The Forces of Yes:
Analyzing Community-Scale Resistance to LNG Development in British Columbia

by

Emily Paige Bishop
Bachelor of Arts (Honours), Mount Allison University, 2014

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We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

In this time of transition, when societies are struggling to reshape their energy systems to respond to the challenge of climate change, the role of community-scale resistance to new energy developments is particularly complex and important. The scale of needed changes is daunting: societies must not only change the energy sources they rely on, but in doing so will also change the structure and patterns of industrial societies. It is not surprising that this at times results in conflict and resistance at the community level. Opposition to proposed energy projects by communities is often dismissed as "NIMBY-ism"—a small-minded rejection of any change to local contexts—and portrayed as an impediment to progress. This thesis argues that opposition to new energy infrastructure is often a legitimate response from communities, arising not least from a connection to place, or to poor governance of energy development. Further, it argues that rather than being primarily an impediment to progress, community resistance offers important lessons to those seeking to advance rapid energy transitions to respond to climate change. Specifically, my work investigates the factors that motivated opposition to the proposed Pacific NorthWest liquified natural gas (LNG) terminal on Tsimshian territory in northwestern British Columbia. Drawing on field research including interviews with many who opposed this project, it examines the broader implications of opposition in the context of BC's trajectory of extractive development. It finds that rather than expressing a naïve rejection of change or a resistance to progress, embedded in the resistance to this project were important critiques of contemporary governance processes; crucial local knowledge and insight about the importance of the ecology of the region and its potential to support healthy local economies under changing climactic conditions, and a nascent vision for the future of the region that was in conflict with the trajectory the project represented. As these findings suggest, those seeking to chart a climate-friendly future in which local communities have the potential to thrive would do well to engage with the knowledge, experiences and community priorities that are expressed in resistance movements.

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List of Acronyms

BCEAA – British Columbia Environmental Assessment Agency

CEAA – Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

EA – Environmental Assessment

GHG – Greenhouse Gas

ENGO – Environmental Non-Governmental Organization

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

LNG – Liquefied Natural Gas

NIMBY – Not In My Backyard

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

PRGT – Prince Rupert Gas Transmission

UNDRIP – United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

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It is important to acknowledge that this research was written on unceded Lekwungen and WSÁNEĆ territory. My understanding of this place, and what it means to be of settler ancestry have been profoundly shaped by my time here, and I wish to offer my deepest gratitude and respect to the people who continue to care for these beautiful lands.

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Dedication

To the women in my life

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Energy Development in BC

The climate crisis demands urgent action to decarbonize our economies and transition to a low-carbon future. Doing so requires—among other things—rapidly transforming our energy systems away from fossil fuels to low-carbon energy sources. However, a growing body of literature recognizes that the solutions to the climate crisis are not only technological, but have deeper social and political implications (Bee, Rice, & Trauger, 2015; Klein, 2014; McMichael, 2009). As Sundberg & Dempsey (2013) write: "Global climate change is *the* socio-environmental issue of our time. It is also deeply political" (p. 179).

British Columbia, a province in western Canada, represents an important example of the complexities and politics of this transition. British Columbia (BC) prides itself on its climate change policy, which includes North America's first carbon tax and legislated emissions targets (Stephenson, Doukas, & Shaw, 2012). However, despite the province's commitment to climate action, the government continues to expand fossil fuel production, evidenced by their efforts to develop a liquified natural gas (LNG) industry on the West Coast, which has resulted in over 20 proposals for pipelines, liquefaction facilities and export terminals. The emergent LNG industry is the latest manifestation of "extractivism" - the prioritization of extractive modes of natural resource management - which has long been a mainstay of BC's economy. LNG has been, and continues to be promoted as both an economic boon for the province and a source of much needed employment for resource-dependent communities. Those who oppose the industry note the multi-scalar environmental impacts, concerns related to Indigenous rights and title, and the implications of building fossil fuel projects in the midst of a climate emergency.

LNG projects in BC were being proposed at the time when the Canadian government was also positioning itself as a climate leader. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau campaigned in 2015 on a platform to combat climate change, to prioritize evidence-based decision making with scientific integrity, and to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (Wilt, 2017). Once elected, Trudeau signed the Paris Agreement, a treaty designed to limit global temperature rise to two

degrees Celsius. Months later, his government approved the Pacific NorthWest LNG export terminal - a project that was highly contested amongst affected Indigenous[1] communities, and on completion would be the estimated single greatest point source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in all of Canada. For many, "Pacific Northwest LNG was a really bad decision by our federal government; they simply didn't use the very things that they campaigned on - that they wrote in their mandate letters - which was evidence-based decision making, climate action, and most importantly, their relationship with First Nations" (Upstream Media, 2016).

It was in this context of simultaneous commitment to mitigating climate change, supporting Indigenous rights, and pursuing new fossil fuel infrastructure that resistance arose at a wide range of sites across BC. Resistance of this kind is often not adequately examined by researchers (Burningham, 2000; Devine-Wright, 2013; McClymont & O'Hare, 2008) nor by the mainstream media. Many responses to resistance are essentially dismissive, whether through using NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) labels, or through failing to understand underlying social and political dynamics (Gill, 2016; Hume, 2016; Johnson, 2016; Linnitt, 2016a). This thesis seeks to develop a better understanding of the underlying dynamics of resistance through taking a political ecology approach. This research explores the resistance that emerged to a specific LNG proposal: the Pacific NorthWest (PNW) LNG project. My work critically examines opposition to the PNW LNG project. I argue that the opposition that formed around the project offers a potentially important case insofar as it highlights and clarifies the bigger challenge for BC of how to reorient away from an extractivist economy while also responding to the challenges of climate change.

1.2 The Pacific NorthWest LNG project

The PNW LNG project was a proposal to build a natural gas liquefaction and export facility on Lelu Island, near Prince Rupert, on the territory of the Tsimshian peoples in northern British Columbia. In 2013, the Malaysian state-owned energy company Petronas

[1] A note on terminology: Conventionally the term Indigenous is used to refer to all original inhabitants of Canada, Aboriginal is a federal government term for all Indigenous peoples, and First Nations refers to Status Indigenous peoples. Throughout this thesis the term Indigenous is used when referring broadly to Indigenous peoples in Canada and the term First Nation is used to describe Indigenous groups in British Columbia.

and its partners[2] proposed to construct and operate the $11-billion LNG conversion plant and export terminal. To supply the PNW LNG terminal with natural gas, the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission (PRGT) pipeline was planned to connect the Montney gas fields in northeast BC to the coast. The PRGT pipeline would span 900 kilometers through First Nations territories across northern British Columbia (BC Oil & Gas Commission, 2013). The total investment of the project, included the construction of the liquefaction plant and terminal as well as the pipeline, was estimated to be $36 billion. At the terminal, natural gas would have been super cooled, creating liquified natural gas, and then loaded onto tankers to be shipped to overseas markets. PNW LNG would have shipped 19 million tonnes of liquified gas annually to markets in Asia (Ghoussoub, 2017). Once in Asia, the gas would be regasified and finally combusted.

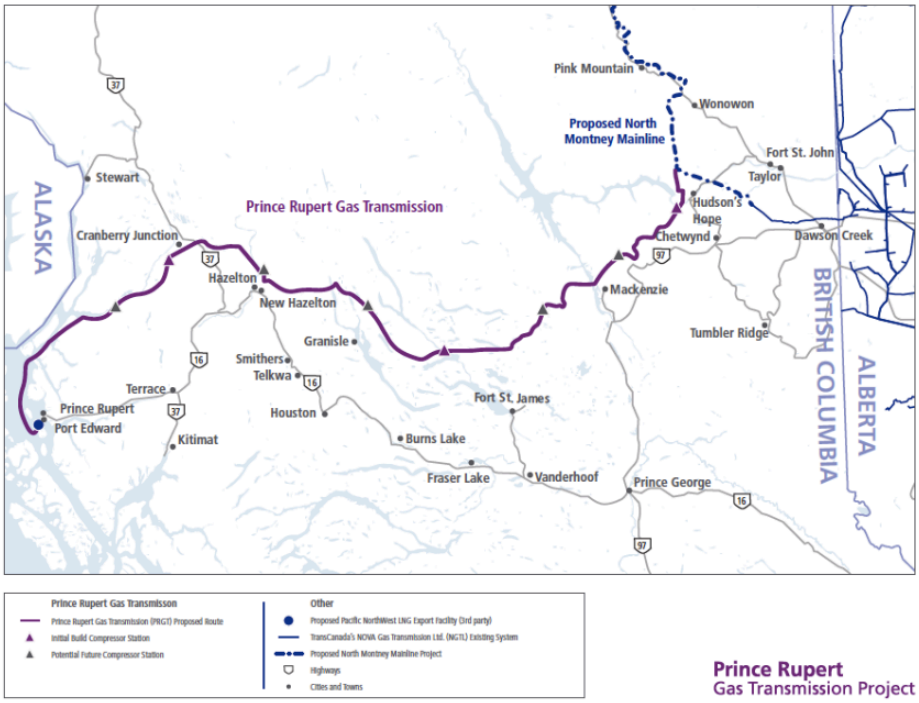

Figure 1: Map of the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission Project
Source: LNG in Northern BC (n.d.)

In 2012, at the recommendation of the federal government, Petronas chose Lelu Island, located in the Skeena estuary, as the site for the Pacific NorthWest LNG project

[2] Japan's Japex, China's Sinopec, Indian Oil Corp., and PetroleumBrunei.

(Cattaneo & Morgan, 2017). Lelu Island was selected despite a 1973 federal government decision which recognized the estuary and neighbouring Flora Bank as unfit for industrial development due to its unique ecology and the impact development would have on critical salmon habitat (Gilchrist, 2016). The site location for PNW LNG was widely criticized and the proponent later redesigned the marine infrastructure associated with the project to minimize impact to Flora Bank, but declined to relocate the terminal itself. The proponent submitted the project description to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) in February 2013. In July 2015, the BC government passed legislation to approve the project development agreement. In 2016 the federal government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau approved the PNW LNG project, subject to 190 conditions detailed in the environmental assessment report (Tasker, 2016). Despite both political support from both provincial and federal governments, in July of 2017 the proponent cancelled the project, citing poor market conditions (The Canadian Press, 2017).

1.3 Resistance to PNW LNG

Petronas began consulting with local communities in 2012 (T. Jang, 2017). Affected communities, both settler and Indigenous, both supported and opposed the PNW LNG project. Those who were in support embraced the potential economic benefits the project would bring, including access to jobs and training opportunities, while those who opposed the project highlighted concerns about a range of impacts (Cattaneo & Morgan, 2017; G. Horne, 2015; B. Jang & McCarthy, 2016; Lough, 2017a; Uechi, 2017). Resistance to the PNW LNG project was dynamic and multi-faceted; numerous groups—from local concerned citizens, fisher-people and First Nations, to scientists, politicians and provincial NGOs—were involved. Concerns about Indigenous rights and title were integral in this case; Gitanyow, Gitxsan, Wet'suwet'en, Lake Babine and Takla Lake nations, and the Allied tribes of the Lax Kw'alaams all stated the Pacific NorthWest project "does not meet the test" for respecting Indigenous rights (T. Jang, 2017). Concerns were also raised about the failure of consultative processes and the colonial natural resource decision-making frameworks, air pollution and safety, and the implications of increasing fossil fuel production during a climate crisis.

Concerns over impacts of the project arose not least because of the specific location of the project on Lelu Island. Lelu, which is also known as Lax U'u'la, is an island at the

mouth of the second largest salmon producing river in Canada – the Skeena River. Adjacent to Lelu Island is Flora Bank, an offshore area rich in eelgrass which provides critical habitat for juvenile salmon from the entire Skeena watershed, which is the traditional territories of ten First Nations (G. Horne, 2015).

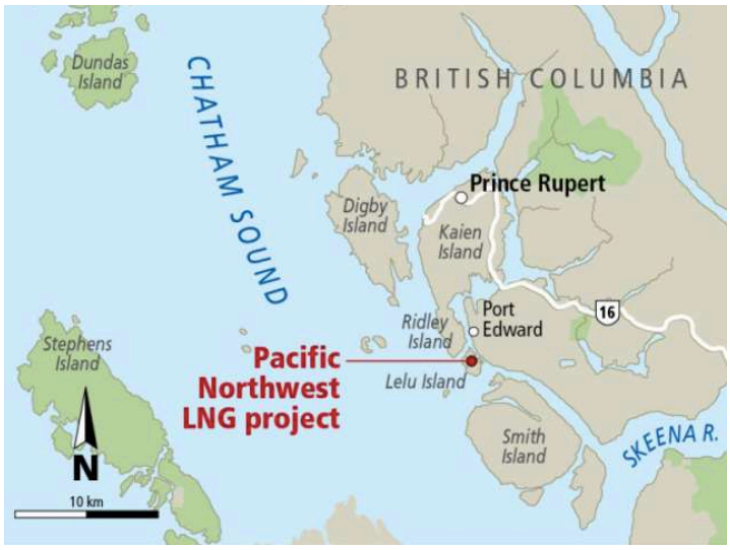

Figure 1: Map of the location for the proposed PNW LNG project
Source: CEAA, 2013

In 2016, the Salmon Nation Summit was held in Prince Rupert. The Indigenous-led event to protect wild salmon brought together hundreds of hereditary and elected First Nations leaders, scientists, politicians, fisher-people and other residents of northern BC. This event led to the creation of the Lelu Island Declaration, which reads as follows:

> The undersigned First Nation leaders and citizens of the Nine Allied Tribes of Lax Kw'alaams hereby declare that Lelu Island, and Flora and Agnew Banks are hereby protected for all time, as a refuge for wild salmon and marine resources, and are to be held in trust for all future generations.
>
> Our ancestral knowledge, supported by modern science, confirms this area is critical to the future abundance of the wild salmon our communities rely on. It is our right and our responsibility as First Nations to protect and defend this place. It is our right to use this area without interference to harvest salmon and marine resources for our sustenance, and commercially in support of our livelihoods.
>
> We hereby extend an invitation to all First Nations, the governments of Canada and British Columbia, and all communities that depend on the health of Lelu Island, Flora and Agnew Banks and the Skeena River

> estuary, to join us in defending this unique and precious place, and to protect it for all time (Friends of Wild Salmon, n.d.).

