressed by Sandilands. Through the notion of "wild justice," Sandilands offers a conceptual frame for recognizing that there is a value of nature as subject, beyond social discourse, while simultaneously recognizing that any particular representation of nature is a social construction (Sandilands 1994). As Sandilands writes, there is an "aspect of nature that cannot be apprehended in political discourse," something that is inevitably beyond the horizon of the social (Sandilands 1994, 168). Through the concept of wild justice, Sandilands illuminates a potential solution to the problem of trying to authentically represent "nature" within the political realm. She writes:

By conceptualizing the domination of nature as a hierarchical process of oppression, nature becomes a social problem, linked to and interstructured with other forms of oppression. The liberation of nature is thus only attainable through struggles for social justice (169).
In Sandilands’ formulation, environmental politics should move towards the elaboration of a democratic, intersubjective nature, which still recognizes the existence of something fundamentally beyond the horizon of the social. Thus, despite their different orientations, political ecology and environmental constructivism may both lead to a model of environmental politics which articulates ecological concerns with a politics of social justice.

While environmental constructivism’s analysis of the cultural dimension of environmental conflict is a necessary corrective to the cultural blind spot in political ecology, this perspective often lacks a connection with questions of economic and political power. The large discrepancies in social power between environmental claim-makers and the corporate and state actors in environmental conflict is rarely problematized. While environmental constructivism avoids the simplicity of a “dominant ideology” approach, it tends to overlook the processes through which the cultural construction of environmental problems is linked with political and economic structures of power.

Political ecology and environmental constructivism each offer an intriguing perspective on the questions of environmental conflict and the environment-society relationship. Political ecology is valuable in that it locates environmental conflict within a network of social and economic power. It illuminates the connections between environmental issues and questions of social justice. At the same time, environmental constructivism’s emphasis on the essentially social character of environmental conflict is an important theoretical contribution. A theoretical lens constructed at the Gramsci-
Foucault nexus provides a useful framework for bringing together key concepts from both sides of this theoretical divide.

The Gramsci-Foucault Nexus

Both media sociology and environmental sociology are marked by a dichotomy between critical and postmodern theoretical perspectives. Here, I will construct a theoretical lens from the intersection of Gramscian and Foucauldian theory which is essentially critical, but which also takes postmodernism seriously. The result is a critical theory that is equipped to comprehend the subtlety and complexity of the relationship between environmental conflict and the media in a modern capitalist society.

The work of Antonio Gramsci and his successors forms the foundation for this theoretical lens. Through the notions of hegemony and counter-hegemony, Gramscian theory provides a framework for analyzing the connections between culture, economy and political conflict (Gramsci 1971). As such, it provides a conceptual frame that can be used to draw on the strengths of conflict theory and postmodernism in media sociology, as well as the strengths of both political ecology and environmental constructivism. For Gramsci, hegemony is a form of social control grounded in the consent and willing participation of the governed; it is an alternative to coercion as a means of governing a society. Hegemony is distinctly not synonymous with a dominant ideology (Grossberg 1996). Instead, it may be understood as a set of core values that are integrated into everyday life. Hegemony is produced through the state, but also through the organizations of “civil society,” such as the mass media, or religious and educational institutions (Femia 1981, 24). While hegemony tends to reflect the interests of elite
groups, it must be consciously maintained and constantly negotiated. As it is forged, it must also account for the needs of subaltern groups (Hall 1996). As Hall writes, while “the ideological field is always . . . articulated to different social and political positions, its shape and structure do not precisely mirror . . . the class structure of society” (Hall 1996, 434).

Hegemony is also a “cultural” form of social control that is intimately linked with the political economy of society. As Williams writes, hegemony is a “specific economic, political, and cultural system”; it places “pressures and limits” on our understanding of the social world (Williams 1977, 110). While all social actors can contribute to the formation of a hegemonic order, there are meaningful differences in political-economic power that privilege certain actors in the cultural production of hegemony. As Williams observes, “To say that ‘men’ define and shape their whole lives is true only in abstraction. In any actual society there are specific inequalities in means and therefore in capacity to realize this process” (Williams 1977, 108). By recognizing the economic factors that limit participation in the creation of hegemony, Gramsci theorizes the connections between the culture-formation of a society and political-economic power.

The notion of hegemony addresses the failure of revolutionary class consciousness to emerge in industrial societies. For Gramsci, critical consciousness does not spontaneously emerge from the experience of labour exploitation. Rather, critical consciousness must be actively developed in opposition to a hegemonic order (Williams 1977). This leads us to Gramsci’s inter-related notions of subalternity, the “organic intellectual,” and counter-hegemony. In Gramsci’s usage, subaltern groups consist of
those who are subordinated in the process of capitalist production. In this sense, the Marxian working class is the archetypal subaltern group. However, the notion of subalternity has been extended by others to include the multiplicity of social identities that demarcate a subordinate position within the hierarchies of political, economic, or cultural power (cf. Hall 1996). For example, subalternity can be read through the lens of gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.

According to Gramsci, the critical consciousness of subaltern groups must be actively produced. This is where the "organic intellectual" fits in. While "traditional intellectuals," who are found in positions of privilege, generally act to reproduce hegemony, organic intellectuals can emerge from within subaltern groups (Gramsci 1971). They are critical intellectuals, whose lived experience within a subaltern group leads them to critique the dominant hegemony. While everyone has the potential to become an organic intellectual, not everyone fulfills this social role (Gramsci 1971, 9). Organic intellectuals are the nuclei around which counter-hegemonic discourses emerge. As Hall writes, "The organic intellectual cannot absolve himself or herself from the responsibility of transmitting those ideas, that knowledge, through the intellectual function, to those who do not belong, professionally, in the intellectual class (Hall 1992, 281).

Stuart Hall’s concept of "articulation" provides an important addition to the Gramscian theoretical framework. The notion of articulation focuses on the social process whereby discourses are joined with each other; as well as with historically
specific political and economic practices (Grossberg 1996; Rupert 2000). The concept of articulation is defined by Hall as follows:

An articulation is . . . the form of the of the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time. . . . the so-called “unity” of a discourse is really the articulation of different, distinct elements which can be re-articulated in different ways . . . The “unity” which matters is a linkage between that articulated discourse and the social forces with which it can, under certain historical conditions, but need not necessarily, be connected (Hall qtd Grossberg 1996, 53).

As an illustrative example, Rupert uses the concept of articulation to examine how anti-globalization discourse has been linked with both progressive, leftist political movements, as well as with a right-wing political agenda (Rupert 2000). In his analysis, we see how the counter-hegemonic critique of globalization can be articulated with demands for social justice and environmental sustainability. Alternately, it can be articulated with a nationalist and religious fundamentalist political agenda. Through the key concept of articulation, we see how hegemonic values are linked to political and economic structures in specific historical-social locations. Articulation helps us map the points of convergence between culture, economy and politics.

Finally, Laurie Adkin provides a useful illustration of a Gramscian environmental sociology. Adkin argues that there is “not one ‘environmentalism’ but many,” which can either be articulated with hegemonic or counter-hegemonic political projects (Adkin
Adkin has examined both the diversity of Canadian environmentalism, as well as the broader discourse of "sustainable development" (Adkin 1992; Adkin 2000). Through this research, she has demonstrated how environmentalism may either be contained, through articulation with an eco-capitalist project; or how it may be mobilized as part of a broader counter-hegemonic movement. For Adkin, the "apolitical" environmental discourse adapted by many social movement actors can lead to a sort of "passive revolution." In Gramscian theory, the trap of "passive revolution" is described as the failure "to alter hegemonic constraints" by engaging in a politics geared towards "limited reforms" (Carroll & Ratner 1999, 31). In Adkin's view, the radical democratic potential of ecology has frequently been contained within the structures of a capitalist economy. Writing about the "sustainable development" project, Adkin observes:

Many environmentalists have been persuaded that market mechanisms offer the only achievable gains for environmental objectives. There has been a trend towards . . . the adoption of an environmental management approach linked to technological modernization . . . and divorced from transformative social projects (Adkin 2000, 64).

By contrast, Adkin argues that environmental discourse and politics should be articulated with other social movements in a broader counter-hegemonic movement.

Gramscian theory provides a good model for understanding how hegemony is constructed, maintained, challenged and transformed. It gives a useful account of how elite values are disseminated and integrated, without relying on a crude "dominant ideology" perspective. However, I believe that this model can be enriched by
incorporating insights from Michel Foucault about the relationship between power and knowledge. Foucauldian theory enables us to better understand how hegemony is produced at a specific site, such as a newspaper text. Thus, I would like to bring Foucault’s theory of power/knowledge into dialogue with Gramscian theory.

Foucault’s model of power points to an understanding of power as a process, rather than as a property, or an object. As Silverman writes, “Power . . . is not reducible to one factor but is a network of relations. It is not the privilege of a dominant class but the overall effect of its strategic positions” (Foucault qtd Silverman 1985, 84). In this model, power is not a zero sum game. Individuals are embedded within networks of power. They simultaneously wield power and are governed by it in their relationships with others. According to Foucault, power “is never localized here or there, never in anybody’s hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization” (Foucault 1980b, 98). From this understanding of power, it follows that an analysis of power must concern itself with the processes through which power is exercised. As Foucault writes:

If power is properly speaking the way in which relations of forces are deployed and given concrete expression, rather than analyzing it in terms of cession, contract or alienation, or functionally in terms of its maintenance of the relations of production, should we not analyze it primarily in terms of struggle, conflict and war? (Foucault 1980b, 90).

In this formulation, discursive strategies of power are not translated wholesale by dominant groups into social practice (Gordon 1980). Just as hegemony is never a
finished project, so too are strategies of power contested and re-shaped as they are applied in real social relations.

Building upon this model of power, Foucault introduces the concept of power/knowledge: the notion that power is intimately linked with discourse. Gordon writes that discourses are marked by “immanent principles of regularity, they are also bound by regulations enforced through social practices of appropriation, control and policing” (Gordon 1980, 245). The regulation of discourse deals with who is allowed to speak on a given topic and which knowledges are subjugated in the production of “truth” (Foucault 1980b, 81-82). Discourses are vehicles, or sites, of social power. As Foucault notes, “relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses” (Foucault 1980b, 93). If discourses are sites for the exercise of social power, then the production of discourse may also constrain and challenge the exercise of power.

Networks of power/knowledge are also sites of resistance, where “truth” is produced and contested by oppositional groups as well as elites. The result, as Gordon writes, is that “discourse is a political commodity” (Gordon 1980, 245).

Foucault’s understanding of discourse, power and knowledge leads to the post-structural destabilization of “truth.” From this perspective, truth becomes a social construct, built from a network of dominant discourses. As Foucault writes: “Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true” (Foucault 1980a, 131). From a Foucauldian perspective, the research task cannot be to evaluate discourse as “true” or “false,” as all
discourses are socially constructed. Rather, we can see only how discourses are mobilized in the exercise of social power.

There are both points of intersection and points of tension involved in bringing Gramscian and Foucauldian theory together. Here, I will turn to critiques of Foucault which justify the subordination of Foucauldian key concepts within a broadly Gramscian theoretical lens. In Nancy Fraser’s critique of Foucault, she problematizes Foucault’s “bracketing” of epistemological and normative frameworks in his analysis of power/knowledge (Fraser 1989). For Fraser, there is a tension in Foucault’s work between claims to normative agnosticism, and a style of writing which is obviously engaged and critical. For her, this tension is unresolved in Foucault’s own work, leading to vagueness. Thus, Fraser illuminates one of the points of tension between Foucault and Gramsci. Foucault’s refusal to apply moral evaluation to the production of discourse or the exercise of power is inconsistent with Gramscian theory’s commitment to a critical and politically engaged research stance. From a Foucauldian perspective, we cannot evaluate whether or not a given discourse is “true” or “false.” The evaluation of “truth” is outside the realm of debate, once we accept that the “truth” of a discourse is not an objective fact, but rather the result of the exercise of social power. Bringing Foucault into dialogue with Gramscian theory may be one way to circumvent Foucault’s moral agnosticism, while acknowledging the tenuous character of “truth.”

Like Fraser, Hall argues that Foucault’s key concepts of discourse, power/knowledge and discipline are incompatible with an “apolitical” stance which rejects the notion of ideology (Grossberg 1996). As Hall notes, “What Foucault would
talk about is the setting in place, through the institutionalization of a discursive regime, of a number of competing regimes of truth and, within these regimes, the operation of power” (Hall qtd Grossberg 1996, 48). For Hall, this is quite consistent with Gramsci’s notion of hegemony, despite Foucault’s reluctance to use the term “ideology.” Hall continues, arguing, “I don’t see how you can retain the notion of ‘resistance,’ as he does, without facing questions about the constitution of dominance in ideology” (48). For Hall, we can comprehend Foucault’s notion of power/knowledge as something similar to Gramsci’s model of “hegemony.” By integrating the most useful key concepts from Foucault into a broadly Gramscian framework, we move towards a resolution of this ambiguity in Foucauldian theory.

Another point of criticism raised by Hall deals with Foucault’s exclusive focus on discourse as a field of inquiry. Hall argues that “the fully discursive position is a reductionism upward, rather than a reductionism downward, as economism was” (Hall qtd Grossberg 1996, 57). Here, bringing Foucault into dialogue with Gramsci is also useful, as Gramscian theory retains a focus on “the way in which ideological/cultural/discursive practices continue to exist within the determining lines of force of material relations, and the expropriation of nature” (57). Thus, while Foucault’s model of power/knowledge may be a useful analytical tool for examining how power is produced, exercised and challenged in a specific research site, Gramscian theory draws our attention to the need to link the politics of discourse with political and economic relationships in the world beyond the text. In a similar vein, Carroll and Ratner note that the post-structural erasure of a sense of structural – or “extra-discursive” -- boundaries to social behaviour is problematic (Carroll & Ratner 1994). By locating the Foucauldian
key concepts of power/knowledge and discourse within a broadly Gramscian analytical framework, we can more usefully account for the ways in which discourse is articulated with political and economic conflict outside the realm of the textual.

Routledge and Gill have each attempted to theorize the intersection of Foucauldian and Gramscian theory. Both of these authors argue that Foucault is so focused on the microsocial dimension of power that he neglects the macrosocial dimension. Routledge argues that Foucault’s conception of power, while offering insight, is “too amorphous” (Routledge 1996, 511). He writes that power “has both macro and micro dimensions – local resistances tend to privilege the subject while macro processes (e.g. imperialism) tend to be manipulated by states – and this difference is not given due consideration by Foucault” (511). In a similar vein, Gill writes: “Despite the Foucauldian preoccupation with the problematic of power/knowledge as localized and institutionalized by discourse, with localized resistance . . . there is . . . no adequate link between macro and micro-structures of power” (Gill 1995, 403). Both Routledge and Gill attempt to bridge Foucauldian concepts with a Gramscian framework as a means to ground Foucault’s model of power/knowledge in a model of political life which has a more adequate grasp of economic and political structure (Gill 1995; Routledge 1996).

Finally, Carroll and Ratner note that there is a profound difference between the Gramscian notion of counter-hegemony and the model of “anti-hegemony” which is implicit in Foucauldian theory (Carroll & Ratner 1994). As they write, the form of resistance espoused by Foucault is “not counter-hegemonic in the sense of aspiring to build consensus around an emancipatory project; it is anti-hegemonic in the sense of
opposing attempts to construct a general interest of whatever kind” (Carroll & Ratner 1994, 13). Here, Gramsci’s notion of counter-hegemony is more useful if we wish to adopt a critical research stance, which is aligned with a movement for social change.

Despite the points of tension between Gramscian and Foucauldian theory, there is also a degree of convergence, which makes a dialogue between their respective bodies of work interesting and useful. Foucault’s notion of power/knowledge is a useful addition to the Gramscian framework in that it reinforces the notion that “hegemony” is not an object that is wielded by one class over another. Rather, it may be viewed as a macro-social description of a multitude of social processes, many of which occur on a micro-social level. Hegemony may be read as a short-hand for the repeated exercise of ideological power across a vast number of social sites. This conception of power draws attention to the need to research the localized sites where hegemony is exercised, such as newspaper texts. While Gramsci offers the conceptual tools for a larger-scale explanation of hegemony, Foucault offers the analytical tools for examining the production of hegemony at the local level. Thus, a theoretical lens built at the intersection of Gramsci and Foucault is potentially very useful for an analysis of the mass media.

Summary

In this chapter, I explored theoretical tensions within both media sociology and environmental sociology. In each of these theoretical traditions, there is a point of tension between critical and postmodern perspectives. Both critical theory and

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13 This is not an error made by Gramsci, or by the other Gramscian theorists discussed here. However, as Hall notes, this misuse of “hegemony” is quite common (Grossberg 1996, 59).
postmodern theory have insights that are worth drawing upon. Likewise, each perspective illuminates the limitations of the other. From this point of departure, I have developed a theoretical lens that is located at the Gramsci-Foucault nexus.

Beginning with a Gramscian foundation, I will draw upon the key concepts of hegemony, counter-hegemony and articulation for my data analysis. Hegemony refers to the way in which the public is integrated into the value system of a capitalist economy. Hegemony is the means by which society’s elites secure the consent of the governed. Counter-hegemony refers to the oppositional critiques and ideologies mobilized by subaltern groups and “organic intellectuals.” Furthermore, Hall’s concept of articulation provides a tool for understanding how discourses are always linked to political and economic practices in the formation of hegemony, or counter-hegemony. Articulation allows us to conceptualize how a specific discourse may be joined with different political and economic practices.

From this Gramscian starting point, I will also draw upon Foucault’s key concept of power/knowledge. Through this concept, we see how discourse is intimately linked with networks of social power. Through the notion of power/knowledge, Foucault describes something that approximates the operation of hegemony on a more micro-social level. As such, power/knowledge is a useful conceptual tool for examining how hegemony plays out at specific sites of analysis, such as newspaper texts.

Into this framework, I also wish to import relevant concepts from media sociology and environmental sociology. From critical media theory, we are sensitized to the ways in which news texts construct a social reality that is articulated with networks of
economic and political power. By contrast, postmodern theory draws attention to the fact that the text cannot only be taken at face value. While my own reading of textual materials may be valid, it is not the only possible reading. The notion of the active audience points to the primary limitation of textual analysis: we cannot assume that the content of a textually-constructed social reality is translated wholesale into the social reality of the audience.

Finally, I wish to draw upon the Allan Schnaiberg’s concepts of the “treadmill of production,” “managed scarcity” and “ecological synthesis.” These concepts seem to provide a fairly accurate model of the ways in which natural ecosystems are integrated into the capitalist mode of production. Furthermore, political ecology illustrates the need to understand environmental conflict as a social justice issue. At the same time, the constructivist thread in environmental sociology alerts us to the ways in which “the environment” is socially constructed through public discourse. Within the Gramsci-Foucault nexus, we may comprehend how discursive constructions of nature and discourses about the meaning of environmental policy are articulated with networks of political and economic power.

It is true that this theoretical lens is somewhat eclectic. Due to the nature of this research project, I am compelled to draw upon both theoretical work in both media and environmental sociology. Yet, the critical and postmodern tendencies in both bodies of theory offer useful insights. Thus, drawing upon an overarching theoretical lens constructed from the intersection of Gramsci and Foucault seems to be a useful means bringing the critical and the postmodern into dialogue with each other. My goal is not to
resolve the points of tension inherent in these different perspectives. I have neither the space nor the ability to attempt that here. Rather, I only hope that this theoretical lens will prove a useful tool for understanding the ways in which the Vancouver Sun constructs a textual reality concerning forestry and land-use policy debate in BC. Furthermore, this theoretical lens may be useful for articulating the findings from this specific research project with a larger understanding of how media discourse about environmental policy works to reinforce and challenge networks of power/knowledge and hegemony.

In the next chapter, I will describe the methodology of this study. I will outline the method of Foucauldian discourse analysis, a qualitative approach to the study of textual material. I will also provide a reflexive account of my research process, focusing on my standpoint as a research, on the research context, and on the strengths and limitations of my chosen methodology.
CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will discuss the methodology used to analyze the Vancouver Sun’s construction of forestry and land use policy debate in British Columbia, between 1991 and 2003. In the first section, I will provide an introductory discussion of Foucauldian discourse analysis, the approach used for this research project. In the following section, I will provide a more detailed chronicle of the sampling, data coding and analysis phases of the research. Finally, I will draw upon Walsh’s model of the four dimensions of reflexivity, as I engage in a process of self-reflection about the research process (Walsh 2002).