Although affected Indigenous groups were divided on the merits of the PNW LNG project, resistance to PNW LNG was Indigenous-led. Resistance was centered around the land-based resistance on Lelu Island, where hereditary leaders of the Gitwilgyoots tribe of Lax Kw'alaams, whose territory includes Lelu Island, constructed a permanent settlement and halted workers from accessing the site location (G. Horne, 2015). A second land-based resistance took place in Gitxsan territory: Camp Madii Lii was constructed on the proposed route of the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission pipeline (T. Jang, 2017). Indigenous resistance to PNW LNG was nested within complicated regional and community politics. While it is beyond the scope of my project to define the difference between traditional hereditary leadership and the contemporary Indian Act band council leadership, it is important to note that on Lelu Island, resistance was led by hereditary leaders. Hereditary leaders were not consulted by Petronas nor the provincial or federal governments.

Since the 1970s, First Nations in British Columbia have repeatedly resorted to direct action tactics such as blockades to resist extractive development (Blomley, 1996). Blockades have often been used in conjunction with legal battles which seek recognition of Indigenous rights and title through the courts. In response to the federal government's approval of the PNW LNG project in 2016, Indigenous groups – the Gitwilgyoots tribe of the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation, Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs, and Gitxsan Hereditary Chiefs from the house of Luutkudziiwus and the house of Gwininitxw – filed judicial reviews (RAVEN, n.d.). As Gitwilgyoots Chief Yahann noted: "Once again, we are forced to ask courts to do what our politicians seem unable to do – to honour Canada's obligations to its Indigenous communities, and to protect our environment from catastrophic harm" (Linnitt, 2016a). A local environmental group, SkeenaWild Conservation Coalition, also filed a court action requesting judicial reviews of the project's approval, arguing that the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency's

assessment did not adequately consider the impacts on fish and fish habitat (Linnitt, 2016a).

Concerns were also raised about the decision-making process. In response to the CEAA's conclusion that the Pacific NorthWest LNG project "could be built and operated without causing major ecological damage to Flora Bank" (B. Jang & McCarthy, 2016), more than 130 Canadian and international scientists wrote a letter to Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Catherine McKenna, highlighting the flaws in the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency's process (Hume, 2016):

> The CEAA draft report for the Pacific NorthWest LNG project is a symbol of what is wrong with environmental decision-making in Canada. An obvious risk of a flawed assessment is that it will arrive at an incorrect conclusion […] CEAA did not adequately consider decades of scientific research on salmon in the Skeena River estuary and instead relied on proponent-funded studies that were substantially more limited in scope and duration and that reached different conclusions compared to the larger body of available science (B. Jang & McCarthy, 2016).

Local fishing guides and lodge owners also submitted comments to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency noting that "the location of this terminal poses an unimaginable risk to our local economy and our livelihoods" as Skeena salmon contribute $110 million annually to the regional economy (Hume, 2016). Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and think-tanks based in southern BC were active in opposing PNW LNG and supporting First Nations in their efforts to resist the project. These include but are not limited to: Wilderness Committee (Wilderness Committee, 2016), Sierra Club BC (Sierra Club BC, n.d.), LeadNow (LeadNow, n.d.), RAVEN (RAVEN, n.d.), Pembina Institute (Kniewasser, Horne, Hui, & Franchuk, 2016), Clean Energy Canada (Glave & Moorhouse, 2013), the Council of Canadians (Darwish, 2014), and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (Lee, 2015).

As mentioned above, the PNW LNG project was cancelled in July 2017. Energy companies and other investors claim that they cancelled the proposed LNG plant on BC's North Coast because shifts in global markets made the economics unfavourable (Leach, 2017). To summarize, there was a wide range of groups involved in resisting the Pacific NorthWest LNG project: local and regional, urban, Indigenous and settler communities, and they raised a wide range of issues and used a diversity of strategies. The outcomes

included divided communities and a strange "loss/win": the project received all the federal approvals it needed to go ahead, but was cancelled anyway. It is difficult to assess the role of the resistance in the decision to cancel the project—it was not cited as a reason for the cancellation, but opposition no doubt added significant uncertainty to the project, which would have figured in the calculations of project costs and risks.

1.4 Contextualizing Resistance

Resistance to resource extraction projects is not novel in British Columbia, as evidenced by the "War in the Woods," which galvanized strong opposition to old growth logging on Vancouver Island in the 1990s (Braun, 2002; Magnusson & Shaw, 2003; J. Wilson, 1998). However, the rate and scale at which flashpoints of resistance are emerging in response to oil and gas infrastructure in the province seem to be intensifying. This is evidenced by opposition to the Northern Gateway Pipeline proposal (Bowles & MacPhail, 2017; Omand, 2015; Veltmeyer & Bowles, 2014), Trans Mountain Expansion proposal (Brake, 2018), Coastal GasLink (Bliss & Temper, 2018; Spice, 2018), fracking resistance (Coles, 2019) and bans in numerous jurisdictions in Canada and other countries (Minkow, 2017), as well as the student divestment movement (Grant, 2019) and global climate strike (Stober, 2019).

As many have argued, sites and strategies of resistance can offer fertile glimpses into the social and political dynamics that undergird environmental conflicts (Bryant, 1992; Conde & Le Billon, 2017; Temper, Bene, & Martinez-Alier, 2015; Martin & Pierce, 2013; McCarthy, 2002; Peluso, 1993). These dynamics are essential to understand insofar as we seek to effectively address the root causes of environmental issues (Leff, 2015; McCarthy, 2002; Perreault, Bridge, & McCarthy, 2015; Robbins, 2004; Rocheleau, 2008). In particular, research has drawn out the ways in which resistance can express underlying injustices and grievances (Dietz, 2019; Poma & Gravante, 2015), relationships to place and identity (Escobar, 1998, 2001), and livelihoods (Guha & Martinez-Alier, 1997; Peet & Watts, 2004; Peluso, 1993) that offer crucial insights into what is necessary to resolve environmental conflicts.

Early research into social responses to energy infrastructure developments was frequently based on the premise that resistance is driven by "not-in-my-backyard" (NIMBY) politics. NIMBYism refers to a community's refusal of a project based on local

or aesthetic impacts, regardless of the public good of the project (Shaw et al., 2015). McClymont & O'Hare (2008) describe how labelling opposition to energy projects as NIMBY-ism "delegitimises and invalidates the arguments of opponents by dismissing their contributions as selfish and narrow-minded" (p. 322) and that "given its negative connotation, it is a potentially powerful label that possesses a depth of political power by implying that protest groups should have their activities curtailed and their opportunities to participate limited" (p. 323). More recently, researchers have argued that NIMBY frameworks are insufficient in explaining local opposition to energy projects, and that a deeper examination into what fuels resistance is needed (Devine-Wright, 2009; Phadke, 2011). Similarly, Blomley's (1996) research examining First Nations blockades in BC notes that:

> Blockades have not received much scholarly attention as a political phenomenon. As a consequence, our understanding of blockades is largely framed by the media, which tend to treat each blockade as a singular and often sensational event, paying little attention to the context within which it is deployed or to its relation to similar tactics. This is unfortunate; not only does it distance us from the underlying problems that engender blockades, but it also makes it easy to dismiss them as aberrant and those behind them as illegitimate (p. 5).

The approach taken by political ecologists explicitly seeks to counter this superficial treatment: it refuses to accept that resistance is just an expression of selfishness, narrow-mindedness or bias, and asks what the underlying reasons are for resistance, in order to reveal broader and deeper structural dynamics that must be changed if environmental problems are to be addressed. One insight emerging from this research concerns a decline of trust in government. Indeed, the literature finds that a significant factor that motivates opposition to energy projects is that: "communities perceive that governments at provincial and federal levels are pursuing energy projects for purposes of capital development and, as such, governments are seen as advocates for the developments rather than neutral arbiters of social interest" (Shaw et al., 2015, p. 42).

The opposition that formed in response to the PNW LNG proposal offers an important potential case study in this regard. Resistance was initially characterized by the then-Premier of British Columbia, Christy Clark, as "the forces of no." In Clark's words: "I'm not sure what science the forces of no bring together up there except that it's not

really about the science. It's not really about the fish. It's just about trying to say no. It's about fear of change. It's about a fear of the future" (Gill, 2016). The Premier's dismissal of opposition to the project echoes the responses described above: it seeks to characterize the resistance as somehow illegitimate, ungrounded and unimportant.

My research seeks to question this reading of the resistance, countering the tendency by elected officials or media, often—as described above—supported by academic research, to dismiss resistance as driven by NIMBYism, or as otherwise simplistic or unjustified. Guided by the framework of political ecology, I analyze and unpack some factors that motivated and guided aspects of the resistance to PNW LNG, in order to explore the underlying dynamics of the conflict. I do so recognizing that this specific site and expression of opposition is occurring in the context of global climate change, and emergent social movements seeking to mitigate climate impacts on an unprecedented scale. Understanding the underlying dynamics of sites of conflict over major fossil fuel infrastructure projects may hold important lessons for these movements, potentially enhancing their ability to create the large-scale change necessary. With this in mind, I begin from the assumption that the opposition that formed around the PNW LNG proposal offers an important case study insofar as it has the potential to offer insights into the bigger challenge for BC of how to respond to climate change.

As described in more detail in the critical context section below, the LNG industry in BC was proposed as a solution for rural economic development in light of the failing extractivist forestry and fisheries industries on the one hand, and to address climate change on the other. The government claimed it could achieve this by producing "clean LNG," which would replace dirtier coal in export markets. By exploring resistance to a project that was proposed to meet this dual need, I sought to assess community responses to this proposal, and what implications this might have for building a movement towards effective climate action.

1.5 Research Questions

With the above context in mind, my research explored the following questions:

1. How did those who opposed the PNW LNG project understand the issue, and frame resistance to it?

2. What are the underlying dynamics expressed in the opposition, and how have these shaped community priorities going forward?
3. What are the broader implications of this resistance in the context of BC's trajectory of extractive development?
4. What are the implications of these findings for those seeking to build a movement for effective climate action?

2. Methodologies and Methods

I now turn to my methodology and methods to provide understanding of how they informed my research before offering a broader contextualization of the conflict to conclude the chapter. Research methodologies speak to how researchers gain knowledge about reality; methodologies describe the ways in which researchers approach the framing and answering of research questions. Research methods describe the steps taken in answering the research questions.

2.1 Political Ecology

My thesis has been informed by political ecology, a field of study that examines the economic, political and cultural contexts in which environmental problems arise (Blaikie & Brookfield, 1987; Bryant, 1992; Peet & Watts, 2004; Robbins, 2004). Political ecology brings together diverse fields of study such as geography, development studies, anthropology, political economy, and sociology. The concept originated in the 1970s as a way to address questions relating to access and control over resources (Peet and Watts, 2004). This was a turning point towards seeing ecological changes in social and political terms, countering the prevailing tendency to view ecological issues as requiring scientific or technical solutions, rather than political ones. Perreault, Bridge & McCarthy (2015) note that political ecology has, "from its beginning highlighted the struggles, interests, and plight of marginalized populations" (p. 8), and characterize political ecology as a political commitment to social justice and structural political change.

Political ecologists argue that resource extraction does not exist in isolation, but rather is connected to and influenced by global trends and dynamics. Biersack (2006) speaks to how global forces drastically shape local places, and how even subsistence communities do not exist in equilibrium or isolation, but rather are part of a world system

that is impacted by markets, social inequalities, and political conflicts: "Place is … the grounded site of local-global articulation and interaction" (p. 16). A core theme within political ecology is power, with Paul Robbins defining political ecology as "an empirical, research based exploration to explain linkages in the conditions and change of social/environmental systems, with explicit consideration to relations of power" (Robbins, 2004, p. 12). This is echoed in the work of Sundberg and Dempsey (2013) who state:

> While an apolitical ecology ignores power relations, policy structures and the market economy, a political ecological approach includes them. This means that political ecology necessitates methodologies to examine phenomena that may be difficult to fully observe – colonialism, globalization, racism, sexism – but which leave their marks on bodies, landscapes and soils (p. 178).

Within political ecology, there is a body of work that examines the role that social movements play in offering a unique understanding of resource conflicts (Escobar, 1998, 2001). Peet and Watts (2004) note that civil society groups often challenge the "conventional notions of development, politics, democracy and sustainability" (p. 6). Escobar (1998) examines how industrial development schemes are frequently implemented through a top-down approach by nation-state governments and without consultation with local people. Because of this disconnect, communities fight to articulate their vision of development and resource management. However, he importantly highlights that the fight is not solely over land understood as property, but that the "defense of territory entails the defense of an intricate pattern of social relations and cultural constructions" (Escobar, 1998, p. 72). Escobar argues for the importance of critically examining the positions of Indigenous groups, non-governmental organizations, and local social movements who are engaged in environmental protection, as they offer alternative articulations of hegemonic understandings of the environment and economic development (Escobar, 1998).

Understanding what gives rise to resource conflicts from this perspective requires interdisciplinary, cross-scalar examinations that account for the social, political, economic, and cultural contexts in which the conflict occurs. For example, political

ecologists Blaikie and Brookfield's (1987) approach to explaining land degradation follows a chain of explanation:

> It starts with the land managers and their direct relations with the land…Then the next link concerns their relations with each other, other land users, and groups in the wider society who affect them in any way, which in turn determines land management. The state and the world economy constitute the last links in the chain (p. 27).