Methodological Framework

For this research project, I have used a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis. According to Jaworski and Coupland, discourse is “language use relative to social, political and cultural formations — it is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order, and shaping individuals’ interaction with society” (Jaworski & Coupland 1999, 3). That is, discourse may loosely be defined as language used in social interaction. As such, discourse analysis examines how language is used in specific social locations to construct social reality. Beginning from the premise that language is an important means by which social reality is constructed, discourse analysis asserts that discourse cannot be seen as simply “a neutral medium for the transmission

14 The sociological focus of discourse analysis on the use of language to construct social reality has roots in the Symbolic Interactionist tradition embodied by George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) and Herbert Blumer (1900-1986).
and reception of pre-existing knowledge” (Jaworski & Coupland 1999, 4). Instead, discourse is “the key ingredient in the very constitution of knowledge” (4).

Discourse analysis is the set of qualitative research methods that chronicle and interpret the social use of language, or discourse. Conversation analysis, narrative analysis and critical discourse analysis are a few of the more sociologically-oriented approaches to discourse analysis. Discourse analysis may also be done from a more psychological or linguistic standpoint. I would characterize my own approach as “Foucauldian discourse analysis,” as I wish to draw upon the concepts of “archaeology” and “genealogy” that have been developed by Michel Foucault and his successors. However, I would note that Foucault’s approach has been located within the broader umbrella of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough & Wodak 1997; Jaworski & Coupland 1999). According to Jaworski and Coupland, critical discourse analysis is “a means of exposing or deconstructing the social practices which constitute ‘social structure’ and . . . the conventional meaning structures of social life” (Jaworski and Coupland 1999, 6).

That is, critical discourse analysis is not content simply to chronicle the discourses that are used by different social actors. Instead, critical discourse analysis attempts to link the production and use of discourse with political and economic networks of social power and inequality. (Fairclough & Wodak 1997).

From a Foucauldian perspective, discourse is ultimately a “political commodity” (Gordon 1980, 245). According to Foucault, discourse is a medium of social power. He writes that “there can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth” (Foucault 1980b, 93). Foucauldian discourse analysis “locates power at the level of discursive formations which make possible specific truths and knowledges
and which also make possible specific kinds of agents and structures” (Apperly 1997, 15). Archeology and genealogy are complementary analytical tools which are used in the Foucauldian approach. Taken together, these analytic tools allow us to describe the ways in which discourse constructs a web of power/knowledge that shapes our social realities (Gordon 1980).

For Foucault, archeology is a useful tool for describing how discursive formations come into being, as well as how discursive formations construct social objects (Foucault 1972). Through archeology, we attempt to describe how discourse “restricts, limits and arranges what can and cannot be said” about a given subject (Prior 1997, 70-71). Archeological analysis looks at the ways in which “discourse empowers certain agents to create representations,” thereby privileging certain social actors and marginalizing others from the practices that shape our social realities (71). Put another way, archeology examines the “limits and forms of the sayable” within a particular social setting (Foucault 1991, 59). In documenting how social knowledge is constructed through discourse, archeology describes how “sanctioned forms of rational discourse” are linked to “governing systems of order, appropriation and exclusion” (Gordon 1980, 233). Thus, archeology is concerned with the ways in which the production of discourses of “truth” perpetuates relationships of social power. In short, archeology helps us to understand and deconstruct the systems of power/knowledge that are created through discourse.

By contrast, genealogical analysis focuses on the patterns of silence which characterize the production of discourse. That is, genealogy recognizes that what is excluded from the production of discourse is often as important as what is included. As Foucault writes, “There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the
strategies that underlie and permeate discourses” (Foucault 1978, 27). As such, genealogy attempts—to the degree possible—to illuminate these silences and bring them to the foreground. If archaeology is concerned with understanding “local discursivities,” then genealogy is “the tactics whereby, on the basis of the description of these local discursivities, the subjected knowledges which were thus released would be brought into play” (Foucault 1980b, 85). In other words, genealogy is an attempted “insurrection of subjugated knowledges” (Foucault 1980b, 81; italics in original).15

In terms of the present research project, the archeological approach leads to questions about how the Vancouver Sun constructs discursive networks of power/knowledge that privilege certain discourses, while marginalizing others. It also leads to questions about how the dominant discourses of the Sun construct social objects, such as forest policy, protected areas policy, nature, forestry companies, environmentalists, or the government. By contrast, the concept of genealogy leads to questions about the discourses that have been rendered invisible within environmental news. Through a genealogical approach, I will attempt to illuminate some of the possible “truths” that lie beyond the boundaries of the social reality constructed by the Sun.

The Foucauldian model of discourse analysis is an appealing method for this project, as it is already articulated with Foucault’s model of power/knowledge. Thus, the method seems a natural match for the theoretical lens I have developed. I also appreciate the way in which “archeology” and “genealogy” sensitize the researcher to different elements of the textual construction of social reality. In coding the news texts from the

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15 While Foucault’s method of genealogy is concerned with these “patterned silences,” it is also essentially a historical method. Thus, I should qualify this discussion by noting that my use of genealogy represents a partial appropriation of the concept (Cf. Gordon 1980; Apperly 1997; and Darier 1999b).
Sun, I employed the archeological tactic of searching out “dominant discourses.” These are the claims which are repeatedly mobilized to construct “truth” in a system of power/knowledge. Drawing upon the notion of genealogy, I also noted the discursive themes which seemed relevant, but were absent from the social reality of the media texts. These are the “subjugated discourses” within the Sun’s construction of environmental policy in British Columbia. However, I should note that the archeological analysis forms the bulk of my research results. By contrast, my genealogical analysis is more tentative and partial.

While Foucauldian discourse analysis appeals to me as a general approach, it offers little methodological detail. There is little advice about how to use the this approach in sampling, coding, or theorizing from textual data. The work of Kirby and McKenna was invaluable for providing more precise guidelines (1989). From these authors, I adopted the method of reading the texts and coding “bibbits,” small pieces of relevant data that could be sorted into different coding categories. Once I had read through a number of texts, I compared data within and between coding categories in an attempt to build up descriptive observations. I continued the process of coding newspaper texts and reviewing my coding categories until I felt I had reached a sufficient degree of saturation. Kirby and McKenna define saturation as the state where “the addition of new bibbits does not alter the overall complexion of the category” (Kirby & McKenna 1989, 138). Kirby and McKenna’s approach is similar to “grounded theory,” in that conclusions are built up through the gradual and constant comparison of observations about data, both within coding categories and between categories (Kirby & McKenna 1989).
Research Process

In this section, I will provide an account of my own research process. As per the advice of Kirby and McKenna, I kept a detailed research journal throughout the project (Kirby & McKenna 1989). This journal allowed me to keep track of the sampling process, to document emergent themes in the data, and to engage in a process of self-reflection about both the research process and my standpoint as a researcher. The discussion presented here draws heavily upon my research journal, without going into as much detail.

For this research project, I collected texts from the *Vancouver Sun* during a period from the beginning of 1991 to the summer of 2003. These texts covered four specific environmental policy initiatives: the NDP’s Protected Areas Strategy; the NDP’s Forest Practices Code; the Liberals’ Results-based Forest Practices Code; and the Liberals’ Working Forest initiative. I began by sampling texts that addressed the Protected Areas Strategy. I then coded and analyzed this group of texts before sampling for texts that addressed the Forest Practices Code. After coding and analyzing the Forest Practices Code texts, I collected texts on the Results-based Code. Finally, after coding and analyzing this group of articles, I sampled texts on the Working Forest initiative.

In gathering texts from the *Sun*, I followed the qualitative convention of using theoretical, or purposive sampling, rather than the method of random sampling associated with quantitative forms of textual analysis. As Silverman notes, “Purposive sampling allows us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested” (Silverman 2001, 250). Purposive sampling is inherently flexible and can emerge as research proceeds. Small groups of texts can be selected as required to
illuminate theoretically-interesting social processes (Miles and Huberman 1994). By the
time I had reached saturation, I had sampled and coded approximately twenty texts for
each of the four policy initiatives.16

To collect newspaper texts, I used two different online databases: Canadian
NewsDisc and Canadian Newsstand. While I preferred working with the search engine
on Canadian NewsDisc, it was limited to texts published after 1994. As my sampling
frame covered the period from 1991 to 2003, I used Canadian Newsstand as a secondary
source for material, as it covers the period from 1991 to 1994. Also, part-way through
this project, Canadian NewsDisc was merged with Canadian Newsstand. As such, I used
Canadian Newsstand exclusively to collect texts on the Liberals’ Results-based Forest
Practices Code, as well as the Liberals’ Working Forest initiative.

To begin, I gathered texts on the NDP’s protected areas strategy from the
Canadian NewsDisc online database. I searched all types of Sun articles from 1994 to
May of 2001, when the Liberals replaced the NDP as government. I chose to include all
types of articles, rather than focusing only on news texts, because I believe that editorials,
columns and letters may have as important a role as news stories in shaping the textual
social reality of the Sun. I did a key-word search for “protected areas” or “Parks Legacy”
(a term used later in the NDP period to describe the Protected Areas Strategy) in the full
text of articles. After removing articles that were irrelevant (i.e. those that talked about
“protected areas” outside of British Columbia), I was left with a set of 27 texts. I
imported these into N6, a software package for qualitative data analysis (QSR 2002).
After collecting the articles from Canadian NewsDisc, I went to Canadian Newsstand to
collect articles from the period from 1991 to 1994. A keyword search for “protected

16 A complete list of the news articles that comprise my four textual archives is included as Appendix I.
areas” in the citation/abstract of Sun articles led to 10 more useful texts. These were also imported to N6.

After coding and analyzing this first group of articles, a process I will describe in more detail below, I collected texts on the NDP Forest Practices Code. First, I searched Canadian Newsstand during the period from 1991 to 1994. Keyword searching for “Forest Practices Code” in the Sun turned up several hundred articles. I limited this sample by searching for articles that contained the keywords “Forest Practices Code” and either “NDP” or “New Democratic Party” in the article text. This gave me a set of twelve texts, which I imported to N6. I then searched Canadian NewsDisc, using the same keyword search strategy. A search of the full article text turned up over 100 articles, so I reduced the set of articles by doing a lead paragraph search for the keywords “Forest Practices Code” and either “NDP” or “New Democratic Party.” This turned up a set of seven articles.

As I progressed through the coding and analysis of the Forest Practices Code texts, I felt that too many of the articles were only tangentially relevant. I returned to Canadian NewsDisc and searched for “Forest Practices Code” (without “NDP” or “New Democratic Party” as a limiter) as a keyword in the lead paragraph of Sun news and op-ed articles from 1994 to 1996. Thus, I focused on the period immediately leading up to, and following, the introduction of the Code. This gave me seven additional texts to work with, which I imported to N6. I then searched Canadian NewsDisc for “Forest Practices Code” in the lead paragraph of articles published from 1996 to 2001. This search turned up 25 articles. I limited this number by focusing only on front page articles. This gave me another seven articles to import to N6. To complete this second stage of sampling, I
also imported two front page articles which contained "Forest Practices Code" as a lead paragraph keyword, which were published between 1991 and 1994. The texts collected through this second round of sampling allowed me to reach a degree of saturation that I was comfortable with.

The third environmental policy news I sampled for was the Liberals' "Results-based" Forest Practices Code. When I attempted to access Canadian NewsDisc for this group of texts the database was no longer accessible through the University of Victoria library gateway. As a result, all of the texts for this group were drawn from Canadian Newsstand. A search for "Forest Practices Code," or "results based code" as keywords in the full article text of articles published between May 2001 and the summer of 2003 turned up an unwieldy 98 hits. By limiting my search to article citations and abstracts, I arrived at a set of 20 texts, which I imported to N6.

The final group of articles dealt with the Liberals' Working Forest Initiative. For this set, I searched for "working forest" as a keyword in the full-text of articles. This gave me a set of 26 relevant articles, which I imported to N6. Out of curiosity, I also searched for "protected areas" as a keyword in the full-text of articles. This turned up 18 hits, most of which were irrelevant, as they discussed protected areas news outside BC. In general, the Liberal government has dealt with protected areas in a very piece-meal way, rather than through any distinct policy initiatives. This confirmed, in my mind, that the Working Forest initiative was a useful episode to pair with the NDP Protected Areas Strategy.

After each phase of sampling, I coded and analyzed the different sets of texts. The coding process involved reading through the texts in small groups (sub-samples from
the original groups), which were chosen through a process of purposive sampling. That is, each subset of three-to-five texts was selected on the basis that they were theoretically interesting. One general principle that guided my selection of sub-samples was a desire to maintain an approximate balance between news texts, on one hand, and editorials, op-ed pieces and columns, on the other hand.

Rather than engage in a detailed discussion of the coding and analysis of each of the groups of texts, I will provide a more general description of this process, as it remained the same throughout the research project. While I did draw upon the Foucauldian sensitizing concepts outlined above, I did not create a comprehensive “coding scheme” prior to engaging with my data. As Silverman notes, while coding schemes are useful for helping us to move quickly through data, they also “furnish ‘a powerful conceptual grid’ from which it is difficult to escape” (Silverman 2000, 825). By adhering to a preconceived coding scheme, the “uncategorized activities” within the data are likely to go unnoticed (825). In an attempt to address this problem, I created codes as I read through the data. While this resulted in a make-shift “coding scheme” that was often redundant and required work to pare down, I believe it was worth coding from the data to avoid putting on the conceptual blinders of a pre-defined scheme.

I coded each text I read for the “bibbits” that felt relevant. As Kirby and McKenna note, a bibbit is a “snippet or bite of information” that feels important (Kirby & McKenna 1989, 135). The bibbits were originally coded to “free nodes” in N6, which are stand-alone categories used to collect similar pieces of data (QSR 2002). As I began working through my data, I found that I was adding several coding categories, or “free nodes,” with each text. As the number of free nodes became unwieldy, I sorted the free
nodes into a "node tree," which orders the nodes in relation to each other (QSR 2002). For example, nodes were organized into trees based on who was speaking within the text; whether the bibbits were drawn from news texts or editorials; whether the bibbits demonstrated some facet of a particular type of discourse; or whether a node was a "satellite" and not obviously related to any other node. After sorting free nodes into a node tree, I deleted nodes that appeared to be irrelevant and merged nodes that were redundant. However, I was often reluctant to delete or merge nodes until I had read through a substantial number of texts for each policy initiative. As a result, I went through the process of re-reading and revising my node trees several times as I worked through each group of texts.

As I worked through several readings of the texts, I also made document memos and annotations (QSR 2002). Memos are personal notes that are attached to nodes, while annotations are notes that are inserted within the original news texts, but which can also be retrieved separately. In addition to creating memos about the texts, I also kept memos about the patterned silences which I perceived in the texts. Through repeated readings of my memos and annotations, I was able to build up my own observations until I felt that I had reached degree of saturation that allowed me to form conclusions about the data.

The conclusions that were drawn through working with N6 were primarily "descriptive," rather than analytical or interpretive (Wolcott 1994). That is, I attempted to summarize the data without going engaging in extensive theoretical interpretation. Through this descriptive reading of the data, I was able to make some observations about the dominant discourses contained in the news texts. Only after I finished working through the coding and analysis phase of all four groups of texts did I attempt to draw
more “interpretive” conclusions, where I attempted to articulate my findings with my theoretical lens. A process of repeated free-writing, as well as the creation of visual maps, helped me to link the data and my theoretical lens.

**Reflexive Account**

Several writers on qualitative sociology emphasize the importance of engaging in a process of self-reflexivity as part of the research process (Kleinman, Copp, & Henderson 1996; Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong 2000; Walsh 2002). For Kleinman, Copp and Henderson, self-reflexivity is a means of moving beyond the “folk notions of science,” the positivist ideals of validity, reliability and academic objectivity that are becoming increasingly untenable (Kleinman, Copp, & Henderson 1996). In the remainder of this chapter, I would like to draw upon Walsh’s “four dimensions of reflexivity” to provide a reflexive account of my own research process (Walsh 2002). First, I will address the dimension of methodological reflexivity, through which I will explore the limitations of Foucauldian discourse analysis as a method. Second, I will address the dimension of personal reflexivity, through which I will explore my standpoint as a researcher. Finally, I will address the dimension of interpersonal reflexivity. Normally, this refers to the impact of the researcher’s interactions with research participants. However, since I have used a non-interactive research method, I would like to address the lack of interpersonal interaction and the implications this has for my research.

Walsh’s model of reflexivity includes a fourth dimension, termed contextual reflexivity (Walsh 2002). Contextual reflexivity refers to the implications of the research
context for the research project. For the most part, issues of contextual reflexivity overlap with discussions of the other types of reflexivity. Thus, a separate discussion of contextual reflexivity would largely be redundant.

**Methodological Reflexivity**

Analysis of the media construction of social reality can focus on any of four distinct levels of inquiry: the ownership of media institutions, the production of texts by media workers, the audience reception of texts, or the content of the text itself (Eldridge 1993). Here, I have chosen to focus on the world of the textual, rather than the related social processes of production or reception. There are theoretical reasons for focusing on textually-embedded discourse. First, discourse influences the formation of the “social identities” of individuals and groups (Fraser 1997). Second, the creation of dominant discourses is inextricably linked to the Gramscian notion of “hegemony,” the “process wherein cultural authority is negotiated and contested” (Fraser 1997, 154). Thus, discourse is intimately related to questions of social power and conflict. Finally, discourse analysis can illuminate sites of resistance to hegemony and show “how, even under conditions of subordination, . . . [subaltern groups] participate in the making of culture” (154).

My choice to focus on news texts as a site of inquiry is also pragmatic. Textual analysis is unobtrusive and data are readily available through online databases. As Babbie notes, using texts also makes it easier to study social processes over a longer period of time (Babbie 1995). By using the *Vancouver Sun* as my field of inquiry, I was able to study the discursive construction of environmental policy debate over a twelve-
year period, something that would have been impractical using interviews, focus groups, or ethnography as an approach.

For this project I have chosen a qualitative approach to textual analysis that may be termed Foucauldian (or critical) discourse analysis. The choice to use a qualitative approach to textual analysis reflects my primary interest in the “latent content” of media communication, defined by Babbie as the underlying meaning of the text (Babbie 1995). This is distinct from the quantitative approach of content analysis, which focuses on the “manifest content” of the text. This is the “visible surface content,” such as words or phrases (Babbie 1995, 312). The choice to work with a qualitative method also reflects my unease with the “folk notions of science” embedded in quantitative analysis. I do not believe that the positivist constructions of objectivity, validity and reliability that are usually articulated with quantitative research are tenable in light of post-structural and postmodern theory (Gubrium & Holstein 1997; Davies 1999; Lincoln & Denzin 2000).

There are genuine benefits to working with texts, as a non-obtrusive research strategy. However, the choice to work with textual materials also has limitations. Kirby and McKenna raise one of the problems with unobtrusive research methods. They write:

As with a camera, the person doing the recording has a particular view or perspective, . . . the recording is a snapshot view of the world; the researcher then analyzes the particular frame or record outside of its living context. This can lead to errors of interpretation. It can also lead to observing only those experiences which record well (Kirby & McKenna 1989, 84).
Thus, working with media texts can lead to a narrow focus on the more dramatic events in environmental conflict, those which play well as news. The discourses represented in environmental news are those that have been rendered “newsworthy”; the news text does not capture environmental policy debate in its entirety. As a result, I have tried to remain conscious that there is a lot going on outside the world of the textual, that is not included in the news texts that inform my analysis. At the same time, this critique would be more poignant if I was only using news texts as a resource for examining environmental conflict, without problematizing the ways in which the Sun constructs a particular reality about environmental policy. Given that I am treating the Sun as a research subject, rather than as a resource, I believe that I can treat Kirby and McKenna’s critique as a cautionary note, rather than as a serious challenge to my analysis.

However, there is a more substantial qualification that applies to research that is limited to textual data. There are limitations to the inferences I can make about the “effects” of the textual social reality on real audience members. As the results of this research are grounded only in my own interpretations of the news texts, I cannot draw conclusions about news production and audience reception solely from an analysis of textually-embedded discourse. If I did wish to make inferences about news production or reception, I would have to triangulate my research, using other methods to gather data from audience members or media workers. While this would have been an interesting research strategy, it would have required far more time and greater resources to execute.

In both my analysis and in the presentation of my results, I have paid limited attention to the location of articles within the Vancouver Sun. While I have noted how many articles within each textual archive appeared as opinion pieces (editorials, columns
and letters to the editor), I have not structured my discourse analysis to account for how these different "genres" of newspaper texts work in terms of the overall network of power/knowledge constructed by the *Sun*. As both Hackett and Ericson et al. note, letters to the editor are particularly important for providing a sense of democratic "legitimacy" to newspapers. The letters section is the site where readers can participate in the news debate (Ericson, Baranek & Chan 1989; Hackett 1991). Letters and opinion pieces may also be used to circumvent the greater ideological "closure" of news texts. Hackett writes, "Letters to the editor... can be used to shift the terms of debate, challenge the language in dominant use, and extend the range of perspectives that otherwise would have been available" (Hackett 1991, 279). However, at the same time, these opinion pieces may be treated less seriously by readers, since they fall on the "opinion" side of the fact/opinion dichotomy that underlies news discourse (Ericson, Baranek & Chan 1989). By paying insufficient attention to the location of discourse within these different news genres, I have left a lacuna in my analysis that should be addressed any future work on environmental discourse and the mass media.

Jaworski and Coupland's discussion of discourse analysis also raises two points worth considering. The authors describe a range of linguistic and psychoanalytic approaches that I did not consider, due to the disciplinary boundaries I am working within (Jaworski & Coupland 1999). The choice to work within a more sociological framework has real impacts on what I am able to see. Another qualification which emerges from Jaworski and Coupland's discussion centres on the analysis of non-verbal semiotic systems as part of discourse analysis (Jaworski & Coupland 1999; also see Hall 1981). The original, print versions of the texts I am analyzing might have contained
photos that were not available through the electronic databases I used for data collection. As Hall notes, news photos provide an added aura of naturalism and realism to the news, as they are generally taken to be "literal visual-transcriptions of the 'real world'" (Hall 1981, 241). The question remains: has my analysis has lost anything through the exclusion of news photographs as a data source?

A further point of qualification emerges from Foucault's notion of "points of discontinuity" that structure historical research (Foucault 1972). These are the points of historical change that are used as reference points for research. For Foucault, the choice of points of discontinuity has effects on the research results. In this project, my own points of discontinuity are marked by transitions in the provincial government of BC. The point at which the NDP came into power and the transition from the NDP to the Liberals are the two most important points of discontinuity in the construction of my research problem. The choice to focus on points of discontinuity in the government ruled out an alternative possibility of organizing my work around the changes in the Sun's ownership. In such a research design, the points of discontinuity might have been the transition in ownership from Southam to Hollinger, then from Hollinger to CanWest Global. This alternative design would have led to a different organization of my data and might have produced different results.

The final methodological consideration I would like to discuss concerns my use of computer software for data analysis. Lee and Fielding do a good job of assessing the strengths of qualitative software (Lee & Fielding 1991). They emphasize the flexibility of computerized coding schemes, which allow the researcher to easily rethink and rework the structure of their data. They also note that qualitative software allows the researcher
to move easily between the coding scheme and the original data. Elsewhere, Kelle points out that software facilitates the clerical work of indexing (coding) and retrieving data (Kelle 1997). In other words, it facilitates processes that occur naturally in manual research. Thus, qualitative software offers a pragmatic advantage in that the “tedious” elements of qualitative research are reduced and more time can be dedicated to data analysis and interpretation.

There are several important critiques of computer-assisted research to consider. Lee and Fielding provide a list of possible limitations of qualitative software. First, the computer is located within a “technical” culture which can encourage “the exclusion of women.” Second, there is a possibility that “method” will define “substance,” that the structure of the computer program may influence the research design. Finally, software use may tempt researchers to engage in “quick and dirty research” that results in “premature theoretical closure” (Lee & Fielding 1991, 7-8). Elsewhere, Kelle notes that the “theory building” capabilities of qualitative software often lead researchers to use “fuzzy” coding categories to test very specific hypotheses (Kelle 1997). For Kelle, the misuse of theory building features can give an unfounded appearance of “scientific legitimacy” to qualitative research.

Seidel also offers an intriguing critique of qualitative software (Seidel 1991). He describes three forms of “analytic madness” that are encouraged by qualitative software. First, there is a tendency to focus on “scope” instead of “resolution,” wherein researchers take on too much data and ground their analysis in breadth rather than depth (Seidel 1991, 109). Second, there is a possibility that coding categories will become reified. In other words, researchers might lose sight of the postmodern recognition of the social
construction of their own coding schemes (112). Third, there is a possibility that the use of software will distance researchers from their data.

My own experience with N6 is that there are both strengths and limitations to software-assisted research. Like Kelle, I am skeptical about the “theory building” features of N6. Throughout my research, N6 was used primarily to facilitate the processes of data coding and retrieval. The analysis part of the research remained essentially human. Furthermore, the software made it easier to approach the data from a number of different directions, to navigate the data in a multiplicity of different ways. As such, I found N6 to be generally beneficial. If any of the critiques feel particularly relevant, it is that I may be guilty of choosing “scope” over “resolution,” as noted by Seidel (Seidel 1991). By using N6, I was able to work with a large number of articles. However, each of these articles probably did not get as “deep” a reading as they could have received if the groups of texts had been smaller. Of course, the choice to focus on “resolution” in my analysis would have meant an entirely different, more narrow, research design. To a certain extent, the breadth of my research design directed me to focus on scope, rather than resolution. If anything, N6 facilitated the work required to work with a larger body of data.

**Interpersonal reflexivity**

In this section I would like to address the lack of interaction involved in working with textual materials. Within Foucauldian discourse analysis, the text is a legitimate point of entry for qualitative research. The Foucauldian method of archeology is less concerned with the “validity” of a text, in terms of its truthful representation of the “real
world,” than it is with understanding the “origins, nature and structure of the discursive themes by means of which the text has been produced” (Prior 1997, 66). Prior argues that “the study of text need not be subordinated to studies of interaction, . . . still less do we need to seek out the ‘meaning’ or authorial intent of texts. Texts can constitute a starting point for qualitative analysis in their own right” (65).

While I generally agree with Prior about the legitimacy of textual analysis as an end in itself, it is still worth reflecting on the limits of what textual analysis allows us to say about the social impact of the mass media. As Dorothy Smith points out, we need to ask: “How can we take up post-structuralism’s discovery of how discourse speaks through us and beyond our intended meaning, while at the same time avoiding its solipsistic confinement to discourse?” (Smith 1999, 76). In asking this question, Smith is pointing out the need to link the study of discourse with an analysis of how social actors “enter and participate” in the texts, as writers and readers (75). There are real limitations to doing research that is purely textual. Questions about the social processes of media production and audience reception must go unanswered. The alternative is to fill these knowledge gaps with the researcher’s own inference, which seems a dubious practice.

There are still sociologically-important conclusions that can be drawn from work on non-interactive materials. Through a discourse analysis of the media, we can see how the textual construction of social reality limits the available resources for understanding social issues. Thus, we can see how the creation and reproduction of dominant discourses create textual systems of power/knowledge. On a more limited basis, we can engage in the “genealogical” work of trying to identify “subjugated knowledges” within a system of “truth.” However, genealogical work from the text alone is necessarily tentative and
partial. Genealogical work that is limited to the textual is ultimately dependent upon the inference of the researcher. Only those subjugated discourses that the researcher is aware of can be “insurrected” through genealogy. Thus, the limits of the researcher’s experience set boundaries on the potential for a textually-based genealogical analysis.

While we can question whether a genealogical analysis is ever “complete,” given that there may always be a marginalized discourse beyond the researcher’s awareness, it is likely that research with textual producers or audience members would produce a more complete elaboration of discourses which are marginalized from a specific textual reality.

Media sociology embodies several possible sites of inquiry: the social production of texts, the content of the text as a social object, and the audience reception of texts. Together, these sites form complex networks of social interaction. Textual analysis isolates part of this network for study. Focusing only on the textual allows us to draw conclusions about the media construction of reality and how it is intertwined with systems of power/knowledge. Thus, textual analysis is an important project, as long as we bear its limitations in mind. If we wish to go beyond an analysis of the discursive structure of the text itself and draw conclusions about media production or audience reception, some sort of triangulation seems necessary. For example, textual analysis can be complemented with ethnographic or interview work with media workers who produce news texts. Alternately, work with “audience members” can be useful for learning about the processes whereby audiences make sense of the texts. In order to draw conclusions about the social processes that occur beyond the boundaries of the text, it is ultimately necessary to gather data from beyond the world of the textual.
Personal Reflexivity

Personal reflexivity involves locating oneself as a researcher relative to the research process. My own process of personal reflexivity has raised several points that I have tried to remain aware of throughout the research process. The most pertinent point to consider is that I have a history of environmental movement participation. During the past few years, I have been involved with the Elliot-Anderson-Christian-Trozzo Watershed Association, a watershed protection group located in the Slocan Valley, in southeastern British Columbia. In 2000, I was arrested for breaking a court injunction, in an action of civil disobedience. Kleinman, Copp and Henderson offer a useful discussion of emotionality in research, which focuses on the different emotional relationships that researchers tend to have with their research subjects. Their ideal-typical research standpoints include: the empath, the cynic, and the “superscientist” (Kleinman, Copp & Henderson 1996, 6-7). In general, my experience as an activist has likely made me more empathic towards the environmental movement and more cynical towards the state and forestry capital.

While I was aware of the tension between my role as researcher and my experience as an environmental activist, I do not believe that my research standpoint dulled my ability to critically read and analyze environmental discourse. As the research progressed, I often felt as though I was critically re-reading my own ideas from five or ten years ago. From my perspective as a researcher, the environmental news-work of the 1990s had a feeling of naïveté about it. Also, as the research progressed, I arrived at a greater sense of appreciation for the tensions the NDP were trying to balance through
their environmental policy-making. With the benefit of hindsight, the NDP looked more appealing than they did from the "environmentalist" side of the fence in the 1990s.

I have conducted this research from a standpoint of "critical identification" with the environmental movement that should be made explicit (Routledge 1996). By adopting a standpoint of "critical identification," I hope to retain my ability to engage critically with the environmental movement, even as I am sympathetic to the movement's political goals. Such a research standpoint is consistent with my general orientation towards the critical tradition in sociology, wherein the idea of the completely "objective" and "neutral" researcher is taken to be an unattainable (and undesirable) goal. Thus, I would locate my own work in the "praxicological" tradition embodied by theorists like Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault, Dorothy Smith and Nancy Fraser (Carroll 2002). In this tradition, sociology is seen as a potential tool for social change, rather than a neutral account of the way things are.

Routledge raises some very challenging questions about doing research from a standpoint of critical identification. He points out that the researcher needs to question the "nexus of power/knowledge relations within which the social sciences [and the researcher] are inscribed" (Routledge 1996, 527). Throughout this project, I have attempted to maintain an awareness of my position of privilege within the multiple networks of oppression and privilege that make up Canadian society. I am a white male from a wealthy family background. I am also attending University on a fellowship that allows me to avoid teaching assistant responsibilities and dedicate more time to my own work. Of particular relevance to this project, I would note that I have the "luxury" of working with textual materials as a lone researcher. The voices of news sources that are
represented and constructed through the news texts have no opportunity to contradict my own interpretations and analysis. To take seriously my standpoint of critical identification implies a commitment to share my research with the movement I claim to empathize with, as well as a commitment to take feedback seriously. While I have not incorporated the feedback of environmental movement participants into this thesis, I plan to make copies of this thesis available to environmental groups, once it is completed. I then plan to incorporate their feedback as I engage in future research.

Finally, I would like to address a point of theoretical tension which has haunted me throughout this research project: the dilemma of postmodernism. To oversimplify, postmodernism encourages a deep skepticism about "the possibility of any totalizing or exhaustive theories or explanations" about the social world (Gubrium & Holstein 1997, 75). Postmodernism problematizes traditional sociological notions of objectivity and validity; it questions the ability to accurately represent any social reality. As Gubrium and Holstein write: "Because 'truth' is necessarily relativized, if not impossible, then social scientific reports should enjoy no special privilege over any other set of accounts" (92). For Denzin, a "triple crisis of representation, legitimation, and praxis" is the result of the post-structural and postmodern critique (Denzin 1997, 3). Taking post-structuralism and postmodernism seriously means that the positivist notions of validity, reliability and generalizability become increasingly untenable. For Denzin, sociologists should abandon the pretensions of positivism in favour of an approach that is "post-structural to the core, . . . emotional, biographically specific, and minimalist in its use of theoretical terms" (26). Instead of seeing the sociological text as an omnipotent, neutral
account, we should realize that our texts are primarily concerned with the ways in which "our subjectivity becomes entangled in the lives of others" (27).

I believe that the postmodern and post-structural critiques of traditional, positivist, naturalistic social science are too compelling to ignore. I agree with Lincoln and Denzin's assessment of the situation: "It is not that we might elect to engage in work that is postmodern. Rather, it is that we have inherited a postmodern world, and there is no going back" (Lincoln & Denzin 2000, 1059). I wish to do work that takes postmodernism and post-structuralism seriously. As Davies notes, the radical reflexivity of postmodernism is a valuable contribution to the social sciences (Davies 1999). At the same time, postmodernism implies a sort of relativism, "self absorption" and a negation of the "enterprise of social research" that is problematic for a research stance of critical identification (Davies 1999, 5). As Davies notes, there is a certain "irony [in] the postmodernist refusal to privilege any voice at the historical moment when the voices of others – women, former colonized peoples, non-white peoples – were beginning to be empowered" (223). Similarly, there is a profound tension between the positivist assumptions that underlie much of the environmental movement's discursive action and the radical epistemological skepticism of postmodernism. In discussing the relationship between environmentalism and Foucauldian theory, Darier notes that there is a conflict "between the 'nature-endorsing' claim of a truth-discourse about nature and the 'nature-sceptical' radical critique about the inescapable power effects of all knowledge, of all truth claims" (Darier 1999b, 4).

Both Davies and Denzin have attempted to formulate a research stance which takes postmodernism seriously while remaining critical and politically engaged. (Denzin
1997; Davies 1999). Similarly, both Darier and Quigley have attempted to construct a framework for bridging Foucault's post-structural position with environmental politics (Darier 1999a; Quigley 1999). Without engaging in a detailed discussion of these solutions to the postmodern dilemma, I would note that I don't find any of them entirely convincing. As a result, I find myself in a position of epistemological agnosticism. My attempt to construct a theoretical framework that brings together Gramsci and Foucault, as well as political ecology and environmental constructivism, reflects the appeal that both critical and post-structural approaches hold for me. To a certain degree, the unresolved tensions inherent in my theoretical lens reflect my own sense of ambiguity.
CHAPTER V: RESULTS

In this chapter, I will present the results of my research. I will use a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis to examine four groups of texts from the Vancouver Sun. These textual “archives” focus on four distinct episodes of environmental policy debate in British Columbia. First, I will look at the Protected Areas Strategy (PAS). This was introduced by the NDP in 1991, under the leadership of Premier Mike Harcourt. The Protected Areas Strategy was designed to set aside twelve per cent of the province as parkland and protected areas. Second, I will examine the Working Forest. The idea of the Working Forest was introduced by the Liberal government of B.C. in 2002, under the leadership of Premier Gordon Campbell. In a sense, the Working Forest is the inverse of the Protected Areas Strategy. Whereas the PAS set aside twelve per cent of the land-base as parkland, the Working Forest defines logging as the priority use for all crown land that is forested and not presently protected as parkland: a total of 48 per cent of the provincial land base. The Working Forest remains a work in progress. In October 2003, the government passed legislation which will allow the Working Forest to be implemented.

The third set of texts I will examine deals with the Forest Practices Code (FPC), which was introduced by Premier Harcourt in 1993. The FPC placed more stringent regulations on the logging industry, increased the penalties for violations of logging rules, and increased the role of the government in monitoring the forest industry. Finally, I will examine the texts which deal with the Liberals’ Results-based version of the Forest Practices Code. This legislation was introduced in 2001. It reduces many of the regulations that comprise the Forest Practices Code and limits the role of the government.

17 All Vancouver Sun references for this chapter are located in Appendix I.
in monitoring the forest industry. It relies on more self-enforcement by the forest industry for the protection of environmental values.

For each of these textual archives, my analysis is based on groups of approximately 20 texts. For the Protected Areas Strategy, I examined 24 texts before reaching a point of saturation. For the Working Forest, I examined 20 texts. For the Forest Practices Code, I examined 22 texts. For the Results-based Forest Practices Code, I examined 18 texts. A complete list of all 84 texts is included separately from my bibliography as Appendix I.

The Protected Areas Strategy

Of the 24 texts that address the Protected Areas Strategy, 11 (46%) are news texts and 13 (54%) are opinion pieces (editorials, columns, op-eds and letters). Only one news text is authored by a female writer (Hunter 1995). Also, only one of the opinion pieces is authored by a woman (Beckmann 1997). Thus, the textual reality of the Protected Areas Strategy is almost completely defined by male authors. For the most part, the Protected Areas Policy is not "big news." Only two articles appear on the front page (Hunter 1995; Pynn 1999). Otherwise, PAS news is spread throughout the A and B sections, with a couple of pieces in the business section.

"Compromise" is the dominant theme in the news discourse of the NDP’s Protected Areas Strategy. In several instances, the Sun constructs an evolutionary narrative in which the period of the "war in the woods" is succeeded by an emergent period of compromise. For example:
Last August, after some 15 months of deliberation, an agreement was reached by representatives from the B.C. forest industry, the provincial government and outdoors, environmental, labor, mining and tourist groups. . . . Endorsed by the provincial government and announced in October, it was hailed as bringing peace to our troubled forests and ending years of strife (1997c, A14).

Through "compromise," environmental values are articulated with a politics of eco-managerialism, wherein the non-human world is parceled out into protected areas, to be governed by the state, and productive areas, which are the domain of capital. This is seen in the following two excerpts:

The protected areas that will be announced today will encompass land for the spotted owl, but land that has been shielded from logging will also be opened up as the New Democratic Party government seeks a compromise between its union backers in the logging industry and its "green" supporters (Hunter 1995, A1)

A forest a little larger than the park would remain open to resource uses such as logging, mining and ranching. And next to the park there's a transition zone, some pretty valleys where horse loggers can pull out timber without making 50-hectare clearcuts, as conventional logging shows do now. (Bohn 1993, B4).
Within this news discourse of compromise, those who critique the Protected Areas Strategy as inadequate, or persist in the "war in the woods," are portrayed as irrational and unscientific.

The agreement offered a sensible compromise. It preserved much of the precious wilderness in the area, and also precious jobs for the workers employed by B.C.'s most important export industry, an industry closely regulated by the Forest Practices Code and other legislation. It must be protected from the zealotry of anti-logging extremists taking civil disobedience "classes" and promising a "long, hot summer" in B.C.'s forests. They should cool it. But that's unlikely. The bearer of truth tolerates no compromise; any agreement is by definition a sellout, just as the monopolist on purity has no need, like lesser mortals, to worry about shabby means if the aims are righteous. (1997c, A14)

The voices of these "radicals" are rendered silent; they are not admitted into the realm of news discourse. At the same time, the opposition to the PAS from industry news sources is not constructed as "capitalist zealotry." In fact, in the following excerpt, opposition to the Protected Areas Strategy from a mining industry spokesperson invokes a discourse of "coercion." That is, the speaker invokes the notion that the mining industry has no choice but to accept the "compromise" imposed by the NDP.

Bruce McKnight, executive-director of the B.C. and Yukon Chamber of Mines, said in Vancouver that the cost of settling outstanding mineral claims in parks is expensive but should total less than $100 million. . . . "The mining industry wasn't very happy with the 12 per cent, but we went
along with it because we had a gun to our head,” McKnight said. “I believe that the cost of lost opportunities and investment is 10 times the cost of buying out people” (Pynn 1999, A1).

Within the Sun’s coverage of the Protected Areas Strategy, “biodiversity” emerges as a dominant environmental discourse. Biodiversity is invoked from all of the major standpoints in PAS news. The following excerpt mobilizes a biodiversity discourse from an environmental standpoint, articulated by David Anderson, a former leader of the provincial Liberal Party:

Achieving the arbitrary 12 per cent figure for parks and protected places solely by increasing the amount of high-elevation reserves would completely ignore the attitudes of British Columbia’s environmental groups . . . What criteria should be used in choosing new parks or protected areas? First is the protection of representative areas of biological significance, or in the new jargon of the 90s, biodiversity (Anderson 1991, B5)

This second example of biodiversity discourse is also from an opinion piece written from an environmental standpoint.

Survival is what B.C.’s new parks are all about. The importance of biodiversity is the real reason behind their establishment. Human evolution may well depend on keeping as many species alive as possible. For that, they need undisturbed land, all different types of land, in sufficient quantities to survive and grow. (Scott 1995, A11).
A final illustrative example of biodiversity discourse comes from an opinion piece by Patrick Moore, an official speaker for the Forest Alliance, the public relations arm of the B.C. forest industry. Here, Moore defends the forest industry by focusing the biodiversity critique on the impacts of agriculture:

WWF must know that it is farmlands that represent virtual destruction of natural species diversity with their monoculture crops, exotic species, high chemical dependencies and soil degradation. Forest clearcuts may not please the urban eye but they have a far higher level of biological diversity than farmlands and are capable of supporting many more plants, animals and birds as the new forest becomes established and flourishes (Moore 1993, A11).