Blaikie and Brookfield's approach advocates for an analysis of influences with various actors (settler and Indigenous communities, NGOs, provincial and federal governments, and corporations) and at numerous scales (local, regional, national, international). This cross-scale chain of explanation is also helpful in that it provides a conceptual framework which demonstrates the link between environmental problems and political-economic forces.

Below I seek to flesh out this cross-scale context which offers the crucial context for understanding my data and findings, which emerged from local-scale interviews. In the critical context section, I explore how the PNW LNG case is nested within the intersection of various local and global forces: the community of Prince Rupert has been shaped by the particularities of the local context but the community is also woven into complicated networks of global relations.

2.2 Methods

The methods I employed to answer my research questions were a political consideration, and the choices I made shaped the knowledge that I have produced. My work seeks to examine the social and political dynamics of resistance to LNG development in BC. My interest is driven by doing research that helps understand community responses and offers analysis for those trying to solve environmental problems. I came to this project through my interest in exploring the emancipatory potential of opposition movements, and resistance to oil and gas infrastructure. I was also interested in learning more about the LNG industry in the province; I was confused by the lack of media attention, and how infrequently LNG and fracking appeared in the provincial conversation. I was further dismayed when Premier Christy Clark labelled opposition to PNW LNG as the "forces of no" and in doing so dismissing elders, youth, scientists, hereditary chiefs, and fisher-people. This seemed problematic and I wished to

learn more. My education in the years leading up to and including this work, has been coming to terms with many of the harmful actions of the Canadian state. This seemed to represent one manifestation of that: the leader of the province acting as a proponent for an energy project and corporate interests rather than meaningfully addressing local people's concerns.

To examine the opposition that formed, I used qualitative research methods. I began by conducting a grey literature review and a media analysis to examine how various media sources framed and represented resistance to the PNW LNG project. After going through various articles, I knew I needed to speak to those who were involved in the resistance themselves in order to build a deeper analysis. Qualitative interviewing is a flexible and powerful tool used to capture people's personal experiences and the ways in which people make meaning of these experiences (Rabionet, 2011). I elected to conduct semi-structured interviews as an open-ended interviewing style allowed my respondents to highlight what was significant for them from their experiences. As described by Mason (2004), semi-structured interviews reflect "an ontological position that is concerned with people's knowledge, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions." (p. 2). Interview questions were designed to gather information about the participant's experience, their knowledge and how these had shaped their response to the proposal. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed the interviewees to speak on the themes, and to experiences, that mattered most to them.[3]

In the summer of 2018 I spent three weeks conducting field work; I traveled to Prince Rupert and visited neighbouring communities along the way. During that time, I spoke with eighteen people about their experiences with opposition to industrial projects on the North Coast. While the majority of my interviewees were affiliated with opposition to the PNW LNG project, several people campaigned against other LNG and fossil fuel projects in the region. Several people that I spoke with were full-time organizers but the majority of the those I spoke with had other jobs and thus were not full-time campaigners nor were they exclusively focused on resisting industrial projects.

[3] See Appendix A for interview questions

Sixteen people of the people I spoke with were affiliated with NGOs; these groups ranged from small community groups (e.g. Friends of Wild Salmon, Friends of Digby Island) and regional groups (e.g. Skeena Wild) to provincial-scale organizations (e.g. Wilderness Committee). Two people – both located in Prince Rupert – were engaged in community-scale politics but were not actively involved in resisting the PNW LNG project.

Nine of my interviewees were based in Prince Rupert (cited as PR 1-9). While the majority of my interviewees spoke about their experiences with the PNW LNG project, several of my interviewees spoke about the Aurora LNG project. The Aurora LNG project was a proposal to build an LNG export terminal on Digby Island, southwest of Prince Rupert.[4] Five of my interviewees were from northwestern BC – one from Smithers, two from Hazelton, one from Terrace, and one from Kitimat (indicated as N 10-14). Four of these interviewees based in the northwest were involved with the PNW LNG project, one interviewee spoke about their experience resisting the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline. Four of my interviewees were from southern BC – two from Vancouver and two from Vancouver Island – and their organizations were all involved with opposition to the PNW LNG project (indicated as S 15-18).

My interviewees were identified and recruited for qualitative semi-structured interviews using snowball sampling through referrals and publicly available contact information. Before conducting interviews or contacting participants I received approval from the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board (Protocol Number 18-173).[5] Interviews averaged 60 minutes in length, with some as short as 20 minutes while others lasted over 100 minutes. Interviews were scheduled in a location that was convenient for the participants but that was also an appropriate place to record the interview. All interviews were conducted with informed consent, were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Interviews were coded and analyzed for emergent themes using NVivo, a qualitative software package.

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[4] Through referrals, many of the people I was introduced to in Prince Rupert were involved with opposition to the Aurora LNG project. Their insights, although at times not explicitly linked to the PNW LNG, were helpful in understanding the politics of the region, the impact of boom-bust economies, and the downturn of fisheries.

[5] See Appendix B for Certificate of Approval

In interviewing people, I was able to hear directly from community members who actively opposed the PNW LNG project. The aim of my research was not to produce generalizable results, nor to get a cross section of the population, or a comprehensive view of people's feelings about the PNW LNG project or place. Rather my aim was to explore the views and experiences of the individuals who were involved in the resistance movement. I wish to emphasize that my research speaks to why opposing PNW LNG was important for those who resisted the project, not for the region as a whole. As well, I did not interview many Indigenous people, therefore this work does not speak to Indigenous resistance to PNW LNG.

2.3 Locating Myself in the Research

As a researcher, my beliefs, politics, and background are important variables that have affected the research process; "who we are and where we stand has profound implications for the knowledge we produce" (Sundberg & Dempsey, 2013, p. 176). It is thus important to reflect upon my positionality, to acknowledge who I am as an individual, and to speak to how I came to this project. Firstly, my ability to conduct this research is nested within the same power relations I write about in this thesis, and is a direct result of my privilege as a white woman of settler descent. My family is of British, French and Irish ancestries. I was raised on WSÁNEĆ and Hul'qumi'num territories on Salt Spring Island and grew up surrounded by the effects, benefits, and culture of settler colonialism, although I was not aware of this at the time as the public-school education I received did not explore Canada's violent and ongoing colonial history. Only in the years since I have returned to Coast Salish territories to attend the University of Victoria have I begun to see the extent of my ignorance, and how I am a beneficiary of systems of injustice. I am still very much learning and will continue to grapple with what my responsibilities are as a settler on these lands.

Numerous experiences over the past years brought me to undertake this project in graduate school. While attending university on Mi'kmaq territories in New Brunswick, I witnessed how the state responded to Indigenous land and water defenders in Elsipogtog. At the time I had been studying international relations, but then changed my focus to examine extraction and capital accumulation in a Canadian context. My involvement in climate justice has also played a prominent role in my life over the past few years and

shapes how I engaged with this project. Finally, I spent seven seasons working in tree planting camps in northern BC; these experiences gave me a brief yet informative glimpse into how destructive extractive industries are in this province.

My time at the School of Environmental Studies has been marked by reflecting on my positionality. Each aspect of this Master's project - from crafting the interview questions and selecting the participants, to how I analyzed the data and wrote about the emerging themes – has been mediated by who I am, and the lens through which I view the world. I recognize that the people I spoke with and the communities I visited were more aware and grounded in the local context than I ever could be. In conducting interviews and visiting northern communities, I became glaringly aware of my whiteness, my role as a researcher, as an "environmentalist," and I began to feel how problematic this was. Despite my being an outsider, the people I spoke with were generous in sharing their knowledge and were supportive of my project. I thank them for the stories they shared with me and for welcoming me into their communities. Throughout this process, I have strived to be mindful about the influence my positionality has on my work. My hope is that something positive can come from this work – that it is of use to those striving to create a more just society.

2.4 Limitations of the Research

There are important limitations to this research, some arising from the context of the research and others from the research design. A challenge was how politically sensitive the issue of development is in the region; as a researcher I became aware of how industrial project proposals like PNW LNG impacted – and often divided - community relationships. I arrived in the wake of what had been a very divisive and difficult period in the community, and this affected who was interested in being interviewed, as well as their own feelings about the proposal and resistance. My research design was not expansive enough - due to my limited time in the region - to encompass this community division, and so does not speak to it directly, but it impacted the experience and insights of those I interviewed.

My work does not explore Indigenous resistance, nor issues concerning Indigenous rights and title, self-determination, governance, sovereignty, or resurgence. Although I see this as an essential part of the resistance in the region, it proved very

difficult for me to examine. This is primarily because a lack of research experience and previous relationships with the community and the fairly short time available to do fieldwork. Together, these constraints limited my ability to build relationships that would have facilitated meaningful Indigenous involvement, and ensured the research was responsive to their priorities. In the past, white Western researchers have conducted research on Indigenous people in ways that perpetuate empire/colonization (Falter, 2012). This too frequently continues to be the case. I did not want to be a 'parachute' researcher - collecting data which suited my needs and then quickly leaving the community (Brant Castellano, 2004). As a consequence, given the limitations of my project, I did not focus my analysis on the experiences of local First Nations. This means that the research presents only a part of the story, and misses the integral role of First Nations.

To the extent that this is only one part of the story, other parts of the story also need to be told –perhaps by other researchers and through other research methods. With this in mind, I shifted my work to analyze how industrial development in Canada is part and parcel of ongoing settler colonialism, and to critically examine who benefits from these projects, and who bears the burdens. What I have produced offers an important snap shot of how primarily settler residents of the region who opposed the project understood and explained their resistance to the project, as well as its wider implications.

3. Critical Context

This section provides some historical and economic background information about northwestern British Columbia, and offers a brief introduction to understanding the nascent LNG industry in the province. This context greatly shaped my thinking about the PNW LNG proposal specifically, as well as its broader implications.

Development in BC, and across all of Canada, has been predicated on the state-led dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their land and the large-scale extraction of "natural" resources to build the province: "British Columbia was divided into two vastly unequal parts that came to underlie all its other developments: a tiny fraction of land set aside for Natives, the rest available in various tenures, for developments" (Harris, 2002, p. xviii). In the past 150 years, economic growth and fiscal revenues as well as employment and income generation in BC have been contingent on resource extraction (Veltmeyer & Bowles, 2014). The extraction of northwest BC's wealth first came in the

form of fur, fish, and forests (Menzies & Butler, 2008). Colonization of northern British Columbia, the area of my research, arose through exploitation of resources that had been stewarded for millennia by Indigenous peoples; since then, "the North Coast has been a cauldron of extractive industries" (Menzies, 2015, p. 8). More recently mining has become a focus of extraction, and—as indicated by the proposed introduction of the LNG terminal—the ambition of the provincial government is that oil and gas will be the new export commodities.

Prince Rupert is a coastal city in northern BC with a population of 12,000 settler and Indigenous community members. Prince Rupert has historically relied on resource-based development and is vulnerable to boom-and-bust economic cycles. This case stands as an example of how global forces shape the local: it was a demand for the region's resources that brought the settler community of Prince Rupert into being and has continued to shape it both economically and culturally. In recent decades, the decline of the forest industry and the downturn of the fisheries has corresponded with an exodus of people and capital from the region. During the early 2000s, the Skeena Cellulose pulp mill and fish canning industries – two major employers in Prince Rupert – closed their doors. Many people left the community because of this loss of employment, and Prince Rupert's population declined from 17,414 people in 1996 to 12,220 people in 2016 – a decrease of nearly 30 percent (Allen, 2018). In addition to being shaped by global forces in the past, Prince Rupert continues to be influenced by its links to global flows of capital through the railroad and its connection to domestic and international markets, and a container shipping terminal, which is one of the biggest employers in the community today.

3.1 LNG as a solution to rural economic decline

In response to rural economic vulnerability in the northwest of the province, the provincial government was very quick to promote the economic benefits of LNG projects, with a large emphasis on the jobs the PNW LNG project would create. In the 2012 British Columbia's Natural Gas Strategy, Clark stated:

> B.C. was built on its natural resources and our resources continue to fuel our economy. *The BC Jobs Plan* released in September is about using our competitive advantages to benefit all Canadians. We want to open new markets for our exports, strengthen infrastructure to get our goods to market, and work with employers and communities to help grow and

> strengthen our economy and create jobs in every region of the province. The natural gas industry is an important revenue generator for British Columbia. With new, undeveloped shale gas deposits in the northeast, there is a real opportunity for growth…Now is the time to adopt a more aggressive approach to environmentally responsible industrial development (British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines, 2012, p. 1)

During her time in office, Premier Christy Clark vehemently pushed the LNG industry in the province. This is evidenced in the following quote by Clark's former deputy chief of staff: "She's made liquefied natural gas part of the provincial lexicon. When before did you ever hear the term LNG?" (Walker, 2018, p. 79). Clark touted the nascent LNG industry as being an economic salvation for British Columbia; leading up to the 2013 election, she promised that the industry would generate enough revenue to pay off the provincial debt, as well as create a $100-billion prosperity fund and 100,000 jobs (Zussman, 2016). The BC Liberals sought social legitimization for shale gas development and the LNG industry by over-estimating the jobs the industry would create, which is a tactic that has been noted elsewhere: "Celebrating economic benefits brought by natural resources has become a common discursive strategy employed by fossil fuel proponents to win public support" (Chen & Gunster, 2016, p. 313). When the Liberal government's claims were examined in detail, it was evident that rural communities were not positioned to be the primary benefactors of the LNG industry: for instance, Clark's claims conflated permanent jobs with temporary construction jobs, and foreign workers would have accounted for almost 40% of the work force needed to build the PNW LNG terminal (B. Jang, 2014). As well, PNW LNG would have used "fly-in, fly-out" workers – a "practice [that] enables companies to bring in the labour they need rather than rely on local labour markets" (Lee, 2015, p. 6). This also, of course, diminishes the benefits of these developments to the local communities which host them. As evidenced by reports that refuted the number of local jobs that would be created, the LNG industry was not necessarily a financial "win" for local communities (Lee, 2015).