Thus, we see how a particular environmental discourse may be articulated with a variety of political standpoints. From a more environmentalist standpoint, the biodiversity discourse represents a move away from an environmentalism grounded in recreational values towards a more “scientific” discourse. Here, the scientific authority associated with the biodiversity discourse works to legitimate environmental knowledge claims.

Another dominant environmental discourse, which is related to the biodiversity discourse, centres around “wildlife values.” Wildlife discourses focus on animals which are endangered (and charismatic), such as the grizzly bear and the spotted owl. The following two examples are illustrative of the wildlife discourse:
But the scheme will also free up a substantial amount of land for commercial logging that is currently held in study -- in areas that may include nesting areas of the endangered spotted owl. The bird is on Canada's official list of endangered species and has been a flash point for clashes between environmentalists and loggers. The northern spotted owl requires vast areas of old-growth forest to survive -- the average breeding pair needs a home range eight times the size of Stanley Park (Hunter 1995, A1).

A spider's web of oil and gas pipelines lie just east of the new protected area, but the Muskwa-Kechika itself is mostly pristine. There are few roads, few people and what is being called one of North America's richest and densest wildlife populations, with Mountain sheep, moose, caribou, deer, bison, Grizzly bears, wolf, lynx, fox and wolverine (Bell 1997, A3).

The wildlife discourse is an important part of the environmental discourse that emerges in the NDP era. This is a “scientific” environmentalism of biodiversity, endangered species and old-growth forests.

By contrast, the aesthetic/recreational discourse is a paradoxical element in environmental discourse on protected areas. On one hand, it is a valuable part of environmental discourse. Aesthetic and recreational values are invoked to construct the mystique of wilderness as something spiritual and romantic, as demonstrated in the following excerpt:
It's a land-use agreement that welcomes industry in one part of the Chilcotin but also conserves an unscarred landscape where wild horses still run free. Chilko Lake, a vast glacial-green lake between the ice-capped Coast Mountains and the dry pine forests of the Chilcotin Plateau, would become the centrepiece of a protected area, likely a provincial park. The proposed park boundaries encompass 230,000 hectares, a wilderness almost as large as all the lands around Clayoquot Sound (Bohn 1993, B4).

In this example and others, the allure of wilderness is articulated with eco-tourism, a “sustainable” economic practice that provides economic legitimacy for the PAS. However, the potentially problematic aspects of eco-tourism are left unexplored. For example, we might ask how the move to an eco-tourist economy could create economic barriers to access to “wilderness.” Alternately, the economic impacts on local communities of a shift from a high-wage production economy to a service economy is left unaddressed.

At the same time, recreational and aesthetic values may also be denigrated by non-environmentalists and relegated to secondary status by many environmental news-sources, as seen in the following excerpts:

Today, recreational and scenic values are no longer the only appropriate criteria for park and protected area selection. Given the park and protected area system we already have in place, such criteria are now well down on the list (Anderson 1991, B5).

The report suggests that clearcuts in a forest are worse than farmlands with crops and livestock. Does this mean that WWF thinks forest decisions
should be based entirely on aesthetics and have nothing to do with ecology or biological diversity? (Moore 1993, A11).

Throughout this set of news texts, we get a sense that the discourses of scientific environmentalism are displacing more “aesthetic” constructions of the BC environment.

While the Sun’s construction of the PAS is generally positive, critical discourses are mobilized by some news sources. The main critique of the Protected Areas Strategy is economic. Here, the creation of protected areas is defined as a “waste” of forestry resources. Land use is constructed as a zero-sum game wherein the creation of protected areas results in the loss of economically viable activity. This is illustrated in the following excerpts.

Conservation groups were not alone in making the sacrifices necessary to come to this workable and consensus-based decision. Whether as a result of the Forest Practices Code, the timber supply review, or the creation of protected areas, forest workers and their communities have ultimately paid the highest price in job loss, and the Lower Mainland protected areas decision was no exception (Ulley 1997, D2).

Behind the political hoopla and scenic photos that have accompanied the launch of a massive increase in protected areas in B.C. lies a knot of mineral claims and timber tenures that could take years and cost hundreds of millions of dollars to untie (Pynn 1999, A1).
In this construction of the PAS, the expansion of protected areas is a luxury that British Columbians cannot afford. Through this economic discourse, the interests of capital are articulated with those of forestry labour. However, this critique of the Protected Areas Strategy is not a dominant discourse. It is overshadowed by the overarching narrative of the PAS as a successful example of an environmental “compromise.”

The three main news sources in this group of texts are government, the forest industry and environmental groups. As represented in the Sun, these three groups are the official knowers about protected areas policy. Through the selection and representation of these news sources, the Sun constructs its truth about the meaning and implications of protected areas policy.

In this group of texts, government discourse is dominated by the “compromise” theme. In the textual world of the Sun, the state acts as a mediator, seeking to balance the interests of environmentalists and the forest industry. The following excerpts illustrate this:

Scott Benton, the B.C. parks official who tried to keep the talks on track, says they signed the draft deal this spring because everyone realized they wanted a less uncertain future. “Not everybody got what they wanted, but everyone had something to gain - a little more certainty in their lives,” he says. “That’s what kept people at the table” (Bohn 1993, B4).

Rather than dole out cash for lost infrastructure or timber, however, the government is trying to compensate forest companies with alternative
harvesting areas. "It's not as simple as writing a cheque," McRae said. "There's a lot of evaluation, appraisal and consultation" (Pynn 1999, A1).

From reading the Sun, we see how the "compromise" achieved through a twelve per cent protected areas policy fails to subvert the ongoing operation of the "treadmill of production" and its ecological impacts on the remaining 88% of the provincial land-base. The Protected Areas Strategy may be viewed as a "managed scarcity" approach to environmental policy that fails to address the problems inherent in the normal operation of forestry capital. The Protected Areas Strategy may be read, cynically, as an NDP attempt to create a hegemonic project that can integrate the participation of capital, the environmental movement and labour.

Official speakers from the environmental movement include the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Western Canada Wilderness Committee (WCWC), and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS). Environmental news sources tend to focus on the "scientific" discourses of biodiversity and wildlife protection. The following excerpt provides a good example:

Ric Careless, B.C. director for the World Wildlife Fund, said in an interview the Gulf Islands represent a unique Mediterranean-style ecosystem on the dry eastern side of Vancouver Island. Because of their location near major population centres, the islands have become increasingly fragmented by development, making them an urgent candidate for protection, including the underwater marine life. "It's a distinct and special natural region," Careless said. "We must move quickly or we'll lose the opportunity" (Pynn 1995a, A3).
The scientific-environmental discourses legitimize the creation of protected areas by invoking the “needs” of the natural and non-human environment. By representing the needs of nature through these discourses, environmental news sources may displace -- to a certain degree -- their own agency in calling for protected areas.

Furthermore, the environmental discourse that is represented in the news does not challenge the central dichotomies that underlie the Protected Areas Strategy as a mechanism for regulating the human-nature relationship. Neither the division between “protected areas” and the “working forest,” nor the divide between the urban/civilized and the rural/wild is addressed critically. Issues relating to gender, First Nations and social justice do not enter environmental discourse. Those environmental claims that achieve representation may be contained within a managed scarcity framework. Through the inclusion of such an environmental discourse, the Sun constructs a “balanced” narrative without admitting radically counter-hegemonic voices into its construction of reality.

Finally, forest industry discourse also adopts the theme of compromise, articulating an acceptance of the PAS with its own political agenda. In the following excerpt, a forest industry speaker asserts that the Protected Areas Strategy should be combined with compensation for lost access to resources and with the creation of a “working forest” in which forestry is the priority activity.
McCloy said the government now has a “protected areas strategy” – including a goal to double the protected wilderness to 12 per cent of the province. He said B.C. now needs an “industrial forestry strategy” to decide what areas should be permanently set aside for logging (Bohn 1992, B2).

In the next excerpt, Tom Stephens, the President and CEO of MacMillan Bloedel, echoes the compromise theme. In this op-ed piece, we see how Stephens attempts uses his support of the PAS compromise to construct a “greener” public self for the forest industry.

When the B.C. government introduced its protected areas strategy aimed at expanding public park lands, it made an assurance that “fair compensation would be provided” to dispossessed tenure holders. . . . As I have said repeatedly in the last 18 months, MacMillan Bloedel is strongly committed to operating with a social licence. It is not enough that we operate within the law because laws represent yesterday’s social expectations. We need to be in tune with today’s attitudes and values, which will be tomorrow’s laws. That is why MB is ending clearcutting on lands that we manage in B.C., whether public or private, and increasing protection of old-growth forests. We are doing this in part as a response to our customers’ demands but also because it is the right thing to do (Stephens 1998, A15).

While a couple of forestry news sources are explicitly opposed to the notion of an expanded protected areas system, most use the PAS to construct an eco-capitalist public
self. Through the representation of this industry discourse, the Sun constructs a forest industry that is reasonable and open to environmental reform.

The Working Forest

While the Working Forest initiative was only introduced by the Liberal government in 2002, the idea of Working Forest legislation has its roots in the discourse of forestry news sources during the 1990s. In the texts that address the NDP Protected Areas Strategy, the idea that forestry lands require legislative protection emerges as early as 1992 (Bohn 1992). In a sense, the Working Forest policy represents a continuation in the ongoing debate over “protected areas.” However, in contrast with the NDP, the Liberals plan to set aside “protected areas” for the forest industry, rather than for “nature.”

In the Working Forest archive, twelve out of twenty texts are opinion pieces (editorials, columns, op-eds and letters), while eight texts are news articles. This collection of articles is unintentionally skewed towards opinion pieces. While this may reflect a bias in my sampling procedure, it may also reflect an imbalance within the Sun itself, where the Working Forest may have received more attention as an editorial topic than as “news.” Only one article achieves front page status (McInnes 2003). This is the article which features Liberal MLA Stan Hagen’s announcement of the release of the Working Forest discussion paper. Thus, the Working Forest is deemed newsworthy enough only for one front page appearance before dropping to the back sections.

Furthermore, all of the authors in this archive are male. Therefore, the gendered pattern of environmental news authorship noted in the discussion of the Protected Areas Strategy...
is present here, as well. It is also worth noting that this archive includes the reproduction of two speeches from Premier Campbell and one letter to the editor from a Liberal MLA (Campbell 2002; Campbell 2003; Hagen 2003). This direct news-making activity of members of the government is not seen in any of the other groups of texts.

Like the Protected Areas Strategy archive, this group of texts is dominated by news sources from three broad organizational perspectives: government, the environmental movement and industry. Liberal government discourse is generally consistent with the themes of "neo-liberalism," such as concern with the deficit, the benefit of tax cuts and a pro-business worldview. In promoting the Working Forest, government speakers emphasize the need to create "certainty and stability" for the forest industry as a means to "revitalize" the industry. This is illustrated in the following excerpts:

"If we want companies to invest we . . . [must] make sure we remove hurdles that get in the way of certainty and confidence," Campbell said. Campbell said a draft paper on the working forest is to be released next week for discussion. He said the province wants to establish a working

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18 It is worth noting that the "certainty" discourse was first introduced by the NDP in the area of First Nations land claims. Ratner, Carroll and Woolford write: "The provincial [NDP] government has understandably adopted the position that 'the total land held by First Nations after treaty settlements are completed will be less than 5 percent of the province's land base,' and that 'fair compensation for unavoidable disruption of commercial interests will be assured' in all treaty negotiations" (Ratner, Carroll & Woolford 2003, 220). These commitments are part of assuring "certainty" for resource capital. The authors continue: "In a province where . . . industrial capital is still substantially reliant on access to land that is now credibly claimed by First Nations, and in an era in which global capital favors jurisdictions that offer friendly and secure investment climates, 'certainty' on issues of land ownership and access becomes a crucial marker for successful political management" (220). It is interesting, though not surprising, to see this discourse migrate to the news coverage of the Working Forest, which is also designed to create "certainty" for forestry capital. Like First Nations treaty settlements, the Working Forest will work to insulate the "productive" land base from social movement groups.
forest to ensure forest companies have certainty on the land base (Hamilton 2003a, C5).

"I'm sending a message to the investment community that British Columbia is open for business and that we're bringing certainty to the land base," Minister of Sustainable Resources Management Stan Hagen said. He said the working forest will also create greater stability for the families and communities that depend on the forest industry (McInnes 2003, A1).

In contrast with the NDP, the Liberals' discourse gives a more explicit impression of a state-industry bloc, where the government acts on behalf of the general interest of capital. Within Liberal discourse, such a state-industry bloc is beneficial to BC as a whole. The following excerpts are taken from speeches by Gordon Campbell that were reprinted in the op-ed section of the Sun.

All of us in B.C. need to get our forest industry back on track. One way or another, we'll resolve the softwood lumber dispute. Regardless, over the next year we're going to start the tough work of fundamentally restructuring our forest industry to make it both more competitive and more stable for the workers and communities who depend on it for their livelihoods (Campbell 2002, A13).

We all know that our forest industry is a critical component of our heartlands economies. Over the last five years, our forest industry has been in serious trouble. Since 1998 we have lost $600 million in provincial revenue from forestry. Twenty-six mills have closed for good since 1997. Literally thousands of people have lost their jobs. That simply can't continue. We have to make changes (Campbell 2003, A21).
Within the textual world of the *Sun*, Liberal government discourse articulates the interests of forestry capital with the "general interest" of British Columbia as a whole. From this perspective, the Working Forest recognizes the value of the logging industry to the province. Through this discourse, the interests of capital are articulated with the general interest and the needs of rural communities.

While government discourse focuses on the creation of a pro-business public self, environmental values are also invoked. This is seen in the following examples:

The working forest land base creates a new opportunity for certainty for those who depend on forestry. The new forest practices and range management act provides sound science and common sense as we manage our forest in a way that's exemplary to the rest of the world. It is time for a new generation of forestry in British Columbia, a new generation that combines the importance of environmental stewardship with economic viability. (Campbell 2003, A21).

Joyce Murray, minister of water, land and air protection, described the report as good science and the findings understandable given the way the protected areas have been created in the province. The findings emphasize the need for proper stewardship on Crown lands outside the park system, she said, adding those who describe the working forest as being set aside exclusively for industry are dead wrong. "There is that perception," she said, adding companies must realize that to sell their products on today's markets, they must adopt strong environmental practices. "Environmental standards apply in the working forest" (Pynn 2003a, B1).
Through the articulation of a pro-business discourse with a discourse of environmental values, Liberal news sources attempt to construct an eco-capitalist public self. Within this eco-capitalist discourse, the state-industry bloc is constructed as the legitimate manager of the BC environment. Here, we also see that Sun’s construction of the Liberals is very different than the construction of the NDP. Whereas the NDP were defined through a discourse of compromise between capital, labour and environmentalism, the Liberals are seen to be more explicitly aligned with forestry capital.

The Sun’s construction of the Liberal government is generally sympathetic. The Liberals are portrayed as a vehicle of necessary change. They embody economic revitalization, growth and prosperity, as seen in the following excerpts:

The Liberals have the clearest mandate possible to restore integrity, to deliver affordable and effective public services, to stimulate the economy, and to reduce personal taxes. These are their easier challenges. Their greatest challenge will be to thoughtfully and sensitively balance policy tensions and political stresses. For example, balancing workers’ rights with citizens’ access to public services; balancing judicially defined aboriginal rights with common law rights of non-aboriginals; and balancing economic and conservation values in designating working forest lands and park lands (Mullins 2001, A23).19

19 This excerpt, from an opinion piece, echoes the discourses of “compromise” and “balance” that are prevalent in the NDP-era archives. However, while news sources often invoked discourses of “compromise” and “balance” during discussion of NDP environmental policy, these discourses do not appear very often in the Liberal-era archives. In this regard, this quote represents an interesting satellite. Still, it does raise interesting questions for further research about how discourses of “compromise” and “balance” are mobilized by government news sources as a general strategy for legitimating state policy-making.
In the textual reality of the Sun, the Liberals are out to right the wrongs of the NDP decade. They are also out to restore the “balance” that has been implicitly disturbed during the NDP era. In opinion pieces and editorials, critique of the government often takes on the feel of friendly advice.

The provincial Liberals have the rhetoric of economic growth and prosperity mastered. What they do this year will tell British Columbians whether they’ve learned the art of matching their words with action. . . . The Liberals ought not to change course for the sake of scoring a few political points. They ought not to pursue change for change’s sake. They must have their eyes on the right prize: economic growth. It’s only as their general pledges in the throne speech are translated into specific programs this year that we’ll find out whether they can provide British Columbians a chance to achieve a standard of living that’s second to none in Canada, if not North America (2003a, A18).

In this collection of texts, forestry capital speaks for itself far less than in the archives that deal with NDP environmental policy. While the forest industry is the third most prominent news source, industry speakers appear much less than in the discussion of the Protected Areas Strategy. Given the sense of a state-industry bloc that emerges in the Liberal era, we might ask whether Liberals news sources act as a proxy for capital in the textual reality constructed by the Sun. Where industry discourse does appear, it tends to echo Liberal discourse, with a focus on the need for new investment, the need to make the industry more competitive, and the theme of “certainty and stability.” This is demonstrated in the following excerpts:
Craig Neeser, vice-president of coastal operations for Weyerhaeuser, said the industry needs clearer definition of the land base available for logging. “I don’t know if it is going to be bigger or smaller,” Neeser said, “but we need certainty on what it is and we need to get on with building the industry that’s the right size to whatever that working forest will be” (Hamilton 2003c, C5).

Steve Crombie, the director of public relations for International Forest Products Ltd., said in principle the creation of a working forest could lead to more investment. “Because there’s been this lack of certainty or lack of clarity around land use, it makes it very difficult to make decisions in investing in the land base or reinvesting in our manufacturing operations,” he said. We’ll have greater confidence in being able to go logging to have the logs to create the products that we sell” (McInnes 2003).

Like the forest industry, environmentalist news sources appear less often in this archive than in others, though they are still among the primary news sources. The main environmentalist discourse related to the working forest centres on issues of corporate control of forestry resources. The Working Forest is constructed as a form of enclosure which will make it more difficult to allocate forest land for non-industrial uses. The following example is illustrative:

Environmentalists were calling the proposal a giveaway to corporations and an assault on the environment. Ken Wu of the Western Canada Wilderness Society called it “perhaps the most sweeping anti-environmental forestry legislation in B.C.’s history.” Wu argued that the legislation that comes out of the discussion paper will include provisions
that will make it very difficult to protect any new forest areas because they will require that the total amount of working forest be maintained (McInnes 2003, A1).

The second example comes from a letter to the editor by Tom Lester, of the Sierra Club of Canada:

Not surprisingly, the Liberals are trying to portray their working forest concept as a panacea for forest communities and jobs . . . However, handing corporations private-like rights to 45 million hectares of a publicly held resource is nothing of the sort . . . So, is the working forest in the best interest of forestry-dependent families? Absolutely not. Is it a flagrant attempt to line the pockets of the industry players who contributed to the Liberals’ election campaign? You bet (Lester 2003, A15).

Here, the articulation of public interest with the interests of capital is challenged. Instead, the “public interest” is re-articulated with an environmental politics that opposes the working forest. This is demonstrated in the following excerpt, which features Ken Wu, of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, who is one of the most visible critics of the Working Forest.

Ninety nine per cent of the public feedback on the working forest legislation opposed it, said Ken Wu, WCWC executive director. “How can the Campbell government justify even contemplating any move to push through the Working Forest, when 99 per cent of the feedback they got through their own public input process clearly opposes the Working
He described the legislation as an "anti-forest protection act" that would zone 100 per cent of B.C.'s unprotected public forests as permanent logging zones (Hamilton 2003b, D2).

Thus, we see that both the state-industry bloc and environmentalist news sources attempt to link the "public interest" to their own political standpoint in the Working Forest debate. Whereas the environmental discourse that entered the Sun during the Protected Areas Policy debate centred on "scientific" themes, the environmental discourse that enters public debate in this archive may be termed more "democratic" in focus.