In 2012, the Province committed to having BC's first LNG plant in operation by 2015 and three LNG facilities operating by 2020 (British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines, 2012). At the time of writing, in 2020, no LNG plants have yet been built, although construction has begun on LNG Canada: a proposal similar to tone discussed

here combining a pipeline across BC and liquefaction terminal in Kitimat. Despite the provincial government's rhetoric and the various subsidies they provided to industry – including an electrical subsidy to power LNG plants, lowered natural gas royalties, the halving of the LNG tax rate, and an 18-month holiday from the carbon tax (Nikiforuk, 2016) – few of Clark's LNG-related economic promises have materialized.

3.2 LNG as a climate 'solution'

In addition to endorsing the potential economic benefits of the LNG industry in the province, Clark also sought public acceptance by promoting LNG as "the cleanest fossil fuel on the planet" (Gillis, 2015). BC prides itself on its climate change policy; the province boasts the first significant carbon tax and legislated emissions targets in North America. The government tried to reconcile its aspirational climate policy and energy extraction by framing BC as a "clean energy powerhouse" that "will capitalize on the world's desire and need for clean energy, for the benefit of all British Columbians" (Stephenson et al., 2012, p. 453). British Columbia's Natural Gas Strategy (2012) states:

> Natural Gas is a climate solution– it is widely recognized as a transition fuel to a low carbon global economy. We have an important role in helping to lower global greenhouse gas emissions. B.C. can make a significant contribution to global reduction targets when B.C. gas is exported to Asia as LNG and replaces coal and/or diesel as fuel for electricity production or transportation (British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines, 2012, p. 11)

By law, under the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, the province is required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent below 2007 levels by 2030, 60 per cent by 2040, and 80 per cent by 2050 (Province of British Columbia, n.d.). Under these targets, BC is supposed to emit only 13 million tonnes of carbon pollution by 2050. The PNW LNG project was expected to emit 9.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent annually (Linnitt, 2016b). Thus, the PNW LNG project alone would have made provincial GHG emissions targets extremely difficult to meet (Linnitt, 2016b). The Liberal government used a number of tactics to try and secure an LNG industry in BC – and to be re-elected in the 2017 election. In a move to reverse a key environmental policy, Clark announced that her government would amend the *Clean Energy Act* to classify natural gas as a "clean" fuel when used to power LNG plants (Bailey & Stueck, 2012). This suggests that

Clark's efforts to secure an LNG industry in the province were substantially less about mitigating climate change, and more about supporting capital accumulation.

Characterizing natural gas as a "clean" fossil fuel was a tactic used by Clark to legitimize the expansion of the LNG industry and obscure its environmental and climate implications. However, claims of "clean" LNG have been thoroughly debunked (M. Horne & MacNab, 2014; Howarth, 2014; D. J. Hughes, 2015; Newell & Mulvaney, 2013; Pembina Institute, 2013; Pembina Institute & David Suzuki Foundation, 2011; Stephenson et al., 2012). Natural gas is 95 per cent methane. Methane is a much more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, trapping 84 times as much heat in the atmosphere as carbon dioxide over a 20-year period, and methane is responsible for 25 per cent of the changes to the earth's climate that are already observable (David Suzuki Foundation, n.d.). Through industry leaks and intentional venting, oil and gas drilling and fracking operations are major sources of methane pollution, much more than previously thought; a recent report highlights how methane emissions from fracking are 2.5 times higher than reported by the BC government (Atherton et al., 2017).

The climate merits of natural gas are calculated based on emissions from its combustion, not the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions of natural gas; when calculated, natural gas is notoriously carbon-intensive. The lifecycle GHG emissions include extracting, processing and transporting the gas, then liquefying the gas at a liquefaction terminal like PNW LNG; liquefaction is an energy-intensive a process that requires supercooling gas to -161°C. Lifecycle emissions also including transporting the gas to over-sea markets in large tankers, regasifying it upon arrival, and finally, combusting it to supply heat, generate electricity or power vehicles (M. Horne & MacNab, 2014). Thus, when examining the lifecycle emissions of natural gas, LNG has the potential to be worse than coal over a 20-year time scale (Howarth, Santoro, & Ingraffea, 2011) and the extent to which there is an adequate carbon budget in BC to support the development of an LNG industry is heavily contested (Stephenson et al., 2012; Stephenson & Shaw, 2013).

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report of 2018 warns us that we have 12 years to reduce global emissions by nearly 50%, in order to limit climate change catastrophe (Watts, 2018). Reports on climate change shows Canada warming at twice the global rate. Northern BC, where LNG projects are slated to be built, is warming

at nearly three times the global rate. Despite the government's attempt to greenwash natural gas as a climate solution, this myth has been debunked. Building LNG infrastructure locks us in. We should not be building fossil fuel projects in a climate emergency.

3.3 Indigenous Rights

In addition to being an economic and climate disaster, the provincial and federal governments' decisions to approve the Pacific NorthWest LNG project – and consequently increase natural gas production – reproduced colonialism. "In North America, the expansion of oil and gas networks is tightly linked to the continued displacement, pacification, and expropriation of unceded and treaty-guaranteed lands historically inhabited and cared for by Indigenous peoples" (Spice, 2018, p. 44). Natural gas is extracted in Treaty 8 territory in the northeast of British Columbia primarily through hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. The impacts of gas production to the lands and peoples of Treaty 8 territory have been thoroughly documented, with concerns raised about Indigenous rights and title, impacts to public health and water quality, and the lack of democratic decision-making processes (Garvie, Lowe, & Shaw, 2014; Garvie & Shaw, 2014, 2016).

Canada is a signatory of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and BC has now passed legislation to implement UNDRIP. UNDRIP consists of 46 articles recognizing the basic human rights of Indigenous Peoples as well as their rights to self-determination (Bellrichard, 2019). Article 32 calls for governments to obtain free, prior and informed consent from First Nations before approving projects on their territories. The obligation to consult First Nations is already legally binding in Canada, even without the principles of UNDRIP being legislated yet: Canadian courts have recognized the rights conferred by Indigenous title, which include the right "to use and control the land and enjoy its benefits" which, in turn, includes "the right to decide how the land will be used; the right of enjoyment and occupancy of the land; the right to possess the land; the right to the economic benefits of the land; and the right to pro-actively use and manage the land" (quoted in Slattery, 2015, p. 53). The government did not obtain free, prior, and informed consent from the Tsimshian, Gitxsan, Wet'suwet'en, Haida and other Indigenous nations who would be

affected by the PNW LNG project. Lax Kw'alaams stated that Flora Bank is off-limits to industrial development, that the project posed too severe a threat to salmon which is of great cultural, economic, and spiritual significance to people of the Skeena watershed, and in 2015 Lax Kw'alaams unanimously voted to reject Petronas' $1.25 billion offer. The government did not respect that decision, and "with sparring between elected and traditional power brokers, death threats and alleged vandalism, a culture of fear has left community members feeling they haven't been heard by provincial or federal politicians. Pledges by both governments to meaningfully consult with the Lax Kw'alaams people have been broken, according to many community members" (Kelly & Morgan, 2016).

Dynamics of extractive capitalism have led to internal colonialism as rights of First Nations have been overlooked in the pursuit of the "national interest" in developing and exporting oil and gas (Veltmeyer & Bowles, 2014). Leanne Betasomasake Simpson (2013) speaks about extractivism in a conversation with Naomi Klein:

> Industry and government are very invested in the "jobs versus the environment" discussion. [Indigenous] communities are under tremendous pressure from provincial governments, federal governments, and industry to partner in the destruction of natural resources. Industry and government have no problem with presenting large-scale environmental destruction by corporations as the only way out of poverty because it is in their best interest to do so. There is a huge need to clearly articulate alternative visions of how to build healthy, sustainable, local indigenous economies that benefit indigenous communities and respect our fundamental philosophies and values. The hyper-exploitation of natural resources is not the only approach. The first step to that is to stop seeing indigenous peoples and our homelands as free resources to be used at will however colonial society sees fit (Simpson & Klein, 2013).

The governments of BC and Canada reproduced colonialism in this instance in that they offered First Nations benefits defined only by the colonizer; the options available to communities were not allowed to be defined by Indigenous peoples. Dayna Scott – a legal scholar and expert in Indigenous rights – observes how Indigenous leaders are confronted with a "false choice. They're being asked to choose whether or not they want to sign a deal and get some benefits for their people for a pipeline that's going to go through whether or not they agree to it" (Nikiforuk, 2020).

Indigenous resistance to LNG infrastructure in northern BC is reflective of larger issues surrounding natural resource extraction and the right to self-determination, and

raises questions about the efficacy of colonial consultative processes and decision-making frameworks. These issues are coming to the fore with the LNG industry's push to build pipelines through the unceded territories of First Nations in northern BC. At the time of writing, the Unist'ot'en and Gidumt'en clans of the Wet'suwet'en Nation are fighting to protect their land from the encroachment of Coastal GasLink and the state.

Under Christy Clark, the BC Liberals provided a blatantly contradictory agenda in promoting the LNG industry as a solution to both rural economic development and the climate crisis. Given all their promises and the fanfare, much was at stake for the government. Pacific NorthWest LNG was the most developed proposal at the time and was thus the first test in BC's plan. Subsequently, PNW LNG was the site at which some of the inherent tensions within the plan came to the fore, and some of the problems that arise from rushing an agenda forward without adequate process became glaringly evident. Yet as these tensions and limitations emerged, instead of meaningfully consulting with communities and adequately addressing their concerns, the government reacted and labelled opposition as the "forces of no," reinforcing what was missing from the conversation: a government that was actually interested to hear what communities wanted. This thesis seeks to better understand what community member's priorities were, and what they were aiming to express in opposing the Pacific NorthWest LNG project. My work investigates the factors which motivated my interviewees to oppose the PNW LNG project, and examines the broader implications of opposition in the context of BC's trajectory of extractive development. I argue that, if we are to successfully navigate the transitions we are facing, we need to better understand the details about why communities resist carbon-intensive projects.

4. Thesis outline

This thesis is organized into four chapters. This chapter has provided a brief overview of the project, as well as the literature that frames my approach. I then provided the research questions and provide information about the methods and methodologies that have shaped my research, and finally, I explored the critical context of the case. The two chapters that follow were written as stand-alone papers, and as such include some repetition. The second chapter explores opposition to the Pacific NorthWest LNG project by examining the sources of resistance and sites of contention. Chapter 3 discusses

resource dependency and the impacts of boom-bust economic growth, and explores alternatives for the region that were articulated by interviewees. The fourth chapter concludes with a discussion of my findings and their implications, the limitations of the project, and some recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2:
"The Lifeblood of BC is not Oil and Gas, it's Salmon"

This chapter is written as a stand-alone article intended for publication in the journal: The Extractive Industries and Society

1. Introduction

British Columbia has been shaped by extractive industries, and conflicts over them (Barnes & Hayter, 1997; Blomley, 1996; Braun, 2002; Cashore, 2014; Magnusson & Shaw, 2003; Wilson, 1998). The newest manifestations of this, concurrent with opposition to proposed tar sands pipelines crossing the province, are the recent cross-party efforts to develop a liquified natural gas (LNG) industry. In the Liberal government's 2014 throne speech, LNG was promoted as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity due to the industry's potential to transform BC's economy (Renshaw, 2014). While the potential economic benefits were touted by supporters of the industry, those who oppose an LNG industry in the province noted the multi-scalar environmental effects, the unequal distribution of risks and rewards, and impacts to Indigenous rights and title (Garvie & Shaw, 2016; Lachapelle, Kiss, & Montpetit, 2018). Intense opposition emerged around one project in particular: the proposed Pacific NorthWest LNG export terminal on Tsimshian territory in northern BC. This case offers some insight into what might be at stake for communities navigating the potential emergence of this industry. Understanding these concerns, in turn, is essential to inform how future energy and industrial activity unfolds in these regions.

Scientific evidence affirms anthropocentric climate change and the urgent need to transition towards a low-carbon future, as outlined in the 2018 IPCC report (Watts, 2018). British Columbia is already experiencing the impacts of climate change, as noted in the increased frequency and intensity of wildfires and floods in the province (Riley, 2018). By documenting the cultural genocide executed by the government through the residential school system and other racist policies, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission shed light on the ongoing impacts of Canada's colonial legacy, and called on all governments in Canada to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Despite government promises to meaningfully addressing climate change, and statements

about the importance of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, energy projects continue to be approved over the objections of climate activists and Indigenous peoples in BC. Examples include the government's approval of, and the corresponding opposition to, projects such as the Pacific NorthWest LNG project, the TransMountain expansion pipeline, and Coastal Gas Link pipeline.

It is in the intersection of these pushes for development combined with local resistance that the future direction of extractive industries, communities and the environment will be shaped (Arsel, Hogenboom, & Pellegrini, 2016; Keeling & Sandlos, 2016; Veltmeyer & Bowles, 2014). With this context in mind, this chapter explores the factors that are leading individuals and communities to resist carbon-intensive development in BC. To do this, I conduct a case study of opposition to the Pacific NorthWest liquid natural gas (LNG) terminal project located south of Prince Rupert, at the mouth of the Skeena River.

The PNW LNG project was cancelled by the proponent in July 2017 but stands as an important case through which to examine questions related to why opposition to large-scale industrial project emerges, how government responds to this opposition, and the implications of these tensions. Answers to these questions, in turn, offer a potential ground for considering how future energy development in these regions must be shaped if it is to gain the support of communities. I begin by providing a brief overview of the case and its context, as well as how the literature that frames my approach. This is followed by the methods and findings which characterize the factors that influenced resistance to the PNW LNG project. I conclude with a discussion that explores the wider implications of these findings.

My work argues that, rather than being an example of NIMBYism, resistance to this fossil fuel project arose from and highlighted inadequate governance of energy development, within a historical context of unsustainable governance of other community-valued resources. These findings point to the urgency of further examining community responses to energy projects; given the drastic need to transition our energy systems and diversify our economies it is crucial to understand what is at stake for communities impacted by extractive industries. We need to understand what fuels

resistance in order to support climate (and other) solutions that are responsive to community needs and desires.

2. Literature Review

My research is framed by studies of resistance to extractive industries. In recent decades, there has been a rise in extractivist industry due to a global commodity boom (Arsel et al., 2016; Veltmeyer & Bowles, 2014). Extractivism refers to the prioritization of extractive modes of natural resource management: including oil, gas, mining, forestry and fisheries. Colonial and neocolonial polices of appropriation are often associated with extractivism (Acosta, 2013; E. Wilson & Stammler, 2016). Resistance to extractivism has emerged worldwide; opposition movements are part of a wider push to "preserve nature and society from the destructive dynamics of extractive capitalism" (Veltmeyer & Bowles, 2014, p. 67). While it is important to acknowledge the widespread reach of these global dynamics, it is also important to examine the specific conditions which lead particular communities to resist extractive projects. As historical patterns of development are often mismatched with local community values, to analyze opposition from the bottom-up is key; the particularities of local resistance are crucial to understand for those seeking to craft approaches that are responsive to community-scale concerns.

Resistance to extractivism is the subject of much analysis in Latin America, with many researchers examining mining in particular (Arsel et al., 2016; Conde & Le Billon, 2017; Veltmeyer, 2012). While less analysis has been done on extractivism and resistance in the context of the Global North, some research has examined fracking in North America (Frost, 2019; Garvie & Shaw, 2016; Lachapelle et al., 2018; Willow & Wylie, 2014) and oil pipelines in western BC (Bowles & MacPhail, 2017; Spice, 2018; Veltmeyer & Bowles, 2014). Several studies have been especially informative in thinking through my case. Veltmeyer and Bowles' (2014) "Extractivist Resistance: The Case of the Enbridge Oil Pipeline Project in Northern British Columbia" identifies three main groups in their analysis of resistance to oil pipelines: labour, Indigenous groups and environmental groups. My research on resistance to LNG on the North Coast similarly examines themes related to labour, settler colonialism and environmental movements. Conde and Le Billon (2017) analyze why resistance to industrial projects emerges by examining environmental and community-related factors – such as impacts to

livelihoods, displacement, dependency and distrust – which lead to higher instances of resistance from affected communities.

A parallel engagement with dynamics of resource extraction is that of rural economic development. Extractivism in the Canadian context is not novel; Canada has consistently relied on the extraction of natural resources to fuel economic growth, and for several provinces – British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland – this continues to be the case. This reliance has resulted in economic boom and bust cycles (Ryser et al., 2014). Rural economic development literature engages with Canada's history of extractivism and explores how communities can navigate boom and bust economies more effectively (Deacon, Van Assche, Papineau, & Gruezmacher, 2018; Hayter & Nieweler, 2018; Markey, Halseth, & Manson, 2008).

There has long been an interest in examining, and writing about, Canada's resource wealth. While it is beyond the scope of this research to thoroughly review the literature on political-economic thought in Canada, it is important to note the work of some seminal scholars. Studies of the political economy of Canada have been highly influenced by the thinking of economic historian Harold Innis. Innis formulated the Staples Thesis: a theory which asserted that Canada's export of natural resources (or staples) shaped the nation's economy, as well as its social and political systems (Innis, 1930, 1933, 1956). Innis described the early Canadian economy as being characterized by urban industrialized regions (core) and rural resource-supplying regions (periphery). He noted that economic instability and a dependency on foreign markets were central features of the core-periphery model. His work also examined how European exploration and exploitation led to cultural destruction of Indigenous peoples (Innis, 1933).

It remains important to critically examine Canada's staples problem as "most rural and small-town places in BC are single-industry resource dependent economies" (Manson, Markey, Ryser, & Halseth, 2016, p. 103). Hayter and Barnes (1990) argue that "Once a region specializes in producing staples, it then finds it very difficult to reconfigure production into other types of sectors. The result is extreme susceptibility to already volatile resource prices, making the staples economy especially prone to crisis" (p. 158). This understanding of how resource communities are prone to boom and bust cycles - and the socio-economic implications of this – is crucial to the PNW LNG case.

Northwestern BC – the site of my research – has been shaped by cycles of economic boom and bust for decades. Prince Rupert's economy has traditionally been reliant on fishing, forestry and mining; in recent years, people have seen fewer economic benefits go to local communities, as well as environmental degradation, an increase in unemployment, and people leaving rural communities for urban areas. The PNW LNG case arises in this context: while many people supported the introduction of a new LNG industry in the region, others conceptualized it as another example of extractive industry. While resistance to extractive industries and rural economic development literatures have been influential in working through my case, I argue that a gap exists in how we understand resistance to industrial projects in a Canadian context. My work seeks to address this gap by exploring the values, considerations and priorities that guided community resistance.

3. Case Study Background[6]

The Pacific NorthWest (PNW) LNG project was a proposal to build a natural gas liquefaction and export terminal on Lelu Island, near Prince Rupert on the North Coast of British Columbia. In 2013, the Malaysian state-owned energy company Petronas and its partners—Japan's Japex, China's Sinopec, Indian Oil Corp., and PetroleumBrunei—proposed to construct and operate the $36-billion LNG project. In July 2015, the BC government passed legislation to approve the project development agreement, and in September 2016 the Government of Canada approved the project. Despite political support, in July of 2017 the proponent cancelled the project, citing poor market conditions (The Canadian Press, 2017).

Converting natural gas to liquid natural gas requires an energy-intensive process called liquefaction: natural gas must be cooled to -162°C in order to produce LNG. To supply the PNW LNG terminal with natural gas, the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission (PRGT) pipeline was planned to connect the Montney gas fields in northeast BC to the coast. The PRGT pipeline would have spanned 900 kilometers across northern British Columbia (BC Oil & Gas Commission, 2013). The PNW LNG export terminal would

[6] The following content is substantially similar to the Energy Development in BC section in Chapter 1. It is included here as this chapter is intended to be stand-alone piece.

have liquefied natural gas and then loaded the LNG onto tankers which would be shipped to overseas markets. PNW LNG was projected to ship 19 million tonnes of liquified gas annually to markets in Asia (Ghoussoub, 2017). Once in Asia the gas would be regasified and finally combusted.

Affected communities, both settler and Indigenous, supported and opposed the PNW LNG project. Those who were in support embraced the potential economic benefits the project would bring, while those who opposed the project highlighted the multi-scalar environmental impacts: because of the specific location of the project on Lelu Island, many feared that the project would adversely impact the ecology of the region. Of particular concern was the region's salmon population. Indigenous rights and title concerns were integral in this case - the project would have adversely impacted the lands and waters belonging to the people from the Tsimshian, Gitxsan, and Wet'suwet'en nations. The climate impacts of the project were also of much concern: if built, PNW LNG would have been the largest single source-emitter of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada (Pembina Institute, 2016).

Lelu Island is a small island at the mouth of the Skeena River - the second largest salmon producing river in Canada. Adjacent to Lelu Island is Flora Bank, an offshore area rich in eelgrass which is critical habitat for juvenile Skeena salmon (G. Horne, 2015). Due to the region's unique ecology and the potential to disrupt key salmon habitat, in the 1970s the federal government recognized that industrial development near Flora Bank would destroy critical salmon habitat (Gilchrist, 2016). Despite this recognition, the federal government approved the PNW LNG project, subject to 190 conditions detailed in the environmental assessment report (Tasker, 2016). This decision was widely criticized; many argued that PNW LNG would negatively impact juvenile salmon habitat, and that "[a] worse location is unlikely to be found for PNW LNG with regards to potential risks to fish and fisheries" (B. Jang & McCarthy, 2016). There was concern about the socio-economic implications of the project on the region as Skeena salmon contribute to a $110 million regional economy each year (Hume, 2016).

Indigenous, local, regional, and provincial groups were actively involved in opposing the project. Indigenous land-based resistance formed on Lelu Island by hereditary leaders of the Gitwilgyoots tribe – one of nine allied tribes of the Lax

Kw'alaams First Nation, whose traditional territory includes Lelu Island. Another land-based resistance movement was Camp Madii Lii which is along the proposed pathway of the PRGT pipeline in Gitxsan territory by the House of Luutkudziiwus. The Gitwilgyoots tribe of the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation, Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs, and Gitxsan Hereditary Chiefs with the Luutkudziiwus house group and the Gwininitxw house group, as well as a local environmental group, SkeenaWild Conservation, filed judicial reviews (RAVEN, n.d.)

Think-tanks based in southern BC who were involved in resisting the project tended to emphasize the climate impacts of the project; the Pembina Institute reported that PNW LNG would be the largest carbon polluter in Canada, and that the "project would guarantee BC's failure to meet legislated climate target" (Pembina Institute, 2016). In all, resistance to the PNW LNG project was dynamic and multi-faceted; numerous groups – from local concerned citizens, grassroots environmental groups, fisher-people and First Nations, to scientists, politicians and provincial ENGOs – were involved. Various factors motivated resistance as well: concerns were raised about the impacts on salmon, the local ecology and the regional economy; as well as the efficacy of consultative processes and colonial natural resource decision-making frameworks, and the implications of increasing fossil fuel production during a climate crisis. In response to the opposition that formed around the Pacific NorthWest LNG project, the then-premier of BC, Christy Clark, dismissed opponents as "a ragtag group of people," and framed opposition to PNW LNG as the "forces of no."

4. Methods[7]

After doing background research on the case in the form of a media and grey literature review, I conducted three weeks of field work. Over this time, I interviewed eighteen individuals who opposed the Pacific NorthWest LNG project or who were active in working to promote economic diversification in the region. I conducted research using snowball sampling through referrals and publicly available contact information. I elected to speak with people who had grass-roots experience resisting the PNW LNG project or

[7] The following content is substantially similar to the Methods section in Chapter 1. It is included here as this chapter is intended to be stand-alone piece.

other industrial projects in the region, in order to learn first-hand about the sources of resistance, and about why opposition to the PNW LNG project emerged the way it did.

Individuals gave verbal consent to be interviewed. Interviews averaged 60 minutes in length, with some being as short as 20 minutes while others lasted over 100 minutes. Interview questions were designed to gather information about participants' involvement with the proposal, their assessment of it and what issues or concerns guided that assessment. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed the interviewees to speak on themes, and to experiences, that mattered most to them. All interviews were conducted with informed consent, were recorded, and transcribed verbatim. Interviews were coded and analyzed for emergent themes using NVivo, a qualitative software package.

The aim of my research was not to produce generalizable results; my research did not seek to obtain a cross section of the population, nor a comprehensive view of people's feelings about the PNW LNG project, nor LNG in general. Rather my aim was to explore the view and experiences of those individuals who were involved in opposing the project. I wish to emphasize that my research speaks to why opposing PNW LNG was important for those who resisted the project, not for the region as a whole. Due to the constraints of a Master's project, I did not have the time to spend in community, building relationships with Indigenous peoples. Therefore, the majority of my interviewees were settler Canadians. Thus, this research does not address Indigenous communities' responses to the PNW LNG project, and my findings do not speak thoroughly to concerns about the project's impact on Indigenous rights and title. This research is exploratory; the subject of resistance to PNW LNG demands more research.

I take an historical approach to resource management in Canada as it is integral to deepening our conceptualization of place-specific environmental conflicts. However, as Robbins notes, "the writing of history is a political and social act, linked to, and embedded in, larger events and movements, including colonialism, imperialism, the cold war, and the contemporary struggles for global economic expansion and control" (Robbins, 2020, p. 68). It is important to acknowledge power relations, differing conceptualizations of place, and how the region in which I conducted my research has

been shaped by dispossession and exploitation for centuries under colonialism, and decades under capitalist economics.

5. Findings

"People make a choice about a way of life,
so things that threaten that way of life are not well received" (N-10)

The Pacific NorthWest LNG proposal sparked a wide range of responses from those I spoke with. In general, my interviewees were concerned about the protection of social and ecological values, and the inadequacies in the decision-making process; I categorize these findings loosely as sources of resistance and sites of contention. I first examine the sources of resistance - what my interviewees in the region cared about and valued - which include: the specific site location, concerns about threats to salmon, and a commitment to a diversified, resilient economy. I then examine the sites of contention - where resistance arose or was focused – which include: flaws in the approval processes that resulted in the exclusion of effective public engagement, and decisions that failed to reflect on or respond to the impacts PNW LNG would have on communities.

5.1 Lelu Island

I begin my analysis by examining my interviewees' concerns about the specific site location of the project:

> All of these young salmon leave the river to go to the ocean in spring and early summer and they all concentrate at the mouth of the Skeena in this area. It's really high abundance; this is where most of our juvenile salmon hang out for a few weeks to a few months. So that was right where they wanted to build this massive industrial facility… If you were to destroy anywhere, this would be the place that would have the most impact out of anywhere in the watershed … because all the salmon concentrate there - sometimes up to a billion-juvenile salmon, all right there (N-13).