Also, while Sun editorialists and columnists generally present the Liberal government in a sympathetic light, there is a an important -- though less frequent -- oppositional discourse that portrays the Liberals' business-orientation as oppositional to the public interest. This critical discourse attempts to disarticulate the general interest from the interests of capital. It appears most explicitly in a pair of letters to the editor written by environmental movement participants. The following excerpt is by Jim Cooperman, of the Shuswap Environmental Action Society:

The "drunk with power" Gordon Campbell Liberal government is now planning to increase the corporate control of our forests through its proposed working forest legislation . . . Their rationale is flawed because these companies already have a secure hold on the public forests through the tenure system and mandated allowable annual cuts. . . . Forestry companies already have a stranglehold on our forests and this legislation would only further limit opportunities for uses other than industrial forestry. Those concerned about the negative impact that industrial
forestry has had and continues to have on wildlife, recreation and watersheds need to let the government know that the working forest proposal must be scrapped (Cooperman 2003, A1).

The dominant discourses in this group of texts are those which promote the Working Forest. The discourse of "certainty and stability" is the prime example of this. Through this discourse, the state-capital bloc articulates the interests of industry with those of rural forestry communities. This is demonstrated in the following excerpts, the second of which is from an opinion piece written by Liberal MLA Stan Hagen:

"I'm sending a message to the investment community that British Columbia is open for business and that we're bringing certainty to the land base," Minister of Sustainable Resources Management Stan Hagen said. He said the working forest will also create greater stability for the families and communities that depend on the forest industry (McInnes 2003, A1).

Our government committed to establishing a working-forest land-base to provide greater stability for working families. The legislation and policy that will do just that will be completed in the fall (Hagen 2003, D2).

An interesting point, however, is that we are never explicitly told what industry needs certainty and stability from. While we might infer that the industry is receiving
protection from the uncertainty of First Nations and environmental social activism, this is certainly not made explicit in the Sun’s news discourse.20

A jobs discourse is also invoked by the Liberals and by op-ed writers who promote the Working Forest. John Winter, of the B.C. Chamber of Commerce writes:

The B.C. government’s new “working forest” proposal could offer some tangible hope for many of these communities. This new approach to the environment and the economy would give greater certainty to the forest land-base in the province. Most notably, if done right, it offers B.C. communities the potential to increase jobs and investment without sacrificing the environmental values British Columbians expect from our forests (Winter 2003, C3).

Through the jobs discourse, the interests of industry are articulated with the needs of rural communities. Here, certainty and stability for industry goes hand-in-hand with the promise of security for forestry workers.

An oppositional discourse sees industry interests as separate from local communities. Here, industry is defined as primarily self-interested. The Liberal reforms which will “revitalize” industry and make it “competitive” will simultaneously empower industry to dislocate itself from local forestry communities. The following example is illustrative:

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20 As asserted by the Western Canada Wilderness Committee (Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003b; 2003c).
NDP leader Joy MacPhail said the proposal is a smokescreen to cover up the fact that Forest Minister Mike de Jong is working on forestry reform proposals that will give commercial interests more freedom to operate in ways that ignore the interest of local communities. "Stan Hagen hopes to convey a sense that there is going to be prosperity in the future for rural communities. He talks about jobs and the communities but then you have Mike de Jong and his advisers, behind closed doors, planning for a forest restructuring that will mean an end for many forest jobs in B.C. and I think an end to many of the communities, too," MacPhail said (McInnes 2003, A1).

Here, the working forest is constructed as a mechanism for increasing corporate power at the expense of rural communities and the public interest. The articulation of the jobs discourse and pro-industry discourse is challenged by critical news sources, such as the NDP and environmentalists. Thus, we see how rural communities are discursively constructed by opposing sides in the debate over land use policy. The dominant discourse articulates the needs of rural communities with the interests of the forest industry, while a critical discourse disarticulate the interests of communities and capital. Here, oppositional news sources argue that Liberal forest policy empowers capital, without meeting the interests of working communities. What is particularly noteworthy is that rural communities are always constructed by others. The voices of actual members of rural communities are rendered invisible in the textual world of the Sun.

At one level, the emergence of a more "democratic" critical discourse may be celebrated as a positive move towards a discursive opening for the politics of ecological synthesis, which links environmental and social justice concerns. The inclusion of such a
critical discourse in the Sun’s network of power/knowledge demonstrates the possibility for critical discourse to become visible in the capitalist-owned mass media. It illustrates that social movement groups can successfully mobilize a counter-hegemonic discourse that exploits the “cracks in the monolith.” At the same time, the oppositional discourses that are represented by the Sun fail to re-articulate the jobs discourse with a political alternative that is linked with either environmentalism or social justice. While such an alternative discourse may exist beyond the realm of the news text, it is not permitted entrée to the Sun’s construction of reality.

The Forest Practices Code

The articles that address the NDP’s Forest Practices Code are skewed towards news texts, with 16 news articles and 6 opinion articles, for a total of 22 articles. Due to the unwieldly number of articles which turned up during the sampling process for this group of texts, I used the front page location of articles as a sampling criterion. As a result, this archive contains a far higher number of front page articles than the other sets: twelve out of twenty-two articles appear on the front page. Given the number and prominence of articles on the Forest Practices Code, we might infer that the Sun considers this particular policy debate more “newsworthy” than either the Protected Areas Strategy or the Working Forest. Many of the texts in this group of articles are written by only a handful of authors. Nine articles are by Gordon Hamilton; three articles are by Justine Hunter; two articles are by Larry Pynn; and two articles are by Vaughn Palmer. Justine Hunter is the only female journalist who appears in this group of texts.
Thus, the male-centred division of labour in the Sun's coverage of environmental policy continues in this instance.

An interesting narrative emerges from an analysis of these texts. At the beginning, news coverage of the Forest Practices Code is generally positive. However, the news construction of the Code later changes drastically, becoming quite negative. The Sun initially treats the Code as an example of Premier Harcourt's willingness to get "tough" with capital in the pursuit of environmental sustainability. This is illustrated in the following excerpts:

B.C. forest companies could face fines of up to $1 million for violating the code, which will protect streams, prevent damage to hillsides, and severely restrict the size of clearcuts throughout the province . . . [Harcourt] said his government will also address a legacy of "lax" enforcement and "inadequate penalties." Existing fines of up to $2,000 "does not act as a deterrent" said Harcourt. He was asked about fines of $1 million, a figure government sources have cited as an upward limit under the new code. Harcourt replied: "I think that would start to get people's attention" (Palmer 1993, A1).

The New Democratic Party government, which has felt enormous political heat over its decision to allow limited logging to continue in Clayoquot Sound, hopes the code will convince many environmentalists that past, shoddy forestry practices will no longer be tolerated (Baldrey 1993, A1).

Here, the Sun promotes an image of a "green" NDP. This image of a "green" NDP is echoed by environmental news sources. During this period, environmentalists are
shown to support the code, with qualifications about the need for adequate enforcement.

Hamilton writes, “The B.C. government proclaimed the Forest Practices Code Wednesday to cheers from environmentalists pleased about expanded protection zones alongside salmon streams” (Hamilton 1995b, A1). The code is used as a jumping off point to call for effective monitoring of corporate environmental behaviour. The following excerpt is illustrative:

Sierra Club of Western Canada chair Vicky Husband called the code “movement in the right direction.” “Now we are going to be watching enforcement. We want to see prosecutions.” She said the most important change was the expansion of protected areas on each side of major salmon streams. They are to be increased from 30 metres to 50 metres with an additional 20-metre zone where logging will be restricted. “Even if it is only six per cent [of the harvest], it is still probably the most critical six per cent in the entire forest,” said the Sierra Legal Defence Fund’s Greg McDade (Hamilton 1995a, A1).

However, soon after the Code is introduced, there is a substantial shift in the dominant news discourse. The Code is invoked by news sources from the Liberal Party, the forest industry, and economic “experts” as an example of a government that “strangles” economic development. In the following excerpts, the Code is used as a discursive resource to construct the NDP as anti-business.

But Liberal forests critic Ted Nebbeling, noting the proposed legislative changes were not spelled out in detail, said the government is dulling
potential criticism. "I was looking for something really substantial," he said, adding that the proposed amendments may save money for companies but do not stop the "job-killing" impacts of the code. He called the changes tinkering, rather than a full overhaul (Hamilton 1997b, A1).

Industry officials say the code's provisions, intended to protect the environment and ensure forest sustainability, have burdened them with costs and bureaucracy that is driving them out of business. The changes they are seeking will streamline delivery of the code's objectives but not affect environmental protection, said TimberWest vice-president Don McMullan, who chairs an industry committee on the code (Hamilton 1996, A1).

The shifting news narrative of the Forest Practices Code is even reinforced by NDP news sources. In 1997, Premier Clark introduced revisions to the Code which followed the critique of the Liberals and the forest industry. The "bureaucratic" requirements of the code were streamlined, to the approval of the forest industry and the consternation of environmentalists. According to government news sources, the Code is defined as an essentially good idea in need of revision, due to the financial harm it imposes upon industry. The revised Code is defined as less bureaucratic, but also ecologically-sound. Thus, the Clark NDP is not entirely willing to abandon its claims to environmental legitimacy. This is illustrated in the following excerpts:

"These costs [of complying with the Code] are higher than we expected but lower than industry was stating," Forests Minister David Zirnhelt. In response to the report [commissioned by the NDP], the government will offer the industry some regulatory changes, he said, but he vowed nothing
will lessen the environmental protection measures contained in the Forest Practices Code (Hunter 1997a, A1).

The changes were announced by Forests Minister David Zirnhelt and Environment Minister Cathy McGregor, who said they will bring "balance" to the government's forest legislation by recognizing economic issues. . . . To right the wrongs, the government intends to include economic values in the code's preamble, which currently emphasizes sustainability, conservation, and the spiritual and recreational values of the province's forests. . . . McGregor defended the decision to add economic values to the code, saying they will not outweigh environmental values (Hamilton 1997b, A1).

The environmentalist reaction to the revised Code, as portrayed in the Sun, is generally negative. Here, deregulation is defined as a move away from the environmental legitimacy of the Harcourt government. Environmentalist discourse invokes the Harcourt version of the Code to challenge the Clark government's ecological legitimacy and willingness to ensure corporate responsibility. This is seen in the following excerpts:

"This government is pretending to carry on the progressive environmental policies of the Harcourt government, but in fact it is betraying those policies," Allan McDonnell of B.C. Wild said. The groups, claiming to represent 70 organizations province-wide, launched an ad campaign Thursday to counter what they say is an attack by Glen Clark's government on his former allies (Hamilton 1997a, D3).
In considering the ways that environmental discourse invokes the original Code to
critique the 1996 revisions, we might ask whether a defence of an excessively
"bureaucratic" code (as constructed by the media) is the best that environmental news
sources could muster. Environmentalist discourse stands in opposition to a chorus of
government, industry and opposition party voices. If there is an alternative
environmental discourse that does not depend upon the idealization of the Forest
Practices Code to defend against the de-regulation of logging regulations, it does not
enter into the public debate constructed by the Sun.

The Sun's coverage of the Forest Practices Code is dominated by negative
discourses. The main oppositional discourse is that the Code is too costly to the forest
industry. When the Code is introduced, its cost to industry is defined as a legitimate tool
for policing the environmental practices of forestry corporations (Baldrey 1993). While
industry news sources complain about complying with the Code, there is initially a public
recognition that the Code can help create environmental legitimacy for the industry in the
global marketplace. This is demonstrated in the following quote from TimberWest
spokesperson, Don McMullan:

McMullan also noted the industry could reap benefits from the code as
well, particularly if it leads to B.C. forest products gaining international
certification of sustainable forestry. "That could provide some market
leverage and some confidence to our customers," he said. "Government is
aware of that and hopefully it will come with time" (Hamilton & Baldrey
However, by 1996, the cost to industry discourse becomes the dominant discourse for critiquing the code. Now, the cost of compliance with the Code is seen as a major barrier to the forest industry, as seen in the following examples:

But the industry is complaining that it is being strangled by red tape and inflexible regulations. The companies say B.C. has become one of the most expensive places in the world to operate, and that code-related delays in obtaining cutting permits are threatening the flow of logs to the mills (1996, A18).

But George Abbott, Liberal forestry critic, said the code changes prove the folly of NDP forest policies. “It's a clear admission of another failed NDP experiment in over-regulation,” he said, noting that, by the government's own admission, the code has cost forest companies $750 million a year. During its three-year-life, the $300-million-a-year in red tape Zirnhelt says has now been eliminated has wasted $1 billion, Abbott said (Hamilton 1998, A1).

Thus, we how the notion of “cost” is articulated with a discourse of excessive bureaucracy and “red tape” which must be removed. Through this dominant discourse, the Code is reconstructed. It is no longer a legitimate environmental resource; now it is an attack upon the forest industry.

The “cost to industry” discourse is echoed by a discourse of job loss that is mobilized to critique the Code. Job losses are seen to be the result of the Code’s cost to the forest industry. Thus, the interests of capital are articulated with the needs of forestry workers. This is demonstrated in the following excerpt:
Golden-based Evans Forest Products shut down its logging and plywood operations Monday, citing cash flow problems and high logging costs as the reason. More than 400 people were laid off. The company is not prepared to re-open unless logging costs are reduced. "Here we find ourselves in a situation where we have one of the best lumber markets in decades and nobody is making any money," McMullan said (Hamilton 1996, A1).

This set of texts does not include any environmentalist attempts to re-articulate this jobs discourse. The effect is that environmental speakers are portrayed as a group that is unconcerned about forestry jobs. In forestry news, environmentalists appear to be concerned with maintaining ecological protection regardless of the economic cost to forestry communities. Because industry speakers monopolize the jobs discourse, the textual reality of the Sun works to conflate the interests of workers and industry, while perpetuating a "greens versus loggers" discourse.

In this group of texts vague notions of "environmental standards" are invoked more often than any more precise environmental discourses. The vague discourse of "environmental values" is invoked by news sources from industry, government and environmental standpoints. For example, in discussing the deregulation of the Code, Forest Minister Zirnhelt invokes a vague notion of "environmental standards," without getting into specific details about what he is referring to. Hunter writes:

Zirnhelt, who said the paperwork has been cut in half while environmental standards are untouched, dismissed the [Forest Practices] board's
concerns, saying they have fallen into 'the paranoia that is out there that you can't trust anybody' to follow the rules without public scrutiny every step of the way (Hunter 1998, A1).

Another article on the proposed changes to the code includes a similar invocation of a vague discourse of “environmental standards” from a forest industry news source. Peter Wypkema, of the Council of Forest Industries (COFI), is quoted by Hunter as follows: "'If it is just tinkering, it won't be a significant relief to the industry at all,' he said. Wypkema insisted that can be done without watering down environmental standards” (Hunter 1997a, A1). Finally, environmentalists are represented as invoking vague notions of “environmental standards” as a short-hand signifier for more detailed ecological discourses. The following excerpt provides an example:

However, Greenpeace campaigner Karen Mahon said environmentalists intend to tell B.C.'s forest products customers that in streamlining the code, the government has gutted environmental standards. “The code was introduced to preserve international markets. Now it remains in name only and that's going to have serious repercussions in international markets,” Mahon said. “We are going to be saying they have gutted the standards” (Hamilton 1998, A1).

This abstract environmental discourse occurs more frequently than the more precise, "scientific" discourses of wildlife, salmon protection, road building, or clearcutting. The problem with such an abstract discourse is that it is easily articulated with any political standpoint. Thus, “environmental standards” are invoked both to legitimate and critique
the code. Through the vague notion of “environmental standards,” the version of environmentalism that is represented in the Sun is easily integrated into a hegemonic discourse of eco-capitalism. Lacking precision, “environmental standards” becomes a plastic signifier that fits any political agenda.

Just as “environmental standards” are invoked by speakers from radically different standpoints, so too is “the public” articulated with divergent discourses. Initially, the creation of the Forest Practices Code is articulated by government speakers with a notion of the “public interest.” For example, Hamilton writes, “Petter said he expects introduction of the code to create greater public confidence in B.C. forest practices” (Hamilton 1995a, A1). The articulation of the public interest with the introduction of the Code is also seen in the following excerpt:

The code, which will be released today by Premier Mike Harcourt, Forests Minister Andrew Petter and Environment Minister Moe Sihota, comes just after an Angus Reid opinion poll showed the B.C. public favors increased scrutiny of forest company operations and tougher penalties (Baldrey 1993, A1).

Later, the changes to the Code under Premier Clark are critiqued by environmental sources who mobilize a discourse of the “public interest.” The following excerpt quotes the Sierra Club’s David Boyd, who articulates the public interest with an environmentalist standpoint:
Boyd also said changes in planning processes will result in the public being less informed, citing the fact that companies no longer have to state whether or not the method of logging is clearcutting. "We are no longer going to be able to look at plans and inform the public on what the rate of clearcutting is in B.C." Boyd accused the government of "pulling the wool over the public's eyes," by insisting environmental standards will not be affected (Hamilton 1998, A1).

Similarly, the public is invoked in the Liberal party critique of the NDP as anti-business. In the following excerpt, Liberal leader Gordon Campbell articulates the "needs" of "the province" with his critique of the NDP and its forestry policies:

British Columbia's economy is in far worse shape than the government will admit or the public is aware, Liberal leader Gordon Campbell said Monday. . . . Despite its recovery a few years ago, the forest industry -- a major economic driver -- is not rebounding this time and investors, mistrustful of the New Democratic Party government, are staying away and not creating the jobs the province needs, he said. "I believe the situation with our economy in this province is much worse than most people think," Campbell said (Lee 1997, A1).

Throughout the debate over the Forest Practices Code, this singular, reified "public" is invoked by many different news sources. The discourse of the "public interest," like the vague discourse of "environmental values" becomes a plastic signifier that can be mobilized to legitimize any political standpoint within the textual world constructed by the Sun.
To summarize, the dominant discourse in this archive articulates the critique of the Forest Practices Code with a construction of the NDP as too bureaucratic and anti-business. Here, the NDP is defined as an abject failure, unable to please anyone. This depiction stands in stark contrast with the Sun's construction of the NDP in the PAS archive, where the party was depicted as a successful mediator between environmentalists and the forest industry. Furthermore, the Sun's construction of policy debate over the Forest Practices Code presents "two sides" of a story, in which debate is contained between the poles of environmental managerialism, represented by the pre-1996 version of the Code, and eco-capitalism, represented by the post-1996 version of the Code.

Finally, as in the Protected Areas Strategy and Working Forest archives, the network of power/knowledge constructed in the Sun draws primarily on the voices of government, environmentalist and forest industry news sources. At the same time the voices of labour, First Nations, and other possible speakers are marginalized.

The Results-Based Code

In the area of land use policy, there is an obvious point of disjuncture between the NDP government and the Liberal government. This is evident in the dramatically different land use legislation created by the two parties: the Protected Areas Strategy and the Working Forest. However, in analyzing forest practices policy, the point of disjuncture between the Liberals and the NDP is less obvious. As I have shown, the textual reality constructed by the Sun regarding the Forest Practices Code creates an image of "two NDPs." The Harcourt NDP achieved a state of environmental legitimacy through the original creation of the Code. However, the Clark NDP later streamlines the
Forest Practices Code in response to the ongoing criticism of forestry capital and the Liberal opposition party. In a sense, the Liberals' own Results-based Forest Practices Code may be read as a continuation of the move towards de-regulation and eco-capitalism which was started by the Clark government.

This group of texts contains an even split between news and opinion articles, with nine of each included for analysis. None of these articles appears on the front page. In fact, the only articles to appear in the A section of the paper are opinion pieces. From the allocation of news-space, we may infer that the Liberals' Results-based Forest Practices Code is deemed less newsworthy than the other environmental policies which are examined here. All of the authors in this set of articles are male, which is consistent with the other three sets. Also, a few key authors are responsible for several of the texts: four articles are by Gordon Hamilton; three articles are by Stephen Hume; and two articles are by Vaughn Palmer.

The news discourse of the Results-based Code is primarily a dialogue between government and environmental news sources, with government sources receiving the majority of the news-space. Liberal government discourse gives the impression of a state-industry bloc that is more explicit than in government discourse under the NDP. Industry claims-making is not nearly as prominent as government or environmental claims-making. As with the Working Forest, government news sources seem to act as a proxy for a forest industry standpoint within the Sun. Where the state is more explicitly aligned with capital, the Sun appears to work to shift the focus of environmental conflict towards the state and away from capital. Where industry discourse does appear, it echoes
dominant themes in government discourse, such as the compatibility of environmental protection and deregulation, premised on a model of corporate responsibility for the environment.

In this group of texts, Liberal discourse centres around themes of deregulation and efficiency. This is demonstrated in the following excerpts:

The code is to be replaced within one year with a new results-based code that de Jong said will “streamline” on-the-ground forest management but provide stiffer penalties for companies that don’t perform (Beatty & Hamilton 2001, D1).