Several other LNG export terminals were proposed for the region but did not garner the same levels of resistance; opposition to PNW LNG must be understood in relation to the site location and the impacts that development in that place (Lelu Island) would have on the region. The following quotes from my interviewees refer to this:

> We focused on Petronas because of where it was located: every stream, every tributary, every single salmon from our entire watershed goes to that one place (N-12).

> If they hadn't tried to put Pacific NorthWest LNG on Lelu there would not have been a problem because the majority of people were for LNG here. So that choice of location made things very divisive (PR-5).

> We became really concerned about Pacific NorthWest LNG because of its proposed site right over top of critical salmon habitat in the Skeena estuary and we decided that that posed a huge threat to Skeena salmon - probably one of the biggest threats that they've ever faced in terms of development proposals … [The PNW LNG project] would have dredged a lot of this critical salmon habitat … So we were very, very concerned and we got ourselves involved in the environmental assessment process; we started working with Indigenous groups that were working on the issue, we started to get coordinated with other community conservation groups, upstream Indigenous groups whose fish would be impacted by the project. Through our assessment we realized it was a really bad project, it just brought too big a threat that we couldn't ignore. We felt we had to come out against the project. It couldn't be sited there. It was an unacceptable place and the federal government apparently agreed with us looking back over 40 years (N-13).

As these quotes evidence, the specific site of PNW LNG was controversial as Lelu Island is crucial for Skeena salmon. The project posed threats to the whole Skeena Watershed – the lands and waters belonging to the Tsimshian, Gitxsan, and Wet'suwet'en nations:

> The Skeena is a watershed the size of Switzerland. It's a big place. It's the second largest salmon producer in Canada … we communicated the threats to Skeena salmon for everybody, not just in Prince Rupert or Port Edward but in Terrace, and Smithers, and Hazleton and Kitwanga, and Gitanyow and Babine Lake - all the Indigenous groups and local communities in the entire watershed (N-13).

The environmental issues and ecological concerns associated with this project cannot be separated from the ongoing impacts of colonization in the region. One interviewee noted that the opposition to PNW LNG "was mostly about Indigenous rights. There are no treaties up there, they [First Nations] never signed a treaty, that's their traditional territory at the mouth of the Skeena River" (S-17). Although not the focus of my analysis, it is important to acknowledge how colonial policies have impacted – and continue to govern – relations and resource management in the region.

5.2 History of Resistance

Pacific NorthWest LNG was not the first project proposed for the region that involved fracked gas. It also was not the first project to garner widespread community opposition. In 2004, Shell Canada proposed a coalbed methane fracking project on Tahltan territory in the Sacred Headwaters, the birthplace of three salmon-bearing rivers: the Skeena, Stikine and Nass. First Nations and grassroots groups recognized the threat of fracking in the Headwaters and mobilized residents of the Skeena Watershed to oppose the project. One of my interviewees recalled her experience in that fight:

> We think that this project is too risky for this watershed to condone so will you sign this resolution opposing this development and 100% of the mayors and councils, band councils, chamber of commerce, regional districts, rod and gun clubs - they all signed the letter. Downstream hereditary chiefs, tribal councils. Shell had 100% opposition and they learned an awful lot about how to approach development in this watershed as a result (N-12).

It is important to note that the coalbed methane project did not go through; in 2012 the project was cancelled and coalbed methane drilling was banned in the Sacred Headwaters. Over the years, local groups have resisted other large industrial projects which threatened the unique socio-cultural and ecological landscape of the region, and groups drew on this history in opposing LNG:

> The strategy that we took [with LNG] was around hope and strength. We shared videos and photos from previous victories from when this headwater comes together, because this watershed has kicked out Enbridge, it kicked out the project they wanted to do in Kitlope, it kicked out Shell out of the Headwaters, Fortune Minerals, fish farms. This watershed is powerful but the strength comes from the unity (N-12).

Another example of this unity was local resistance to fish farms in the early 2000s:

> Initially the region started to coalesce and come together under a specific threat from Atlantic salmon farms, open net salmon farms being proposed for the region here… [we were] adamant that this was not something that we wanted to be doing in our waters: the implications were significant for our wild salmon stocks. So that began the coalition of Friends of Wild Salmon, the alliance that stretched from the headwaters of the Skeena all the way out to Haida Gwaii and it was focused primarily around protecting and maintaining wild salmon and their habitats (PR-1).

My interviewees noted how "all those campaigns really developed a cohesiveness in the region" (N-10) and that "all the groups in the north as we connected, we recognized each

other as kindred spirits" (N-14). These quotes speak to the sense of community that exist in the northwest amongst my interviewees, and that they were willing to protect the place they called home.

The importance of salmon was a key source of local resistance to PNW LNG; the following quote speaks to how my interviewees conceptualized this as being distinct to the northwest, and how southern audiences did not seem to have the same connection to salmon.

> There's not the same sense of immediacy; people are protecting an idea on the south coast, people are protecting a way of life here. You can see that – we can't fish this year. So for a culture still dependent on salmon as a staple in their actual food supply every year is very directly affected by things that affect their fish. Down south there's so much good intention but … it's so organized, so wealthy, separated from the real core of 'if we don't have this we will die' (N-11).

The risks that PNW LNG posed to salmon and the health of communities were a huge source of resistance and greatly galvanized opposition: "In this part of the world, people are connected to salmon in a major way so if you want people to stand up and care or if you want to get people concerned, threaten their salmon. It was about the fish, really; salmon and the communities that relied on them" (N-13). It is with this understanding that we will now turn to the rest of the findings section.

5.3 Salmon

"It was mainly the salmon issue that was rallying people" (N-13).

A crucial insight that arose from my interviews was the importance of salmon for the region:

> People in the Babine who were relying on salmon coming through the system - the estuary is extremely important to them, it's important to every First Nations groups along this piece of the coast, from Haida Gwaii to Fort Babine. It's important to all of us who live in these communities whether we be First Nations or otherwise just in terms of our own food resources, and in terms of the iconograph piece that this animal represents to us, it's not just a fish, this is far more than a fish. [For] First Nations, it's a significant part of their life. For those of us who are not First Nations, it was also extremely important part of our life, it generated economy for us, it provided us food, a whole range of things (PR-1).

For my interviewees, salmon represented connectivity; as one interviewee expressed: "it's the one thing that continues to create cohesion in the region: whether you support LNG or not, the reality is that fish for you are still paramount" (PR-1). Indeed, as another interviewee noted, "the lifeblood of BC is not oil and gas, it's salmon" (S-5). All the intertwining justifications of why salmon is so integral to the Northwest were summarized as such:

> It's the core reason why we're all here, whether we know it or not, whether we interact with it or not, whether we eat it or not, salmon is the reason why people are here and salmon is the reason this organization is here. Salmon is the backbone of all survival and industry and everything here. Whether it's symbolic or really personal and physical, it's an undeniable force here (N-11).

The above quotes speak to how salmon is regarded as being of the place; it is integral to the ecology, culture, and economy of the region. In detailing the ecological importance of salmon as a keystone species for the coast, one of my interviewees described how:

> Salmon are critically important. If you were to take a leaf or a needle from any of these trees, there would be salmon in them. It's the nitrogen that's in salmon that you will find in all these trees, the reason our forests grow so lush is because of the fish and you can cut the tree down and look at the tree rings and you can tell how many salmon were in the river that year by how much that tree grew that year. The forests grow on salmon, our bears, our eagles, so much of our ecosystem is dependent on the salmon (N-12).

This keystone species had been under threat prior to the PNW LNG proposal; as I describe in Chapter 3, over-fishing, poor fisheries management, and habitat destruction have negatively impacted Skeena salmon. And those impacts have been felt by community members.

The cultural connection that the region has to salmon and the importance of preserving this resource was a theme that numerous interviewees spoke of, because "it [salmon] goes back culturally for thousands and thousands of years" (S-15). Threats to salmon pose a serious concern "for a culture still dependent on salmon as a staple in their actual food supply every year" (N-11). Interviewees spoke about the cultural implications for First Nations of losing salmon, of not fishing, of not teaching those ways to young

people. This is already happening: "this year [2018] they didn't open up the Skeena to fish on" (PR-8).

My interviewees spoke of how many non-Indigenous community members were attracted to the region because of the maritime culture: "the cultural aspects and community basis that many of the communities in the regions are adhered to - which is a marine environment" (PR-1). The livelihoods of many in the region depend on a healthy environment: "my family and all of our history here was completely dependent on an intact ecosystem and that's how we, and so many people, make their living" (N-12). Due to the region's remote location, my interviewees equated a healthy fishing industry with a thriving, resilient community. One person lamented that with a struggling fishing industry, "we've become less self-sufficient and more beholden [on government] than we have been in the past" (PR-1). For many, the threat that an LNG terminal on Lelu Island posed to an already stressed salmon population was not worth the risk. This is exemplified in the work that unions did in resisting the project: the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union were outspoken in their opposition to the project.

My interviewees spoke of how a fishing culture on the coast created a closeness between communities; as illustrated by the following quote, the PNW LNG project was regarded as a threat to that closeness:

> Fifteen/twenty years ago we were a close community. Unlike some places where cultures live side by side without interacting, here in Prince Rupert there weren't Two Solitudes, this was because the fishing community is so close and integrated, 50% or more of the commercial salmon fishery is made up of First Nations people. All those people were working together, working in the fish plants together. But it's really been changing with this LNG industry and the effort to get it in here. That offer of $1.2 billion to Lax Kw'alaams[8] for instance really divided the community (PR-5).

The last quote references a theme that came up in multiple interviews – that the introduction of LNG on the coast divided communities. This finding will be explored in further sections.

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[8] In 2015 Lax Kw'alaams First Nation unanimously voted to reject the PNW LNG terminal, despite a $1.25 billion offer from the proponent. Lax Kw'alaams' elected and hereditary chiefs remained relatively united in opposing the project, however, a new mayor and council were elected later that year and the Band then reversed their decision and began supporting the PNW LNG project. In May 2017 the new mayor of Lax Kw'alaams signed a $98 million LNG benefits agreement for the community (Lough, 2017b).

5.4 Jobs

As noted above, the fishing industry is integral to the economy of the region, and fishing and forestry have traditionally been the main sources of employment for the North Coast for decades. The recent decline of these industries has drastically impacted the region: the population of Prince Rupert shrank by nearly 30% with the closure of the Skeena Cellulose pulp mill and the region's last fish canning plants in the early 2000s:

> With the fishery gone, we have people – that's their main employment. If you walk around the town you see how many places are boarded up and stuff. They just shut down the last cannery here because they've moved the fishery up river. The fish are worth about $20 a fish in the ocean where they have a high oil content and they're worth about 75 cents a fish upriver. So basically, they just took $20 million a year out of the regional economy, which is all we have (PR-5).

The closure of the fisheries and downturn of the forestry industry have undeniably resulted in a need for economic investment and employment opportunities in the region, and many community members regarded LNG as a promising new industry. When asked what role the potential employment accruing to the PNW LNG proposal played in peoples' conversations regionally, one interviewee responded by saying:

> Huge. That was the conversation. The provincial government and industry made a lot of promises: in the province for example $100 billion legacy fund, 100,000 jobs. A lot of people in these communities, like Terrace and Prince Rupert and Kitimat, there was a boom starting to happen and people were buying up properties and new businesses were moving in … People in the community really bought in to, and invested in, in a future where LNG was going to a huge part of the regional economy. Because why wouldn't they? The province was telling all this stuff was happening, industry was promising all this stuff. I think that they set our communities up for a big hangover essentially. And a lot of people are bitter; we fought against Pacific Northwest LNG being sited there and people saw that as we were trying to kill the economy and the premier Christy Clark called us 'the forces of no'. right. That's where that came from was our fight against Pacific Northwest LNG. We were the forces of no and we were against everything so that when we were simply asking for was 'hey don't put the LNG facility there' (N-13).

This quote highlights several implications of the provincial government's pro-LNG rhetoric: that communities invested heavily in the industry because of the government's promises, and that local environmental groups experienced community backlash for raising questions about the perceived economic benefits of the introduced LNG industry.

Other community members resisted the government's narrative that an LNG industry would provide economic security to the region:

> All of us were scratching our heads trying to really put a figure on what the real jobs were, what the real economy that was being derived from [the LNG industry], and it was an impossible task because the misinformation, the misdirection was such that it was very hard to get the information that would actually provide you that. It was proprietorial because it belonged to the company so the companies weren't giving you [information] other than which they were putting out publicly. So that's all you had to work with (PR-1).

While highlighting questions about the economic potential of LNG, the above quote speaks also to the lack of information available to communities, a theme that will be further explored in the Lack of Due Process section of this chapter.

Clark's unsubstantiated claims of how the LNG industry would benefit local communities became a source of resistance: one of my interviewees tried to debunk Clark's myths around job creation, as noted by the following quote: "they [the government] say 'oh 4000 jobs will be created,' well that might mean 1000 in the first year, 1500 in the second year, you know. It's not 4000 jobs are going to be created, it's 1200 jobs for 4 years. So, the numbers are all totally misused and just used to inflate the hype around the industry" (N-13). Furthermore, an interviewee noted that between 40 and 60% of the jobs for the PNW LNG project would have gone to temporary foreign workers, not to local community members. Other people I spoke with described how many of the employment opportunities required highly specialized training, and therefore many of the skilled positions that the project would have be created would not have benefitted local people:

> There are some jobs, if you want to be a security guard. But the serious jobs of the welder - it's specialized, low temperature steel that we're dealing with here, because normal steel cracks at -160C. The low temperature electricians and millwrights that will be employed in LNG plants [require] a speciality qualification. There are none. They have … to be imported (S-17).