The Liberals voted for the code when they were in Opposition. But they have since criticized the excessive bureaucrat costs associated with its so-called “prescriptive” approach -- meaning the code prescribes a detailed set of regulations for every conceivable situation. Instead, the Liberals promise a results-based code, which would lay out a preferred outcome -- protecting stream beds, for example -- while allowing some leeway on the practices necessary to achieve those results (Palmer 2001, A22).

Liberal news sources construct the NDP Forest Practices Code as too costly for industry and too bureaucratic. In this narrative, the Liberals are providing necessary reforms to fix the “damage” caused by the NDP’s Forest Practices Code. The Liberal construction of the NDP’s approach to forest policy is illustrated in the following excerpt from an interview with Gary Collins, the Liberal Finance Minister. Here, Collins describes the impact of NDP forest policy on the forest industry:
We’ve gone through at least one boom cycle in the forest sector where there was very little capital invested in plant and equipment and you saw in the last cycle where super stumpage came in, the Forest Practices Code came in, and it was a very hostile investment climate and people took their investments elsewhere. . . . In the last cycle, the previous government through its policies drove that required investment out of the province into other jurisdictions that are now competing with us (Collins qtd Enchin 2002, C1).

At the same time, Liberal sources continue to invoke an abstract discourse of environmental values. Therefore, the Sun presents a Liberal government that is working to construct an environmentalist public self. This is illustrated in the following examples, which invoke vague terms like “sustainability,” “forest values,” and “environmental values”:

B.C. chief forester Larry Pedersen said sustainability will continue to be the goal of the provincial government. “It is entirely possible to move towards a more results-based code without putting forest values at risk,” Pedersen said after speaking at a forest-management conference. “This isn’t a free-for-all. There will still be standards of conduct for forest management. It’s just a different way of attaining those standards (Beatty & Hamilton 2001, D1).

“The key principle of a results-based code is that licensees will manage the risk associated with achieving specific results and government will hold licensees accountable for achieving those results” the document states. “While it can be argued that a results-based approach does have
greater inherent risk to environmental values, such as wildlife and fish, it can also be argued a greater focus on results is the best way to hold licensees accountable" (Hamilton 2002c, D4).

As in the example of the Working Forest, Liberal news sources are unwilling to ignore environmentalism completely. Rather, Liberal speakers articulate a vague language of environmentalism with a discourse of deregulation. Thus, Liberal discourse is not simply anti-environmental. Instead, the Liberals come to represent an eco-capitalist alternative to the NDP approach of eco-managerialism, wherein environmental resources are integrated into a system of management by the state. Of course, given the fairly abstract and simplistic use of environmental discourse, a cynical reader could infer that the eco-capitalist public image created in the Sun is more symbolic than substantive.

As in Working Forest news, the Sun constructs a sympathetic portrait of the Liberal government. Here, the Liberals appear to embody a radical -- and necessary -- break from the (NDP) past. The Campbell government represents the positive values of deregulation and the market economy. This excerpt from a 2002 editorial is illustrative:

It took a while, but the B.C. Liberals have finally made good on their promise to revamp forestry regulations. This week, Forest Minister Mike de Jong introduced the Forest Range and Practices Act, legislation that will begin to replace the Forest Practices Code in April 2003. The legislation is a welcome change. The old code established a prescriptive system, with virtually every aspect of timber harvesting micro-managed by the government. . . . The result was an unwieldy and prohibitively expensive process that cost the industry close to $1 billion and made
B.C.'s logging business among the most costly to operate. Under the new act . . . the government assumes a stewardship role. Industries won't have to prepare plans for each site they harvest, but they will be required to submit plans that outline strategies consistent with government objectives concerning biodiversity, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and cultural values (2002b, A18).

This excerpt demonstrates a general theme in the Liberal-era news discourse. In this period, much of the op-ed writing appears to address the government with a tone of "friendly advice," as though the writer shares core values and assumptions. This contrasts with the Sun's coverage of the NDP, wherein op-ed content was generally more "oppositional" in tone.

However, while the government is the major news source in this group of texts, government-produced discourse is not homogenous. Government speakers appear both as members of the Liberal Party and as members of the civil service. Through the inclusion of civil service perspectives in the Sun, we see evidence of fissures in the government. Here, civil servants are invoked in the creation of an oppositional discourse regarding the impacts of the Results-based Code on environmental protection. For example Hamilton writes, "A draft of the B.C. Liberal government's proposed results-based Forest Practices Code shows there are concerns within ministries over risks to environmental values in abandoning the existing rules-based approach to forestry" (Hamilton 2002c, D4). Elsewhere, Hume writes about an internal audit of the Ministry of Forests, which found that "70 per cent of forest ministry employees do not believe that the streamlined, 'results-based' Forest Practices Code championed by our new..."
government is capable of protecting the environment or ensuring sustainability on forest lands" (Hume 2002a, A15). Such fissures in the state are also apparent in the news construction of the Forest Practices Board, a forest practices “watchdog” created by the NDP. Speakers from the Forest Practices Board appear as primary news sources in two texts. In both instances the Board critiques the Liberal government’s inability to adequately enforce forestry regulations (Palmer 2001; Hamilton 2003b). Where the Sun texts depict fissures in government and civil service discourse, we get the impression that the Liberals exercise less hegemonic control over the state than the NDP, which spoke with a more unified voice in the news.

The Sun constructs a public debate over the Results-based Forest Practices Code that is marked by two competing discourses. The discourse that promotes the new legislation focuses on the costly and bureaucratic nature of the NDP Code. The new code is constructed through a neo-liberal discourse of deregulation that will spur economic activity and free industry from the fetters of NDP red tape. This is illustrated in the following excerpt:

The industry welcomed the changes. “We welcome the chance to move from a cost-burdensome process-driven code to one that is based solely on results,” said Brian Zak, president of the Coast Forest & Lumber Association. “Industry will reap what it sows” (Beatty & Hamilton 2001, D1).

This discourse is primarily invoked by the state-industry bloc. This discourse asserts that deregulation is compatible with environmental values. For example, Hamilton cites a
passage of the government’s discussion paper on the Code that claims that “because companies are showing improved audit results and are seeking independent certification of their forest practices, the . . . environmental risk [of deregulation] is acceptable” (Hamilton 2002c, D4). The notion that environmental protection can be secured through deregulation appears to be based on a model of government-industry cooperation that presumes that logging corporations are inherently trustworthy and accountable.

In opposition to this dominant discourse is a discourse that opposes the move towards de-regulation by raising issues of enforceability and corporate accountability. The discourse of enforceability is a primary resource for challenging the Liberals’ Results-based Code in the Sun. This discourse is mobilized by environmentalists, the NDP and members of the Forest Practices Board. In the following excerpt, Joy MacPhail, the leader of the NDP opposition, invokes the notion of enforceability as she critiques the move towards deregulation while the government is also downsizing forest ministry staff:

NDP leader Joy MacPhail said both the layoffs and the new Forest Practices Code will weaken the protection of forest lands and increase the chance of another international boycott of B.C. forest products. “It’s a package deal. Change the Forest Practices Code to get out of the business of protecting our forests and then fire the workers who actually do the protecting,” MacPhail said (McInnes 2002, B1).

Enforceability is also a central theme in environmentalist discourse. This is illustrated in the following excerpts:
"With a results-based code, once the damage is done, it can be permanent." Matt Price, research associate with the Natural Resources Defence Council, said even though the government promises tougher penalties, it will not be willing to enforce them (Beatty & Hamilton 2001, D1).

Lisa Matthaus, of the Sierra Club of B.C., said the draft shows how difficult it is for the government to develop clear, enforceable standards without resorting to rules. "If you are going to measure results, you measure them against something," she said, noting that companies, not government ministries, will be responsible for collecting baseline data. (Hamilton 2002c, D4).

From this discursive position, the Liberals’ version of the Code raises problems for enforcing corporate accountability and environmental values on forest lands. This environmental construction of forestry capital implies that forestry companies cannot be trusted to monitor their own behaviour. Here, environmental sustainability depends on the oversight of the state. This construction of forestry capital contradicts the construction of environmentally responsible forestry corporations mobilized by Liberal news sources.\(^{21}\)

\(^{21}\)An interesting aspect of the “enforceability” discourse is that it focuses primarily on the ability of the state to enforce environmental laws, rather than on the deviance of corporations who break environmental laws. In a sense, the responsibility for corporate deviance is displaced onto the state. Furthermore, the environmental deviance of logging corporations is not framed as crime news. While forestry corporations may be constructed as environmentally irresponsible, they are never constructed as environmental criminals. By focusing the “enforceability” discourse on the failure of the government, the blame for environmental degradation is shifted away from capital and onto the state. On the mystification of corporate deviance in the news see McMullan and Hinze (1999); McMullan and McClung (2003).
In environmentalist discourse, government regulation is necessary to ensure corporate accountability and the public interest in Crown forests. The assumption that the state is the rightful guardian of the forest appears to underlie environmental news discourse in the Liberal era. Environmental discourse, as represented in the Sun, focuses on the impacts of deregulation, without offering any alternative solutions to the “problems” associated with the NDP Code. While the NDP Code is not explicitly invoked as a discursive resource, environmental news sources implicitly adopt the eco-managerialist orientation of the NDP. The following quote, from the Sierra Club’s Lisa Matthaus, is illustrative of this:

The environmentalists said they are concerned that government is stepping back from direct involvement in forest management when there will be fewer forestry officers in the field. “The public, through our government, is going to know a lot less about what is going on on the landbase,” Matthaus said (Hamilton 2002c, D4).

From this perspective, the deregulation of the Code is an abdication of the state’s responsibility for environmental protection, in that it allocates control over forestry resources to the private interests of forestry capital. The oppositional discourse of environmentalism that enters this archive reproduces hegemonic notions about the democratic state’s role as the legitimate representative of “the people.”

Rather than focusing on the scientific-ecological discourses that were characteristic of environmental discourse during the NDP era, environmental discourse in
this instance focuses on a more general construction of the forest industry as environmentally irresponsible. This is seen in the following excerpts:

The draft is raising alarms with environmentalists who fear the new code will turn too much control over B.C.'s hinterlands to forest companies. “This draft is a catastrophe in the making,” said Jim Cooperman, president of the Shuswap Environmental Action Society (Hamilton 2002c, D4).

“The results-based code is one of a range of initiatives this government is taking that will effectively result in the privatization of our public lands through the back door,” said Lisa Matthaus, of the Sierra Club, who will also be presenting a brief (Hamilton 2002a, D2).

From this perspective, the Liberals' Forest Practices Code will only increase the unaccountability of logging corporations. This discourse of corporate accountability is mobilized primarily by environmental critics. However, it is also invoked by Stephen Hume, a columnist for the Sun. The following excerpt from Hume provides a more scathing indictment of forestry capital than that produced by any environmentalist speaker:

It's time the people of British Columbia demanded a vigorous public discussion about what we want the government to do on our behalf in the softwood-lumber dispute. So far, the agenda has been about the appeasement of special interests. . . . Then there are the vertically integrated corporate giants that are sustained by a B.C. resource tenure system that puts them in control of better than 85 per cent of the annual
allowable harvest from our public forests -- as though we lived in Rupert's Land in 1660 rather than a modern mixed economy in the 21st century (Hume 2002a, A15).

This discursive construction of forestry capital stands in opposition to the construction of industry mobilized by Liberal news sources, or by the majority of Sun columnists and editorialists. While an oppositional discourse of corporate accountability is present, the dominant discourse is that which conflates the interests of industry with the "public interest" (Willcocks 2001; Enchin 2002; Enchin 2002a).

Corollary with the critical discourse of corporate accountability is a discourse of the "public interest," that is mobilized by environmental news sources. This critical discourse of the public interest defines the state-industry bloc favoured by the Liberals as harmful to the public interest. Within the critical discourse, government is too accommodating to industry and fails to take into account the public interest in environmental protection. This is seen in the following example, which articulates the "public interest" with an environmental standpoint:

At the first hearing held in Prince Rupert, environmental groups involved in forestry issues in B.C. were not invited, said Jessica Clogg of West Coast Environmental Law. She said speakers at the MLA hearing were hand-picked, leaving the public, or environmental groups with an interest in the new results-based code, out of the process (Hamilton 2002a, D13).
Sun columnist Stephen Hume also asserts that the Liberals are neglecting the public interest in favour of the corporate interest. He writes:

Do we want the best forest lands alienated from our children forever, turned into private estates and sold off to American, Asian and European corporations? Some say this is inevitable. Is it? . . . Our arrogant politicians need reminding that, in a democracy, the people reserve the right to set the agenda and that a significant number of British Columbians does not want to see environmental standards abandoned, ecosystems degraded, forest fragmented or Crown lands privatized in an attempt to placate a few special interests (Hume 2002a, A15).

Once again, Hume offers a more radical critique of the state-industry bloc than is offered by environmentalist news sources. The fact that Hume writes as a Sun journalist might lead us to a more pluralist reading of the Sun. While the presence of Hume’s counter-hegemonic critique dispels any simple “dominant ideology” reading of the Sun, his standpoint is definitely a minority voice, more than “balanced” out by the news texts and opinion pieces that take the public benefit of the state-industry bloc for granted.

To summarize, the dominant discourse in this archive depicts the Results-based Forest Practices Code as a necessary move towards deregulation of the forest industry. Here, the interests of capital are equated with the “public interest.” This dominant discourse is mobilized by Liberal news sources, as well as by Sun op-ed writers. By contrast, an oppositional discourse articulates themes of corporate accountability and the public interest with a broadly environmental standpoint. This discourse is invoked
primarily by environmentalists, but also by the Forest Practices Board, the NDP, civil servants and one columnist for the Sun. In this group of texts, the Sun constructs a system of power/knowledge which limits forest policy debate to the options of the eco-capitalist program of the Liberal Party and an eco-managerialist standpoint. Discourses which might offer another option are beyond the realm of debate. Throughout this archive, as in the others, the hegemony of “two sides of a story” prevails. While the standard of news “balance” is achieved, the opposing sides often stand on similar hegemonic ground. Thus, “nature” is alternately defined as an object of state governmentality, or as an object of (eco-)capitalist consumption. In the Sun’s system of power/knowledge, there is no real alternative to the “treadmill of production.” Finally, as in the other groups of texts, the Sun constructs a web of power/knowledge in which social reality is defined primarily by the state, environmentalists and forest industry news sources. Other voices, such as First Nations and labour, are silenced.

Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the results of a discourse analysis of four groups of newspaper articles that deal with land use and forest policy debate in British Columbia. First, the Protected Areas Strategy texts are dominated by a narrative of compromise. The PAS is generally treated as a good news story that contrasts with the prior “war in the woods” news discourse. Thus, the Protected Areas Strategy is constructed by the Vancouver Sun as an example of successful mediation by the NDP between environmentalists, capital and labour. By contrast, the Liberals’ Working Forest initiative is dominated by two conflicting discourses. Here, the Liberal-industry
discourse of providing "certainty and stability" for the forest industry is opposed by an environmental discourse of corporate accountability and the public interest.

Third, the texts which deal with the NDP Forest Practices Code may be read as a narrative of two distinct New Democratic Party governments. In earlier articles, the Sun defines the Code as an example of the government's environmental legitimacy and its willingness to get tough with irresponsible forestry corporations. Initially, the Code is supported by environmentalists, as well as by capital. However, there is a substantial shift in the news discourse following Glen Clark's ascendancy as Premier. In this second period, the Code is constructed as overly bureaucratic and costly. Here, the NDP is eviscerated by industry and Liberal Party news sources, as well as by Sun editorialists and columnists. At this point environmental discourse also shifts, invoking the original Code as a resource to challenge Premier Clark's move towards deregulation. If the Protected Areas Strategy is constructed by the Sun through a discourse of success, the Forest Practices Code is defined primarily through a discourse of failure.

Finally, the Liberals' Results-based Forest Practices Code is characterized by two competing discourses. On the one hand, the Liberals are constructed as saviours of the logging industry, which had been strangled by NDP red tape. In opposition to a discourse of deregulation is an oppositional discourse that focuses on issues of corporate accountability and responsibility. As in the news coverage of the Working Forest, there is a general shift in environmental discourse away from the ecological-scientific discourses that were prevalent under the NDP. Instead, environmentalists are shown to mobilize discourses that might be broadly defined as "democratic." That is,
environmental discourse is more often focused on notions of corporate accountability and the public interest.

Drawing on the theoretical lens developed earlier, I would argue that the media are hegemonic, not in the sense of favouring one political party over another. I do believe that the Sun adopts an oppositional stance in relation to the NDP, while critique of the Liberals tends to assume a tone of “friendly advice.” Still, the difference in coverage is not enough to declare that the Sun is simply a propaganda machine for the Liberals. Rather, the Sun may be considered hegemonic in the sense of encouraging uncritical thought about environmental policy debate.

Throughout all four of these textual archives, the Vancouver Sun creates a system of power/knowledge that is characterized by a hegemony of “two sides” to any environmental policy debate. Here, environmentalists are positioned in opposition to forestry capital; while the state assumes the role of a mediator (the NDP under Harcourt), or the explicit ally of industry (under the Liberals). In this construction of environmental policy debate, the interests of forestry labour are articulated with the interests of capital. Where environmental news sources are shown challenging this point of articulation, there is an absence of an environmental discourse that re-articulates the interests of labour with those of environmentalists. Whether this is a failure of environmentalists to mobilize such a discourse, or a failure of the Sun to include such a discourse in its construction of reality is difficult to determine only from the news texts. Regardless, the effect is the same: the Sun’s textual reality constructs an environmental conflict in which environmentalists appear content to stand in opposition to labour. This reading of the
Sun is consistent with the position that the mass media tend to simplify environmental debate in BC into a dichotomy between “environmental” and “forestry” perspectives, as noted in the first chapter of this thesis (Doyle, Elliott & Tindall, 1997; Hackett et al., 2000).

Furthermore, the environmentalism that is admitted into public debate by the Vancouver Sun is one that is ultimately compatible with the hegemony of capitalism and the liberal democratic state. It is an environmentalism that is bound by the twin poles of eco-managerialism and eco-capitalism. To a large degree, both of these forms of environmentalism may be characterized as “managed scarcity” approaches to environmental politics. The Sun creates a web of power/knowledge that marginalizes any “ecological synthesis” discourse that might seriously challenge the legitimacy of either the modern state or corporate capital on ecological and social justice grounds. Thus, the Sun perpetuates a model of environmentalism that can be articulated with divergent political standpoints. The environmentalism constructed by the Sun is, in Gramsci’s terms, containable as a form of “passive revolution.” In the textual reality of the Sun, the counter-hegemonic potential of environmentalism becomes a move towards “green” capitalism, without challenging either the treadmill of product or the treadmill of productism that underlie the relationship between nature and society in Canada.

Finally, I would conclude that there are only a few official positions that allow entrée into the media construction of environmental policy debate. The debate is dominated, throughout all four archives, by government, environmentalists (from “legitimate,” more moderate organizations) and industry. These are the collective
identities that give media sources the power to participate in the formation of social
reality. While forestry labour and First Nations people may be talked about, they appear
only rarely in news texts to speak for themselves. Likewise, more “radical”
environmental discourses, such as deep ecology, eco-feminism, or social ecology are
rendered silent. These patterns of invisibility contribute to the hegemonic role of media
as much as anything within the texts. Foucault writes of the need to resurrect subjugated
discourses through genealogical work. There are many voices which are subjugated in
the Vancouver Sun’s construction of environmental policy debate in BC. Their
insurrection would be a key element of a truly counter-hegemonic environmental politics.
CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

The media are a key site for the construction of social reality. Through media texts, we form ideas and opinions about people, places and public issues beyond the realm of our everyday lives. Environmental problems are among the prominent public issues that are constructed and contested through the mass media. Whether we examine old-growth logging, global warming, or endangered species legislation, public knowledge about environmental conflict and environmental policy is shaped through interaction with media texts. Therefore, the textual systems of power/knowledge constructed by the mass media should be treated as a key research site for environmental sociology.

In this research project, I have examined how the Vancouver Sun, British Columbia's largest daily newspaper, has framed four distinct environmental policy debates. In the realm of land-use policy, I looked at the Protected Areas Strategy, introduced by the New Democratic Party, and the Working Forest, introduced by the BC Liberals. I have also examined forestry policy initiatives introduced by both the NDP and the Liberal governments: the Forest Practices Code and the Results-based Code. Using a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis, I analyzed over 80 newspaper articles, including both news and op-ed texts.

In this chapter, I would like to present a more synthesized reading of the results from the four different case studies. This discussion will lead into a tentative "genealogical" analysis which attempts to illuminate some of the discourses that have been marginalized from the Sun's construction of environmental policy debate. In the following section, I will engage in a more theoretical discussion, wherein I will attempt to
link my research results to the theoretical lens developed earlier. Finally, I will consider several directions for further research.