Due to this specification, "these jobs are pretty particular, it takes a certain kind of training. There's this whole mobile work force now that's used to doing that kind of

work" (N-10). Because of the specialized skills required to build industrial projects, the positions "were not necessarily tapping into the basic skills of a community like this," (N-14), and "these are not the jobs that we have the skill set for; and most of us, if we worked in these operations at all, we would be in the menial task end of things: janitorial services, minor maintenance work. The overall work in the place would be done by people from away" (PR-1). As well, in terms of the relationships between "the short-term construction jobs and the operation and maintenance jobs: the fraction is 100 to 1" (S-17). Red flags were raised as organizers began looking into these promises and questioned: "so where are the jobs? Like I said – smoke in mirrors. It was all just hype really. It was all politically motivated" (N-13). Many of community members I interviewed wished to properly inform community members and people across Canada; they saw their communities shift because of the promised boom and they wanted people to think critically about these processes.

Since World War Two, industrial development has been a key element of economic development in the northwest; large-scale projects in the region include the Alcan aluminum smelter in the Kitimat region, the creation of multiple dams, and numerous mines. Interviewees recognized that industry is a part of life in this region: "We know the resource extraction industry, we work within it every day. What we are not interested in is the kind of industry that is going to sacrifice our existing economies" (Upstream Media, 2016). One interviewee highlighted her experiences organizing:

> It was very persuasive to hear from people who are really involved in resource economy and extractive industries, like their families… it's built their farms and their houses, sometimes mining, forestry in particular. They also had very personal first-hand experience of a boom and bust industry with forestry tanking and were not environmentalists as a self-identification or a political affiliation at all. They were just people who were like 'oh cool, jobs are coming to our community.' And the more they looked into it, the more the red flags went up (S-15).

These quotes help debunk the myth that opposition to PNW LNG was anti-development, or the work of the "forces of no." On the contrary, many interviewees were open to industrial development; yet they felt that - due to the specific site location on Lelu Island - the project was a bad proposal.

5.5 Lack of due process

> *"That is not good decision making and the people who live here are going to be left with the consequences of these decisions" (Upstream Media, 2016).*

In previous sections I explore my interviewees' desire to protect that which they value. The following section examines how the government failed to respond to those values. The poor decision-making processes on the part of both the provincial and federal government was identified as a site contention for many of my interviewees. My understanding is that firstly, the PNW LNG project was proposed without adequately informing the communities and without providing appropriate information; secondly, there were few forums for community members to discuss the project and get answers to their questions, and thirdly, the EA process and the professional reliance model embedded in it did not inspire confidence in people I spoke with.

My interviewees mentioned how difficult it was for their communities to access information about the LNG industry when projects were first being proposed in the region. One interviewee related: "we had countless people coming into our office and were really concerned but mostly nobody knew anything so the way that this industry was proposed in our watershed was a prime example of how not to introduce a new industry. Nobody knew what was going on - there was no information" (N-12). My interviewees expressed that both government and industry had failed in introducing LNG to the region; in the absence of any substantial or reliable information coming into the community from government or industry, community groups were left to attempt to fill that gap themselves:

> We were writing the companies, [saying] you guys need to get your ass into these communities, people don't even know what this is! It's crazy! You're asking communities to make these major decisions or comment, and no one really understands what's going on. It was really hard to keep track, at one point we had 11 different terminals, 11 different pipelines, so that's 22 projects, massive projects, that people were trying to wrap their heads around. And you had to look at each of them independently because they wouldn't […] do a strategic environmental assessment. Which would have said: if you're going to build an LNG pipeline this is where it or they should go. And if you're going to build terminals there are the places to put the terminals. Instead of throwing spaghetti at the wall. You'd look at the pipeline proposal map and it

> looked like somebody threw spaghetti at the wall. It was ridiculous (N-12).

People I spoke with were upset about how the LNG industry was introduced in the region; it was a brand-new industry and thus people were not familiar with the costs and benefits associated with LNG, and wished to be better informed.

The lack of information available to community members and the proponent's inability to meaningfully address local people's concerns were issues that emerged with other LNG proposals in the region. In the following quotes my interviewees speak about their experiences with the Aurora LNG project:

> Right from the start the onus was on the community and for individual people who have lives, who are raising children, who have jobs, to educate yourself – through what source? The only source there is – through internet and media – because where are you going to get your information from? The government isn't giving us the information (PR-9).

> They [the proponent] came without maps, they came without a lot of information. Most of the community hadn't read anything because there was no information. But they had their local knowledge and they said 'can you imagine, you're going to have ships south of Digby Island … what's going to happen with the south east prevailing winds in the winter time? You've got to be nuts.' These mariners were saying things like that to them [the proponent] and they didn't have an answer for it (PR-6).

Other interviewees had anecdotes of how "the project description [of PNW LNG] left the Skeena River off the map. It didn't show the Skeena River" (PR-5). As well, certain islands were missing too. These glaring mistakes to not instill confidence in the government nor industry's ability to properly protect that which my interviewees valued.

As well, regardless of the concerns that local people raised, there was a feeling that the Liberal government seemed only interested in securing an LNG industry in the province - as expressed by one of my interviewees:

> People felt really disempowered by LNG because government wasn't just backing it, they were pushing it. Come hell or high-water, LNG was happening. People felt really disempowered, they didn't feel like they had a voice, they felt like it was going to happen whether people wanted it to or not. So some people just resigned themselves to the fact (N-12).

The failure to offer adequate information or to engage with the emerging concerns from the community was a serious source of contention for my interviewees. My interviewees thought that the lack of information provided to communities could have been an intentional move on the part of the government: "because people were just thoroughly confused and I think in part that's a tactic, there are strategies that are initiated with those sorts of things in mind: keep the public confused to the point where they just throw their hands up and go 'you know what, it's too hard for me to understand'" (PR-1).

In addition to the lack of information available when government and industry introduced LNG projects, my interviewees noted the lack of a public forum in which to discuss and learn about the proposals. One person spoke about an experience attending an information session for the Aurora LNG project; they anticipated a neutral space for community members to access unbiased information about the proposal, however, they described the session as "yet another forum for industry to present its point of view" (PR-7). My interviewees wanted government to change the current industry-led model of public meetings; in speaking about the PNW LNG project, one person shared how "we've been asking for more engagement, for them to not let proponents do these open houses anymore … For the BC environmental assessment office to host public meetings and have it be a public forum, a true public forum around projects" (N-13).

Several interviewees noted that when conversation did happen amongst community members it tended to happen online; they spoke about how much debate in the community over LNG projects happened on Facebook, where there was little accountability:

> There's this very aggressive attitude from people online, on Facebook. If you don't believe what they believe and if you're against the industry it's this aggressive shut-you-down way of talking. People can insult you on the internet really easily, right, because they're not in your face; they don't know you and they don't have to be nice. Part of it could be how language comes across because there's no pronunciation with written words but a lot of it is meant to shut you up (PR-9).

The nature of the conversation, and in particular how much of it happened online, really impacted the people I spoke with: it enraged some and led to further division within the community. People who were pro-LNG in the region staunchly supported the economic

arguments; one interviewee recalled a conversation with an LNG supporter who told her: "'How dare you feel differently, how dare you be against jobs, I need the job how dare you be against that.' [My interviewee responded by saying] 'What the fuck, you're saying your job is more important than my fucking kid's life?'" (PR-9). This demonstrates how personal and emotionally driven the nature of the conversation was. People I spoke with lamented the fact that there were no democratic spaces in which community members could discuss the potential costs and benefits of the project, where there would be accountability and due process. In this way, both the lack of information and the lack of forums to raise and discuss questions and concerns were major sources of contention and resistance to the project.

The emotional labour, time, energy and resources needed to oppose industrial projects was another theme that emerged from my interviews. One person, in speaking about their experiences with Aurora LNG project, highlighted the community-level burdens associated with resisting LNG: "We live here, the main impacts affect us …We have a community of 40 people, we don't have a government that's earning revenue, there is no money to pay for stuff, it's a volunteer system. Do deal with this project was volunteer. It was insane, it basically consumed 3 years of our life to deal with it" (PR-9).

Many people I spoke with also expressed their frustration with the environmental assessment process. Much has been written about the inadequacies of the environmental assessment at both a provincial and federal level (Baker & Westman, 2018; Van Hinte, Gunton, & Day, 2007; West Coast Environmental Law, 2018) and currently, both the BCEAA and CEAA are undergoing revisions. The purpose of this section is not to critique BCEAA or CEAA but to show that environmental assessment processes were a focal point of contention for communities. The following quote exemplifies this:

> We realized how flawed the environmental assessment process was: when you have peer-reviewed journaled science that gets dismissed because it's contradictory to the science that the proponent put forward, that's ass backwards and the science that the proponent put forward was not peer reviewed, it wasn't journaled. That was really harsh to see how they just change the game, no matter – we're going to deal with them around science: 'we're not going to accept your peer-review journaled super high-end science that is celebrated all over the world except by our government'. Oh ok. Well then, we're going to have 135 of Canada's greatest wild salmon scientists all comment on that – 'oh well

> we're just going to disregard that'. If that doesn't work then we're going to deal with the fact that your policy is really fucked, because we were dealing with salmon habitat. 'Oh well we're going to remove salmon habitat out of the fisheries act so now we don't have to protect salmon habitat anymore.' All these different things, we're just holding you accountable to your own laws. Then it was like 'well we'll just change our laws.' You can't put a pipeline through a class A park, 'well we're going to change our park act so now you can put pipelines and right of way through parks.' They did that too (N-12).

Another factor of contention lay in the professional reliance model. First implemented as part of a deregulation spree in the early 2000s, professional reliance permits the government to outsource management of the natural environment to "qualified professionals" (Page, 2018). The BC government defines professional reliance as "the practice of accepting and relying upon the decisions and advice of professionals who accept responsibility and can be held accountable for the decisions they make and the advice they give" (Nikiforuk, 2017). According to the Executive Director of Ecojustice – an environmental law charity - it is "clear that the government's practice of outsourcing its responsibility to protect natural resources to "qualified professionals" has been a failure… the current model is not working in the public or environmental interest" (Page, 2018).

Speaking about LNG projects proposed for the northwest, one interviewee noted that: "When we started the process, I stupidly thought the government assesses the project. No, the proponent hires people like Stantec, tells them what they want to assess, tells them how to assess it, gets the reports from Stantec, reads it through, takes the information they want and puts it in front of the BC government" (PR-9).[9] People spoke about how they want the EA process to change and that "independent science is key. There's no faith in it because it's all proponent-led and driven. And we've seen a lot of manipulation - Pacific NorthWest LNG was a classic example of incompetent science and manipulating models and that sort of stuff to get the outcome they wanted" (N-13). An interviewee highlighted how the proponent's air quality assessment for the Aurora LNG project was another example of the flaws with the professional reliance model:

[9] This interviewee is speaking about the Aurora LNG project

> They used Stantec and some other guys and we looked at their analysis, knowing that NO2 [nitrogen dioxide - a pollutant] was a serious issue there and would have been one of the most serious problems. We really looked at that closely and found that they had done a miscalculation: they measured the stacks at 10% when they really should have been measured at 30%. We hired an expert to confirm it (PR-5).

With firsthand experience of how these environmental assessments were manipulated by the proponent, the professional reliance model became a site of contention for my interviewees:

> It became really blatant in terms of the Petronas project as to how the science was being conducted and what poor standard it was being conducted. So it became a focal point for us - those who were opposing it - to go after the continued lack of science, or the continued depth of the science, or the lack of utilizing scientific principles and protocol. Really very poorly done (PR-1).

The above quotes speak to my interviewees' frustration with the EA process. They also expressed their discontent with how government approved the PNW LNG project despite widespread awareness that the project posed serious threat to the region:

> Resources Canada [was] saying 'no significant damage to the salmon populations if we destroy the Flora Bank'. And all the First Nations went 'are you kidding'. And the sedimentologist hired by Lax Kw'alaams said 'are you kidding'… Every scientist who was consulted knew there was something suspicious about that finding. When finally they admitted there would be some environmental effects, three ministers flew out here on a Friday afternoon, stood on the bank of the Fraser River in Richmond and said: 'notwithstanding the fact that there will be some significant impacts to the environment up there, we approve the project' (S-17).

The federal approval of the PNW LNG was disappointing for many of my interviewees; they felt that industry and government manipulated models to get the results they wanted, to the detriment of the community.

This section has demonstrated how frustrated my interviewees were with the way LNG was proposed in the region; they felt that government and industry did not provide communities with sufficient information about the LNG industry, nor did they adequately address people's concerns about the projects' potential impact to Skeena salmon. The following quote highlights these concerns well:

> Had [the] provincial government acted a bit more responsibly in terms of how it rolled this thing out, they might have actually gotten one or two LNG projects going and may have actually had them reasonably sustainable, if you want to use that term at all. They didn't, they yelled 'gold rush! opened up the doors to industry, provided all sorts of incentives and in they rushed. Had they come to us earlier and said: 'listen, we think this might be an integral part of the economy of this province, we'd like to pursue it to some degree, what are your thoughts in terms of how would be best to go about this. Where would you think a good place would be locate these types of things, how should we go about it, who needs to be a part of the discussions and how are we going to structure this in governance?' That didn't happen. The previous government had no intention of working with anyone to be perfectly honest other than their buddies. That created a lot of tension right from the word go. And we just all went hold on, you can't be doing that, that's an extremely important piece to us, both socially and culturally and economically - those fish mean a lot. And where you're proposing to put this first facility is right in the most important piece of this: Yes, the headwaters are important, that's where they hatch. Yes, the ocean is importance because that's where they rear, but this estuary is where they change from fresh to salt water and without that, those other two things are irrelevant (PR-1).

Flaws in the approval processes, the exclusion of effective public engagement, and a decision-making process that failed to respond to community needs were defining grounds for opposition.