**Synthesizing the Case Studies**

First, I would like to consider the *Vancouver Sun*'s construction of the New Democratic Party government. In the Protected Areas Strategy texts, the NDP are generally portrayed in a positive light, as a mediator between environmentalism and forestry capital. The creation of new protected areas, totaling twelve per cent of the province, is generally seen as an accomplishment. By contrast, the *Sun*'s portrayal of the NDP in texts that deal with the Forest Practices Code is marked by successive dominant discourses. Initially, the Code is constructed as an environmentally progressive piece of legislation. The *Sun* portrays the NDP as willing to get tough with capital on behalf of the environment. However, this discursive construction of the NDP quickly shifts. Soon, the Code is represented as too costly for business. The NDP are constructed as overly bureaucratic enemies of capital.

Corollary to this shift in media coverage, Premier Glen Clark appears to move away from the environmentally-legitimate public identity constructed by Premier Harcourt. Clark is shown mobilizing a discourse that is more labour-centred and often explicitly hostile to the environmental movement. We see that Clark offers a more business-friendly re-construction of the Code, which foreshadows many of the changes since made by the Liberal government. Still, the media construction of the NDP remains hostile. Finally, once the Liberals gain power, the media construction of the NDP remains negative. When the NDP are invoked, they are defined as responsible for the
decline of the forest economy in British Columbia. As news sources, NDP speakers are relegated to the margins of environmental policy debate once the Liberal Party assumes power.

By contrast, the Liberals are objects of conflicting media constructions throughout their time in government. Overall, Sun editorialists and columnists depict the Liberals as proponents of the corporate interest, which is articulated with a general “public interest.” The sense that the ascension of a Liberal government represents an explicit move towards a state-capitalist bloc is inescapable from a reading of the Sun’s coverage of Liberal environmental policy. However, Liberal news sources continue to articulate a vague discourse of environmentalism with the government’s politics of deregulation. While the Liberals’ environmental legitimacy is challenged by the environmental movement, Liberal news sources persist in attempting to construct an environmentally-legitimate public self. Whereas the NDP are constructed as being more eco-managerialist in orientation, the Liberals are constructed by the Sun as vaguely eco-capitalist.

While I believe that the Liberals generally receive more favourable treatment from the media than the NDP, there is also substantial critique of the Liberals by news sources and by Sun op-ed writers. This critical construction of the Liberals challenges the discourse that articulates the interests of forestry capital with the public interest. From this standpoint, Liberal land-use and forestry policy lacks environmental legitimacy. The Working Forest and the Results-based Forest Practices Code both represent moves to increase the power of forestry capital over provincial (public) resources. From this critical perspective, the eco-managerialist approach of the NDP is preferred to the eco-capitalist approach of the Liberals.
Turning to the representation of forestry capital in the *Sun*, we might note that there are two broad discursive constructions of the industry. The first is promoted by Liberal and industry news sources; as well as by many *Sun* editorialists and columnists. Here, forestry capital is defined as an integral and leading part of the British Columbia economy. As such, the interests of forestry capital appear to coincide with the interests of the general public and with forestry labour. While it is necessary for business to adapt to changing environmental values, this can be done within the context of a capitalist marketplace. In this construction, the environmental harms of industrial forestry can be addressed through a “managed scarcity” policy agenda that takes the underlying “treadmill of production” for granted (Schnaiberg 1980).

By contrast, a critical discourse challenges the articulation of the interests of capital with those of forestry labour and the general interest. Here, forestry capital is seen as inherently ecologically irresponsible. In this discourse, the visible solution is eco-managerialism: the state’s ability to regulate capital and the use of natural resources must be increased. In that the eco-managerialist approach fails to problematize either the underlying treadmill of production, or the social justice dimensions of environmental conflict, it may also be read as a (more progressive) form of “managed scarcity.” Counter-hegemonic constructions of industry that move beyond the twin poles of eco-capitalism and eco-managerialism are rendered invisible in the *Sun*’s network of power/knowledge. Forestry capital is normalized as an essential part of the BC political economy. The main question under debate is how much state regulation is required to “green” the forest industry.
In the Sun, environmental discourse is characterized by a succession of dominant discourses. In the earlier texts, there appears to be a self-conscious move away from recreational and aesthetic constructions of the environment towards more scientific discourses that focus on themes of biodiversity and endangered species. Later on, these scientific discourses appear less frequently. Instead, environmental discourse focuses on more “democratic” themes, such as the “public interest” and corporate accountability, which are articulated with an environmental standpoint.

From a research standpoint of critical identification, this move towards a discourse that articulates environmentalism and democratic discourse seems positive. Yet, while the Sun does allow space for an environmental discourse that promotes eco-managerialism as the preferred alternative to eco-capitalism, there is still room for more radically counter-hegemonic environmental voices to emerge. For example, eco-feminism, social ecology and deep ecology represent three different strands of counter-hegemonic discourse that come closer to Schnaiberg’s notion of “ecological synthesis” (1980). Without engaging in a detailed discussion of each of these perspectives, I will briefly suggest some of the ways in which they might raise questions that remain outside the borders of the Sun’s textual reality. In reading BC environmental policy through a more counter-hegemonic environmental lenses, we would be sensitized to the dynamics of gendered, racialized, and class inequalities that are inherent in environmental policymaking and debate. We might be led to question the hegemonic normality of industrial capitalism as an economic means of relating to non-human “nature.” Similarly, we might question the validity of the state’s managerial approach to defining, governing and

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22 Plumwood (1994) and Hay (2002) each provide a good introduction to all three of these traditions.
distributing natural resources. Finally, we might be led to question the utilitarian construction of “nature” that underlies both eco-capitalism and eco-managerialism.\(^{23}\)

Furthermore, while environmental discourse is often used to challenge the articulation of the “general interest” with the interests of forestry capital, any discourse which re-articulates this general interest, or the interests of labour, with an alternative ecological discourse is largely invisible. The question of whether environmentalists are failing to produce such a discourse, or whether the Sun is failing to admit such a discourse into its construction of reality is difficult to judge, working only from an analysis of newspaper texts. However, if we look at the Western Canada Wilderness Committee’s online publications regarding the Working Forest, we see an environmental discourse in which environmental concerns are firmly articulated with the interests of labour and First Nations (Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003b; Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003c). The Western Canada Wilderness Committee challenges the Liberal discourse that articulates the interests of forestry capital and labour. The group argues that the health of forestry communities is harmed by the increased control over forestry resources granted to industry by the Working Forest. The Wilderness Committee writes:

The Working Forest does nothing to address the main causes of instability and job loss in the forestry industry, such as the increasing export of raw

\(^{23}\) A 1996 paper by McMahon on provides a concrete example of the sort of eco-feminist discourse that is rendered invisible in the Sun. In this paper, she deconstructs the ideal-typical economic man of neo-classical economics, which underlies much of the Liberal government news discourse. A primary point of critique is economic man’s “trouble with relationships,” which makes it very difficult to account for ecological or social justice in any economic framework premised on the individualism and profit-seeking. As McMahon notes, “The assumption of (formal) equality makes it difficult to see relationships of systematic inequality, whether of race, class, gender or speciesism” (McMahon 1996, 171).
logs, the high-grade overcutting of valley bottoms, mechanization in the mills and in the woods, the undiverse, low value-added pulp and lumber orientation of the BC logging industry . . . , the tenure stranglehold of a few large companies that creates this undiversified wood products industry, and the Softwood Lumber duties imposed by the US. All of these causes of job loss and insecurity for forestry workers will only continue and increase with the Working Forest in place.

This spring, along with the Working Forest the BC Liberals also intends to eliminate the local milling requirements for companies logging public forests. They also plan to eliminate cut control regulations that provide employment stability for forestry workers. That is, the Liberals plan to give corporate certainty to public forests but eliminate the social benefits that those companies must provide to rural communities and BC citizens (Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003b).

In a similar vein, the Wilderness Committee argues that the “certainty” provided to logging companies through the Working Forest initiative will shut down possibilities for the just settlement of First Nations land claims. In the following excerpt, the Wilderness Committee articulates its environmental concerns over the Working Forest with a discourse of social justice for First Nations:

Even if Working Forest legislation states that it will not limit First Nations from obtaining such lands for treaty settlement, the amount of money or land the people of BC will have to pay the logging companies for giving back tenured forest lands to First Nations will increase. This will consequently act as a major financial disincentive for the government to give back valuable forestlands to the First Nations, and will slow down negotiations and make them more difficult and costly. By increasing the companies’ claims to compensation on prime forestlands at the centre of
First Nations treaty settlement interests, the First Nations have MUCH to lose from the Working Forest (Western Canada Wilderness Committee 2003b).

Of course, this single example does not offer conclusive proof that the Sun actively excludes more “radical” environmental discourses that link social justice and ecological concerns. However, these excerpts do provide clues that there are more “mainstream” environmental groups that are moving towards a politics of “ecological synthesis.” Unfortunately, this type of counter-hegemonic discourse is excluded from the Sun’s construction of environmental policy debate.

In Chapter II of this thesis, I introduced the main organizational actors in British Columbia’s forest policy debate. These included the NDP and Liberal parties, organized environmentalism, and forestry capital. I also discussed forestry labour and First Nations, who have dropped out of sight since their initial introduction. Forestry labour and First Nations appear infrequently in all four sets of articles. When these groups are acknowledged, they are more often spoken about than allowed to speak for themselves. The invisibility of forestry labour and B.C. First Nations voices is the largest patterned silence to emerge from my analysis.

Working only from news texts, we might ask whether the invisibility of these news sources reflects a process of active exclusion, or whether these organizational actors have not engaged in attempts at news-making activity. There is at least sketchy evidence that First Nations and labour have tried to gain access to environmental policy debate in
the *Sun*.24 For example, the IWA website contains two press releases that challenge the state-capital bloc’s dominant discourse that articulates Liberal forest policy with the general interest of forestry labour. For the IWA, increasing the control of forestry corporations over natural resources works against rural communities. In the IWA construction of Liberal forest policy, the Working Forest and the Results-based Code should be opposed on the basis that increased corporate power is not matched by requirements for companies to invest in local communities. Thus, Liberal forest policy works to sever the "social contract" forged between labour, capital and the state (IWA 2003a; IWA 2003b). For example, one of the releases states:

> Of particular concern to workers and their families is the misguided effort by the provincial government to remove any of the socio-economic obligations on forest tenure holders. “We need to warn citizens of resource-based communities that their futures are on the line,” said CEP Western Region Vice-President Dave Coles. “The writing is on the wall: We’re being asked to give up legislative protection for our jobs and homes, with nothing in return.” “These changes will rip up another contract with the people of British Columbia by stripping away community rights to timber and jobs,” added [BC Federation of Labour President Jim] Sinclair. “First Nations, workers and forest dependent communities must have the opportunity to participate in a complete public review on these changes before the Liberals make a bad situation worse” (IWA 2003a).

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24 That is, I had difficulty finding textual “proof,” through online searching that organized labour or First Nations have attempted to engage in the public debate. Most websites that were run by First Nations groups, or by organized labour, did not have an easily-accessible press release archive.
The IWA website also contains a joint policy statement issued by the IWA, CEP, First Nations Summit, and the BC Federation of Labour. This release opposes Liberal forest policy on the basis the government has neglected to account for the interests and voices of labour and First Nations. Here, First Nations interests, the health of forestry communities, and environmental sustainability are articulated together in opposition to the dominant discourse on Liberal forest policy. The following excerpt is a key example of a counter-hegemonic discourse that is rendered invisible in the Sun's construction of policy debate:

On a critical issue of significant importance to our economy, particularly in rural BC, the province has failed in its constitutional obligation to consult and accommodate First Nations and has failed to adequately consult with forest workers. Further, the province has failed to meet its moral obligation to consult with communities that depend on sustainable forestry and has failed in its ethical obligation to consult with stakeholders whose livelihoods depend on sustainable forestry or who depend on sustainable forest practices. . . .

BC's forests are vital to our province's economic and environmental well being. Future forest legislation and policy must include proper stewardship and monitoring to ensure sustainable forests, the recognition of Aboriginal Title and rights, the full participation of First Nations, and effective mechanisms that develop long-term investments in jobs, and the workers and communities that depend on them. . . . (Coles, Haggard, John & Sinclair 2003, 1-2).

While the evidence I have presented here is limited, it does support the notion that labour and First Nations seem interested in participating in public debate over environmental policy in B.C. Thus, their exclusion from the Sun does not seem due to lack of interest.
Rather, their voices are likely not deemed important enough to gain entrée to the Sun’s system of power/knowledge.25 Through these patterned silences, relations of power among the state, industry, environmentalists, First Nations and labour are reproduced.

From this analysis, I would draw the general conclusion that the Vancouver Sun produces a system of power/knowledge that limits environmental debate to the alternatives of eco-managerialism and eco-capitalism. The former position views environmental resources as something to be managed by the state, while the latter places an emphasis on the ability of capital and the market to manage “nature” for long-term sustainability. In the textual reality constructed by the Sun, the eco-managerialist position is generally adopted by the NDP and environmental news sources. By contrast, Liberal government news sources and speakers from forestry corporations tend to speak from an eco-capitalist standpoint. Thus, the Sun is able to represent “two sides” of environmental policy debate, without offering a substantive critique of the underlying political economy of the forest industry.

Drawing on the theoretical work of Allan Schnaiberg, I would argue that both eco-managerialism and eco-capitalism represent forms of managed scarcity. From both perspectives, the worst ecological harms of modern capitalism are moderated, without addressing the “treadmill of production” that underlies the relationship between

25 Drawing on the work of Ericson, Baranek and Chan, we may infer that First Nations and labour news sources occupy a lower position on the “hierarchy of credibility” than sources from government, industry and environmental organizations (Ericson, Baranek & Chan 1989). However, it is important to emphasize that this finding is specific to the four textual archives examined here. Questions about the marginalization of First Nations and forestry sources from the Vancouver Sun’s broader textual construction of reality cannot be examined from an analysis of only four episodes of environmental policy debate; this remains a question for further research. However, the findings of this project are consistent with the conclusions that emerge from Perigoe and Lazar’s content analysis of racialized patterns of representation in television news. These authors conclude: “It is especially rare to see a Native Canadian speaking on matters of concern to all Canadians. Those stories that did include interviews with visible minorities were usually concerned with individuals or issues in, and specific to, those communities, while stories involving Native Canadians not specific to their community were extremely negligible compared with the overall sample” (Perigoe & Lazar 1992, 271).
capitalism and "nature." Counter-hegemonic discourses that move beyond a managed scarcity approach to environmental politics are rendered invisible. Furthermore, the environmental discourse represented by the Sun is easily articulated with the dominant discourses of managed scarcity. Even where environmental news sources challenge the articulation of the corporate interest and the public interest, an alternative that moves beyond eco-managerialism is never made explicit. Environmental discourses which raise questions about corporate accountability seem to rely on a preference of the eco-managerialist orientation represented by the NDP. Therefore, we may conclude that the Sun works to reproduce the hegemony of the treadmill of production.

Furthermore, the Sun’s construction of environmental policy debate creates substantial patterns of silence. First Nations, forestry labour, more radically counter-hegemonic environmentalisms, and the voices of those who do not enjoy an affiliation with a “credible” news source are excluded from the system of power/knowledge constructed by the Sun. The mobilization of these silenced voices within the realm of public debate is essential to creating a more complex understanding of environmental policy. It is also central to the creation of an environmental politics that can challenge both the ecological and social inequities of the modern treadmill of production.

**Theoretical Implications**

The theoretical lens derived from the intersection of Gramscian and Foucauldian theory has proven useful for interpreting my textual data. In particular, the key concepts of hegemony, articulation and power/knowledge have illuminated how the Vancouver Sun constructs a social reality that simplifies and narrows environmental policy debate.
From environmental sociology, the work of Alan Schnaiberg has provided a useful language for theorizing my results. In particular, I have found his concepts of the treadmill of production, managed scarcity, and ecological synthesis useful. The concepts of eco-managerialism and eco-capitalism have also been useful for interpreting my results, as they add complexity to Schnaiberg's model of managed scarcity and ecological synthesis.

While I have drawn more explicitly upon the language of political ecology, I have also focused on the different ways in which "the environment" is discursively constructed in the Sun. To interpret my results in more explicitly constructivist terms, I would note that "the environment" has been alternately defined in aesthetic, scientific and "democratic" terms. By examining how environmental discourses shift through time, we see how the British Columbian environment is a culturally specific phenomenon. At the same time, all of the constructions of "the environment" which emerge from 1991 to 2003 have a common theme. There is an underlying conception of "nature" as an object for management by the democratic state and as an object of social conflict between "environmentalists" and resource capitalism.

Finally, I would like to briefly locate my work within the theoretical tension between critical and postmodern media theory. The critical perspective views mass media as a tool for the transmission of elite ideology. I believe that my results point to the futility of viewing the media in such a simplistic manner. While the Sun may work hegemonically, it does not promote a simplistic "elite ideology." In conforming to the journalistic norms of balance, the Sun allows substantial "cracks in the monolith" (Hackett 1991). Environmentalists use their access as news sources to question the
legitimacy of state and corporate elites. Oppositional discourses do emerge that question the accountability of logging companies and which assert the importance of democratic values for resource management. While I have illustrated how oppositional discourse may be contained within a broadly hegemonic framework, it is important to acknowledge that the environmental movement is still able to use the media as a site for posing a limited challenge to corporate power.

At the same time, the media is not nearly as fluid or open as postmodern theory might assert. The postmodern perspective asserts that the media do not work in such a simplistic, uni-directional way. Postmodernism stresses the poly-vocality of media texts. This perspective also asserts that audiences have a more active role in interpreting mass media texts than critical theory allows for. However, my analysis demonstrates that systems of power/knowledge are constructed which repeatedly privilege certain speakers and which promote an understanding of the environment-society relationship that takes for granted the power of the democratic state and resource corporations to manage and appropriate "nature." Thus, while environmental news is more "open" than a simplistic critical theory would suggest, it is not as "open" as postmodernism might indicate.

In this research project, I have drawn upon key concepts from political ecology and environmental constructivism. At the same time, I have attempted to work across the division between critical and postmodern theory in media sociology. Adapting a broader theoretical frame grounded in the work of Gramsci and Foucault has been useful for integrating insights from both critical and postmodern approaches to media sociology and environmental sociology. A theoretical lens constructed at the Gramsci-Foucault nexus
integrates an appreciation for political economy with an analytic language that is sensitive to the cultural dimension social conflict. It also allows us to appreciate how social power operates as a network at both the micro-social and macro-social dimensions. While this theoretical lens cannot resolve all of the points of tension inherent in either the political ecology/environmental constructivist divide, or the critical theory/postmodern divide, I believe it can help us integrate the valuable insights offered by each of these perspectives. Through my analysis, I hope I have demonstrated that a model based on the Gramsci-Foucault nexus offers a complex and viable tool for understanding the relationship between environmental conflict and the mass media.

**Directions for Further Research**

To conclude this chapter, I would like to outline some possibilities for further research. In the original design for this project, I had planned to combine discourse analysis, as a primary research method, with a simple form of content analysis. Due to my own doubts about the quality of the content analysis, I have bracketed this portion of the research. Therefore, an obvious direction for further research would be to engage in mixed-methods research on environmental policy news, using a more adequate instrument for content analysis. Within such a research design, discourse analysis could be combined with quantitative coding for the organizational affiliation and gender of news sources and news authors.

Second, it would be worth engaging more deeply in a genealogical exploration of environmental policy debate in British Columbia. While I have attempted a tentative

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26 A discussion of the Content Analysis component of this research is included as Appendix II.
discussion of the discourses that have been marginalized from the Vancouver Sun's construction of reality, I have not gone far enough beyond the textual world of the Sun to provide a detailed genealogy of those subjugated discourses. In the future, it would be worth focusing on a single environmental policy debate, such as the Working Forest, and engaging in a thorough exploration of the discourses mobilized by different key players throughout a multiplicity of media. Then, it would be possible to provide a more extensive account of the discourses that the Sun denies representation in its construction of reality. Given the general invisibility of First Nations and labour voices in the Sun, an exploration of First Nations and labour discourse on environmental policy would be a key area for further research. Through such a genealogical analysis, we would be in a better position to gauge the degree to which the Sun actively limits participation in protected areas and forestry policy debate. We might possibly discover that First Nations and labour organizations do not consider mass media activism an important strategy for engaging in policy debate over protected areas and forestry.

Third, I have discussed the limitations of working only with textual materials. As my research has progressed, I have become increasingly convinced of the benefit of linking textual research with some form of interactive research, whether with audiences or news-workers. Often, discourse analysis conducted only from media texts takes on the feeling of inhabiting a "hall of mirrors." While it is plausible to assume that there is some relationship between the textual reality of the Vancouver Sun and the social world beyond the text, we can never quite be sure how distorted that relationship is. Thus, a major methodological proposition that emerges from this research project is that textual
analysis may be most useful when combined with some form of more “interactive” research.

In terms of further research, I would be particularly interested in engaging in multi-method research that combines discourse analysis with audience research. While I have described how media texts construct a particular social reality, I have tried to refrain from inferring how this reality is read by news audiences. Without engaging in audience research, the question of how news audiences make sense of environmental policy stories remains unanswered. Therefore, an important direction for further research would be to combine textual research on environmental policy news with audience research on the same set of news texts.27

One possible direction for audience research would centre on the gendered nature of authorship of environmental policy news in the Sun. I have noted that the authorship of environmental policy news is almost exclusively male. This raises an interesting question for audience research: does the gendered consumption of the news mirror the gendered division of labour in news authorship? That is, we might ask whether women tend to focus on sections of the paper that are generally authored by women; while men tend to focus on news that is generally authored by men. At a more general level, we might ask to what degree news readers are aware of the gendered division of newspaper authorship. Similar audience research questions examine how audiences perceive the textual construction of environmental policy in the Sun in class-based, or racialized terms.

27 The Glasgow University Media Group has produced interesting work using focus groups as a method for audience research. For example, see Philo (1993).
Another direction for further research would be to compare the Sun's coverage of environmental policy debate with similar coverage in other papers. Such a comparison could involve the Province, the other Vancouver daily newspaper with provincial distribution. Both the Sun and the Province have had the same owners throughout the period under examination. Like the Sun, the Province passed from Southam to Hollinger to CanWest Global, its current owner. It would be worth investigating whether there is any difference in how environmental policy debate is constructed in papers which share the same ownership, but are superficially different. Alternately, environmental policy news in the Sun could be compared with environmental policy coverage in newspapers either in other regions of Canada, or with other regions of the Pacific Northwest, such as Washington or Oregon.

As I noted in Chapter II, newspaper readership has generally declined in British Columbia. This raises the question of whether or not newspapers are the most salient site for media research. The decline of newspaper readership could point to the need to do more comparative research on how different media forms produce different systems of power/knowledge. Thus, it may be valuable to compare print media coverage of environmental policy debate with news from other media, such as radio, television, or the internet. We could ask whether television texts, or internet texts, describe a social reality about environmental policy that is substantially different from the textual reality constructed in the Sun. We could ask how, or whether, hegemony is re-produced across different media. An examination of internet news, in comparison with more “traditional” media, could be particularly intriguing. Given the more pluralistic and open-ended nature
of production on the internet, we might ask whether there is a greater potential for radically counter-hegemonic discourses to emerge.

The suggestions for further research that I’ve outlined so far are largely data-driven. Throughout this thesis, I have also worked to develop a theoretical lens grounded at the intersection of Gramscian and Foucauldian theory. Through a discourse analysis of environmental policy debate in the Vancouver Sun, I have attempted to demonstrate the utility of such a theoretical lens for both environmental sociology and media sociology. The “Gramsci-Foucault nexus” appears to be a useful tool for linking the insights from “critical” and “postmodern” theoretical strands in both fields of study. Admittedly, the theoretical lens developed here is eclectic. At the same time, I have bracketed important tensions between Gramscian and Foucauldian theory for purpose of this study. Thus, a substantial amount of work remains be done to further develop this Gramsci-Foucault nexus, if it is to have a broader application in either environmental sociology or media sociology.
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APPENDIX I: ARTICLES FROM THE VANCOUVER SUN


Is Planned to Cut Red Tape That Has Strangled Both the Industry and Forest

Hamilton, G. (1997a). Forest Code Denounced as 'Green Sham': Environmentalists
Declare War on the NDP Government with an Ad Campaign. Vancouver Sun,
May 9, 1997: D3.

Reduce Logging Costs in B.C. By up to $400 Million a Year, Minister Claims.

E1.

Hamilton, G. (1998). B.C. Chops Red Tape to Save Forestry Firms $300 Million:
Minister Claims Paperwork is Halved, as Environmentalists Say Move’s a Sell-

Hamilton, G. (2001). War in the Woods 'Is over': Forest Agenda Virtually Complete,
Eco-Group Exec Tells Forest Convention. IWA Disputes Claim. Vancouver Sun,

Sun, May 28, 2002: D2.

New Forest Practices Code, Which Opened Monday, Lost No Time Stirring up
Controversy, the Sun’s Gordon Hamilton Reports. Vancouver Sun, May 14, 2002:
D13.

to Hold Companies Accountable Bound to Provoke Reaction, Chief Forester


In the original proposal for this research project, I wrote that I would combine discourse analysis of texts from the *Vancouver Sun* with a simple form of content analysis. As I progressed through my research, I became increasingly dissatisfied with the content analysis portion of the project, due to problems of reliability and validity. In this Appendix, I will outline the methodology and results of this content analysis. In the conclusion to this chapter, I will relate the results to the rest of the Thesis. I will also discuss the qualifications and limitations of this portion of the research.

Initially, I had planned to employ a mixed-methods approach to textual analysis. I had hoped to locate a simple quantitative analysis within a broadly qualitative research design. I was interested in coding news sources for organizational affiliation and according to whether sources appeared in the text as “definers” or “responders” (Clow 1992). Due to the news ideology of “balance,” I did not believe there would be a substantial difference in the overall presence of “elite” and “oppositional” groups in news texts (Hackett 1991). Rather, my hypothesis was that groups who speak on behalf of elite interests (the Liberal party, corporate representatives) would dominate news texts as story definers, while claims-makers who challenged elite power (environmental groups) would be relegated to the role of responders. It was difficult to predict how NDP claims-making would be represented in news texts. As a governing party, the NDP were part of the political elite of British Columbia. At the same time, NDP legislation did limit the power of corporate elites.

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28 References for this chapter appear at the end of this Appendix.
As I began working through the data set in order to test my coding instrument, I found the distinction between story “definers” and “responders” too abstract to be tenable. As a result, I limited myself to coding for organizational affiliation. From this analysis, we see that news sources from government, environmental and business organizational dominate environmental policy news under both the NDP and the Liberal governments. As a result, the appearance of news “balance” is maintained. News sources represent the conflicting perspectives of “business” and “environmentalism.” At the same time, news sources from all other standpoints, such as First Nations or labour, achieve minimal representation.

I also coded news sources according to gender. Building upon ecofeminist theory, I thought that news sources would be predominantly male, due to the gendered imbalance of social power that remains characteristic of North American society.29 Second, I believed that male over-representation would be greater among elite groups than among social movement groups. This hypothesis follows from the notion that oppositional groups engaged in environmental conflict may be more sensitive to issues of gendered social stratification than elite groups. As such, they might be more likely to have female media spokespeople.

The results of the content analysis supported the notion that environmental policy news is strongly gendered. In all four data sets, close to 90% of the news sources were male. The least extreme gender imbalances were seen in the government and environmental group coding categories, in the two Liberal policy data sets (the Working Forest and the Results-based Forest Practices Code). The fact that the gendered

imbalance of news sources was less extreme among Liberal news sources than among NDP sources was quite surprising and contradicted my intuition that female news sources would be more prevalent among oppositional groups than among elite groups.

**Methodology**

I had originally intended to employ a mixed-methods research design for this project. Using Cresswell’s terminology, I would define this approach as a “concurrent nested strategy” (Cresswell 2003, 218). While discourse analysis (a qualitative method) was used as the primary method, content analysis (a quantitative method) would be “embedded . . . within the predominant method” (218). David Silverman argues in favour of such a research design (Silverman 1985). He suggests that simple, descriptive statistics can be a useful means to test the conclusions of a generally qualitative project (Silverman 1985, 154). Miles and Huberman also discuss the rationale for integrating a simple quantitative research tool within a broadly qualitative design (Miles & Huberman 1994). Following their discussion, my own rationale for linking quantitative and qualitative research is the desire for “confirmation or corroboration . . . via triangulation” of methods (Miles & Huberman 1994, 41). At the same time, Miles and Huberman note that the two different approaches to the same data can also illuminate “surprises or paradoxes” in the data that may not emerge from a single method (41).

By combining discourse analysis with content analysis in a mixed-methods design, I had planned to draw on the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to media research while using a single data set. Discourse analysis focuses on the “latent content,” or underlying meaning of news texts, thereby prioritizing validity.
Content analysis, by contrast, focuses on the quantifiable, manifest content of texts, thereby prioritizing reliability (Babbie 1995, 311-312). In using both methods, I had hoped to arrive at a more complete understanding of the media construction of environmental policy debate in British Columbia.

Content analysis was originally the “nested” instrument in this research design. According to Berelson, content analysis is the “objective, systematic, and quantitative description” of textual data (Berelson 1952, 18). Content analysis involves coding texts for their “manifest content,” or the “visible, surface content” of communication (Babbie 1995, 312). During the data analysis phase of my research, I employed discourse analysis and content analysis concurrently, using texts from the same online databases, Canadian Newsstand and Canadian NewsDisc. However, while I used a theoretical, or purposive approach to sampling for the discourse analysis part of the project, I used a “random purposive” sampling strategy for content analysis (Miles & Huberman 1994). I used key-word searching to locate relevant texts in the Canadian NewsDisc and Canadian Newsstand online databases. Once I had identified the sets of texts which appeared relevant, I used a random numbers table to create samples of twenty texts for each of the following four policy initiatives: the NDP Protected Areas Strategy; the NDP Forest Practices Code; the Liberals’ Working Forest; and the Liberals’ Results-based Code. Thus, my content analysis is based on an overall set of 80 news and op-ed texts from the Sun. The size of this data set meets to Hodson’s guideline that univariate and bivariate analysis should be done with at least 40-50 texts (Hodson 1999).
For this project, I attempted to adapt a research instrument used by Michael Clow in his examination of the nuclear power debate in the Canadian mass media from 1974 to 1983 (Clow 1992). Clow’s instrument codes news texts according to the organizational affiliation of claims-makers and whether they appear in a “defining” or “responding” role within the news story. This instrument uses simple, descriptive statistics to examine whether certain news source organizations enjoy privileged access to news texts as story definers, while other sources are limited to a responding role, or excluded from representation altogether. However, I found coding sources as “definers” or “responders” too difficult to do with any measure of confidence. Thus, I limited my own coding to organizational affiliation. I also modified Clow’s instrument by adding gender as a coding category.

Results

Table 1 provides a graphic display of the results, broken down by the organizational affiliation of claims-makers from each of the four data sets. First, in examining the 20 texts which dealt with the NDP’s Protected Areas Strategy, a total of 41 news sources were coded according to organizational affiliation. The earliest article in this data set was published in December 1991. The most recent article in this data set was published in November 2001. In this set, policy debate in the Sun is dominated by government sources (24.4%), environmental sources (24.4%) and forest industry sources (17.1%). By contrast, labour-affiliated speakers account for 9.8% of news sources, while First Nations speakers account for 7.3% of news sources.
The NDP Forest Practices Code data set demonstrates a similar pattern of representation. For this data set, I coded 45 news sources. The articles in this set were published between January 1994 and April 2000. Here, government speakers make up 31.1% of news sources, forestry speakers make up 20% of sources, and environmentalist speakers account for 15.6% of news sources. In this data set, First Nations speakers appear only once, thereby accounting for 2.2% of news sources. Labour speakers do not appear at all in this data set.

The third set of texts deals with the Liberals’ Results-based Code. This set consists of twenty texts, which include a total of 72 news sources who were coded by organizational affiliation. The articles in this data set were published between June 2001 and November 2002. Here, the dominant organizational news sources were government (25%), followed by industry (22%). Environmentalists were also prominent as news sources, though appearing only half as often as industry or government sources (11.1%). In this data set, labour-affiliated speakers accounted for 4.2% of news sources, while First Nations news sources did not appear at all.

| Table 1: News Source Representation by Organizational Affiliation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Environmental | First Nations | Government | Industry | Labour | Others |
| Protected Areas Strategy | 24% | 7% | 24% | 17% | 10% | 17% |
| Forest Practices Code | 16% | 2% | 31% | 20% | 0% | 31% |
| Results-Based Code | 11% | 0% | 25% | 22% | 4% | 38% |
| Working Forest | 22% | 0% | 41% | 15% | 0% | 22% |
The final set of texts addresses the Liberals' Working Forest initiative. This set of twenty texts includes 46 news sources. The articles in this data set were published between May 2001 and June 2003. Once again, the three dominant news sources were government sources (41.3%), environmentalists (21.7%), and industry sources (15.2%). However, there was a large gulf between the rate at which government news sources were represented and the rate at which environmentalist or industry speakers appeared.

In looking at Table 1, it is worth noting that environmental news sources appear more often than forest industry news sources in texts dealing with land-use policy debate. Environmental sources account for 24% of sources in the Protected Areas Strategy texts, whereas industry sources account for 17% of all news sources. In the Working Forest texts, environmental sources account for 22% of sources, while 15% of news sources speak from a forest industry standpoint. The situation is reversed in the two data sets that deal with forestry policy debate. Forest industry news sources account for 20% of sources in the Forest Practices Code data set; while 16% of sources speak from an environmentalist standpoint. Likewise, in texts on the Results-based Forest Practices Code, 22% of sources are from the forest industry, while 11% are environmentalist news sources.

Table 2 integrates the results of the four sub-sets of news texts. In total 80 texts were coded, with a total of 204 news sources. These texts were published between December 1991 and June 2003. Here, we see that government news sources dominated environmental policy debate in the Sun during the period 1991-2003, accounting for 30% of all coded news sources. Industry and environmental news sources were also prevalent.
The former accounted for 19% of all news sources, while the latter accounted for 17% of news sources. Here, we also see the marginalization of First Nations and labour news sources. First Nations sources accounted for only 2% of all news sources, while labour sources accounted for 3% of all sources.

| Table 2: News Source Representation by Organizational Affiliation, All Data Sets |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| Environmental                | 17%    |
| First Nations                | 2%     |
| Government                   | 30%    |
| Industry                     | 19%    |
| Labour                       | 3%     |
| All Others                   | 28%    |

Finally, Table 3 portrays the results of a gendered analysis of news sources. Here, we see that gendered patterns of over-representation and under-representation in news about protected areas and forestry policy in the Sun are quite extreme. In the Protected Areas Strategy data set, male sources account for 93% of news sources, while only 7% of sources are female. In the Forest Practices Code data set, 87% of sources are male, while 13% are female. In the Results-based Code data set, 79% of sources are male, while 21% are female. Finally, in the Working Forest data set, 80% of sources are male, while 20% are female. Going beyond the observation that female news sources are generally under-represented, we might also observe that this pattern of under-representation is not as extreme in the Liberal era (2001-2003) as it is in the NDP era (1991-2001). Finally, the under-representation of female news sources is least extreme among government and environmental organizations in the two Liberal-era data sets. In the Liberal Results-based Code data set, 6.9% of sources are female government news sources and 6.9% of
sources are female environmentalist news sources. In the Working Forest data set, 8.7% of sources are female government news sources, while 6.5% of sources are female environmentalist news sources.

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<th>Table 3: News Source Representation by Gender</th>
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<td>NDP Forest Practices Code</td>
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<td>Liberal Results-Based Code</td>
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<td>Liberal Working Forest</td>
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Conclusion

To summarize the results of this content analysis, protected areas and forestry policy debate in the Vancouver Sun is dominated by news sources from government, industry and environmental organizations. While environmental news sources do not always appear as frequently as government organizations, they generally do appear at least as frequently as industry sources. As such, it is difficult to claim that oppositional news sources are marginalized from the Sun’s production of knowledge about environmental policy. Quantitative patterns of representation are consistent with the news ideology of balance identified by Hackett, in which “both sides” of public debate are represented in media texts (Hackett 1991). This is consistent with my initial hypothesis. At the same time, all other voices are marginalized from the Sun’s construction of reality. This content analysis supports the conclusion from my discourse analysis that the system of power/knowledge constructed in the Sun is dominated by three main standpoints: government, industry and environmentalist. Other important voices (such as First Nations and labour) are rendered silent.
The "hierarchy of credibility" is a notion used by Ericson, Baranek and Chan to describe the way that the repeated selection of news sources constructs a hierarchy of authorized knowers about a particular issue. The news construction of such a hierarchy of credibility provides readers with a "daily barometer of the knowledge-structure of society" (Ericson, Baranek & Chan 1989, 3). I have observed that environmental news sources are more prominent than forest industry news sources in the data sets that deal with land use policy, while industry news sources are more prominent in the data sets that deal with forestry policy. From these patterns of representation, we may infer that the Sun locates environmental news sources higher on the hierarchy of credibility when it comes to land use policy debate. Simultaneously, forest industry news sources are located higher on the hierarchy of credibility within forestry policy debate.

This content analysis also reveals the extent to which the Sun's construction of environmental policy debate is deeply gendered. All four sub-sets of news texts were dominated by male news sources. This result is consistent with my initial hypothesis. At the same time, I hypothesized that gendered discrepancies in representation would occur less among "oppositional" groups than among "elite" groups. This did not hold true. Government sources under the BC Liberals (an "elite" group) included the greatest proportion of female news sources, followed by environmental sources under the Liberal government. While the system of power/knowledge constructed by the Sun is definitely gendered in terms of who is allowed to speak, the gender of news sources does not seem to correlate with a source organization's status as either "elite" or "oppositional."
Finally, I would like to outline several qualifications and limitations that seriously affect my own confidence in the results that I have presented. First, I would like to consider Berelson’s discussion of the formation of analytic coding categories (Berelson 1971). In Berelson’s terms, my categories have been organized around news “authorities” or “sources.” However, Berelson notes that coding categories must be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. As I worked through my data, I realized that my categories were not exhaustive. In particular, I have conflated several distinct organizational standpoints within the “government” news source category. Members of all levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal), as well as civil servants are coded within the “government” category. While the inclusion these of these distinct news voices may be read simply as an example of broad generalization, the “government” category encompasses a more diverse range of speakers than any other single category. Thus, I believe that the results for this category are artificially inflated through a conflation of categories. Unless I re-code a sample of texts with a more precise coding instrument, I can only guess at the impact of the conflation of news sources within the category of “government” speakers.

Second, following the discussions of sampling provided by Beardsworth and Krippendorff, I believe that problems of sampling validity affect my results (Beardsworth 1980; Krippendorff 1980). Regarding sampling, Beardsworth writes that the analyst “must define clearly the population of press items about which he [sic] is making estimates, and . . . the items which make up the sample . . . must be selected at random from that population” (Beardsworth 1980, 382). The key-word searching strategies used to identify the “population” of texts for each of my data sets were not applied uniformly
between the different online databases and across the different data sets. I did use random sampling to select texts from the "populations" of texts which dealt with each of the four environmental policy initiatives I examined. However, I have doubts about whether those initial textual populations were "exhaustively" identified. Therefore, I have doubts about the sampling validity of the content analysis portion of this research project.

Third, I have doubts about the reliability of my results. During the content analysis phase of my research, I felt that I was making too many judgment calls about the coding of news sources. I felt like much of my coding was too "fuzzy." As of this writing, I have not done a reliability check. Of the reliability checks discussed by Krippendorff, the only one that feels practical is "reproducibility," which is defined as the weakest form of reliability (Krippendorff 1980). This is the test-retest method, in which the researcher selects a random sample of the coded texts to re-code at a later date. The coding of this sub-sample is compared with the original coding as a means to judge the reliability of the results. Engaging in a test of reproducibility would be a means to test my doubts about the reliability of my results.

Finally, much of the content analysis methodology literature feels problematic from my own research standpoint. For example, the work of Berelson and Beardsworth claims an "objectivity" and "generalizability" for content analysis that seems untenable in light of the postmodern and post-structural critiques of positivist social science (Berelson

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30 This type of reliability check is termed "stability" by Weber (1990).
There is a significant point of epistemological tension between content analysis and discourse analysis which I have not adequately resolved. Going beyond the problems of reliability and validity outlined above, I find it difficult to take seriously the notion that I can make claims about the "objectivity" and "generalizability" of my content analysis results, even if these problems are resolved. If I am to attempt to integrate the results of the content analysis and my discourse analysis, I feel that I should attempt to address the point of tension between the methodological assumptions of content analysis and the research standpoint that informs my discourse analysis.

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31 On the postmodern critique of positivism, see for example: Denzin (1997); Gubrium & Holstein (1997); and Lincoln & Denzin (2000).
Works Cited