5.6 Climate

> *"The fact that it was going to be the biggest climate polluter in Canadian history was fairly easy to communicate … world renowned salmon and climate scientists spoke out so we just amplified their message about the risks" (N-13).*

Some—but not all—of my interviewees mentioned the climate implications of the project; those who did speak on it tended to be more focused on audiences outside of the region. For the people I spoke with who asserted that the climate impacts of the project were a major issue, the government's promises and actions were regarded as a focal point of contention. As one person noted:

> We made a conscious decision to be like 'this is about climate change' because Justin Trudeau was still talking such a big talk on it and had just come out with this climate plan. We have to reduce emissions by

> 200 mega tonnes and you're going to add 13 mega tonnes to that? That's completely the wrong direction (S-18).

At the provincial, federal and international level, politicians committed to lofty climate targets; the LNG terminals posed for North Coast were regarded as being directly contradictory to BC's and Canada's climate targets: "This proposal was big enough that media would ask me 'can this actually sink Canada's efforts for its climate commitment?' 'Yes, yes, it absolutely can … If this facility was to be built and was still operating in 2050 nobody else in British Columbia would be able to pollute.' You can't make square that math" (S-18). Due to these political contradictions, interviewees directed their contempt at the government by critiquing their decisions and their inability to justify how an LNG industry in the province would allow the province to meet its climate targets. With this, people organized to hold their politicians accountable:

> We have to get that message across that climate targets can't just be something that governments set and then ignore. And that's happened over and over again with every government of every stripe in Canada and really around the world and it's unacceptable at a time when the climate crisis is spiraling out of control… You can't continue this tradition of setting ambitious targets and then failing to meet them completely (S-18).

People I spoke with who were a part of environmental groups in both the northwest and the south dedicated significant time, resources and energy to debunking the myths that these projects were "green". As one person noted: "the numbers are pretty clear – when you add it all up – it's a climate negative, big time" (S-16).

While provincial groups campaigned on the climate implications of PNW LNG, so too did local groups. One environmental group really looked into the climate emissions so they could inform their supporters about how destructive LNG projects are:

> When you start adding up the climate emissions from LNG, there are several studies at the time that were saying that it would be as bad or maybe even worse [than coal], depending on the leaks. Of course, what they did was compare the carbon dioxide emissions from natural gas, not LNG, but natural gas. So if you frack gas in northeastern BC and then you burn it in a turbine to create electricity, it's about half of the carbon dioxide emissions as if it you burn coal to create electricity. So it's true in a sense that natural gas is cleaner than coal in terms of carbon dioxide emissions, but they completely ignored the fact that there are all

> these methane leaks, and methane is a much more potent climate polluter than carbon dioxide. So when you actually add in the methane leaks, studies out of the US now are estimating 10% or more of the natural gas that they're fracking and putting into pipelines is leaking, so it's just going into the atmosphere. So when you add that in, it's comparable to coal in terms of climate emissions. It's cleaner in terms of air pollution but for climate emissions it's about the same. And some more recent studies are saying it's even worse than coal in terms of climate emissions. Of course they weren't also adding in the fact that when you've turned it to LNG you're burning huge volumes of gas, you're piping it further distances, you're loading it on to ships, some of that gas is warming up and you have to off gas it as you cross the Pacific Ocean to Asia, you have to re-gasify it in Asia, you have to ship it again through pipelines in Asia, so if you add all that sort of stuff up you're probably looking at climate emissions that are worse than coal, much worse than coal in some cases. So, the whole 'cleanest LNG in the world' is a sham, right. And they spun it in their favour, like I said, only looked at carbon dioxide emissions, ignored the methane (N-13).

Overall there was an emphasis on holding government accountable for the climate impacts of PNW LNG. Communicating these risks to others was a priority for some of the environmental groups I spoke with.

6. Discussion

This research examines why my interviewees opposed the Pacific NorthWest LNG and found that their resistance was embedded in concerns about protecting salmon and ecosystems, economic diversification, democratic process, Indigenous rights and title, and climate impacts. A common theme that emerged from my interviews was a concern for place. One interviewee conceptualized their experience opposing extractive industry in the region "as an eye opener"; the following quote speaks to one interviewees experience with the Northern Gateway pipeline hearings "It was a really important, in terms of giving the whole region a cohesiveness in a way. I went to all the community hearings and it was kind of an eye opener for me too, to see how people feel about this place, the deep connection people have to the place" (N-10). Another interviewee spoke about how diverse groups bond over a shared love for the region:

> There's a real sense of [Indigenous] sovereignty here. On top of that you have really quirky settlers who are 4th generation ranchers or they are draft dodgers or back-to-the-landers, or folks who have a real investment in the land. A project like this has really brought together all those

> disparate communities around 'regardless of who you are and why you want the land intact, we all want the land and water intact' (N-11).

People's commitment to place and the role place plays in fuelling opposition to projects has been documented elsewhere. Devine-Wright's (2011, 2013) work emphasizes the importance of place attachment—the emotional bonds people have to places—when examining community responses to energy projects. Stedman (2002) further asserts that "we are willing to fight for places that are central to our identities" (p. 577). These emotional bonds speak to community values, and the desire to protect those values. Experience, local history, and connection to place have all been documented as key sources of resistance (Bell, Gray, Haggett, & Swaffield, 2013; Taylor, 2008; van der Horst & Vermeylen, 2011).

In the case of PNW LNG, employing a place attachment lens allows us to better understand my interviewees' values and how they fought to have those values recognized by government and industry. Opposition emerged because a model of development was proposed for the region that did not match community member's values; resistance was not about saying 'no' to development, it was about saying 'yes' to place. People's connections to place were clearly at play in the PNW LNG case, suggesting that any pathway forward for economic or industrial development in the region must take these into consideration to ensure that proposals are responsive to both community concerns and to people's relationships to place, and thus have the potential to garner community support.

My findings on this point are consistent with other research which notes that "communities' impulse for place protection often articulates with other, broader concerns, including skepticism that regional governments and outside project proponents will understand or be motivated to pay sufficient attention to community notions of place" (Shaw et al., 2015, p. 42). My interviewees came to distrust the government's capacity to respect their values, or protect the place they call home:

> You're asking us to take all of the risks – which seem rather significant – and get none of the rewards. Fuck you. I left that meeting and that's when my whole world came crumbling down because my family are rednecks, full on … That was the moment when a big serious part of my foundation was just crumbled away because I always believed that people who

> protested development - like those wild crazy green-peacers - were just tree hugging, dope sucking freaks who didn't have a lick of common sense. Maybe they were book educated but they didn't know anything about living in the bush and that no government or company could ever do the things that some of these wing nuts accused them of doing. They wouldn't still be government, they wouldn't still be in existence as a company. How could they possibly get away with that kind of stuff. It was at that moment when I [realized] governments do make bad decisions, whether they intend to or not, and corporations do not have the communities' best interest at heart. And that was a serious eye opener for me (N-12).

Had the government proposed another location for the PNW LNG project, some interviewees argued, the same level of opposition would not have emerged. Rather than meaningfully address community concerns to the PNW LNG project, the government dismissed opposition to PNW LNG as the "forces of no." As Christy Clark stated: "I'm not sure what science the forces of no bring together up there except that it's not really about the science. It's not really about the fish. It's just about trying to say no. It's about fear of change. It's about a fear of the future" (quoted in Gill, 2016). Christy Clark's words greatly impacted communities, and the reverberating implications of her words should not be understated:

> We have a Liberal premier who thinks it's OK to publicly discount people with dissenting views. Clark went out of her way to demonize a whole segment of her constituents, stigmatizing their beliefs, their passions, their genuine concerns, and their heartfelt vision for a prosperous future for their families, as nothing more than NIMBYism (quoted in Gill, 2016).

As noted above, the provincial government ultimately framed opposition to PNW LNG as a form of NIMBYism. NIMBYism refers to a community's refusal of a project based on local or aesthetic impacts, regardless of the public good of the project (Shaw et al., 2015). Burningham (2000) notes how the charge is used by government "as a succinct way of discrediting project opponents" (Burningham, 2000, p. 55). Furthermore, framing opposition as NIMBY politics problematizes actions taken by residents that in other contexts might be regarded as helping to build sustainable communities (McClymont & O'Hare, 2008). My findings show that Christy Clark's framing fundamentally misrepresented the conflict, and that her government failed to adequately address community concerns.

Researchers have acknowledged that concerns over the actions and inactions of government and industry are known to motivate opposition to energy projects; recent work suggests:

> That communities perceive that governments at provincial and federal levels are pursuing energy projects for purposes of capital development and, as such, governments are seen as advocates for the developments rather than neutral arbiters of social interest. As a result, many communities doubt that governments have the intention or capacity to guarantee fairness and protect natural and social values over the long term (Shaw et al., 2015, p. 42).

Critically examining the resistance that formed around the PNW LNG proposal sheds light on the inadequate governance of energy projects on the part of the provincial government, and the affected communities' desire to be more involved in decision-making processes. A local grassroots organization that was actively involved in resisting the PNW LNG project "began out of a desire to see regional and local voices included more in decision-making. So, when it comes to major decisions that will impact the people who live here, we believe – as the people who live here – we should be the ones making those decisions." (Upstream Media, 2016). Extractive industries have shaped, and continue to shape, northern BC; while it is undeniable that economic development is needed in the region, any new proposals for the region must be attentive to community dynamics. Engagement with the affected community must be a part of any solution.

7. Conclusion

Studies affirm that resistance to energy projects is fuelled by more than an aesthetic dislike, and that other factors are pivotal in shaping resistance (Burningham, 2000; Devine-Wright, 2011, 2013; McClymont & O'Hare, 2008; Shaw et al., 2015; van der Horst, 2007). My research contributes to this growing body of literature that characterizes opposition to energy projects as more than NIMBY politics. My findings reveal that, if we are to successfully navigate the scale of transitions we are facing, it is important to understand what is at stake for communities, and why resistance to energy projects emerges. This need is especially acute in the case study examined here, in which the political leadership of the day explicitly failed to engage with the community concerns that led to the resistance that formed around the Pacific NorthWest LNG project. This

failure on the part of leadership is not one that should be replicated by researchers: insofar as researchers seek to contribute to building sustainable communities, or climate solutions that work for local communities, we need to better understand the details about why communities resist carbon-intensive projects, and what that says about the priorities of the community.

Extractivism in Canada has shaped rural areas in particular ways; many communities are becoming increasingly aware of the limitations of extractive industries and are seeking to develop a more sustainable way forward. Markey, Halseth, & Manson (2012) argue that the economic future of the region must include everyone in northern BC and must respect the quality of life and environmental foundation on which those people, places, and cultures are based. While rural economic development literature notes the impacts that government policy has on communities, there is little emphasis on the role of resistance, either specifically in shaping outcomes for industry, or more generally on communities themselves. My work seeks to address this gap: critical examination of resistance movements is crucial; it is important to listen to local voices and consider their broader implications. Given the current need to drastically shift our energy systems, these are particularly important considerations: if we do not listen to local concerns, we will instead provoke gridlock rather than collaborative solutions.

My findings speak to how complex and nuanced resistance to extractive industries is. By speaking with those affected by the project, my research debunks the myth that opposition amounted to the "forces of no." My findings also speak to how PNW LNG was not conceptualized as being only or primarily a climate issue, even though PNW LNG would have been BC's largest single-source emitters of GHG emissions. This is an important insight for those working in climate justice movements – it is problematic to conceptualize resistance to fossil fuel infrastructure as being solely or even primarily a climate issue; painting it as such runs the risk of failing to understand local concerns. Rather we need to understand local priorities and commitments, and shape climate change strategies, and economic development, in dialogue with them.

Chapter 3:
"Bringing Solutions Forward"

This chapter is written as a stand-alone article intended for publication in the journal Local Environment.

1. Introduction

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon states climate change to be the greatest challenge humanity has ever faced (Goldenberg, 2011). While grappling with tough questions of how we should—or indeed, *if* we should—continue to extract and export fossil fuels, the push to expand the fossil fuel industry continues in BC, as exemplified by the efforts to establish a large liquified natural gas (LNG) industry. Over the past decade, the Province of British Columbia aggressively sought to expand production of shale gas in the northeast of the province in part by catalyzing an LNG export industry on the West Coast, leading to a plethora of proposals for pipelines, liquefaction facilities and export terminals.

One of these proposals was the Pacific NorthWest LNG export terminal on Tsimshian territory, south of Prince Rupert in northern British Columbia. If constructed, Pacific NorthWest (PNW) LNG would have been the largest single point source of greenhouse gas emissions in all of Canada (Wilt, 2016). PNW LNG, like other LNG projects, was proposed as a climate solution by the Liberal government, and resistance to it was often portrayed as being about climate (Brend, 2017; Hernandez, 2016; Kniewasser et al., 2016; Wilt, 2016). However, it was neither a climate solution nor resisted at a local level primarily for climate reasons, as the previous chapter has demonstrated. We know that climate change is a huge challenge, but actually addressing it requires effective solutions that work at a local level (Devine-Wright, 2011, 2013; Phadke, 2011; van der Horst, 2007; Wüstenhagen, Wolsink, & Bürer, 2007). This chapter seeks to analyze some of the priorities expressed in my interviewees' opposition to PNW LNG, and the wider implications of these priorities in particular for those seeking to craft climate solutions that are supportive of and supported by local communities.

While the sources of resistance varied, local concerns included potential impacts of the export terminal on salmon, issues related to Indigenous rights and title, and the

perceived failure of the decision-making process to effectively engage the concerns of the local communities.

This research explores the broader context that both motivated and was revealed by the resistance to LNG, so as to better understand the priorities and potentials embedded in these communities. It is crucial to read the political through specific sites, and examine the convergence of global trends and local struggles (Magnusson & Shaw, 2003). In focusing on the PNW LNG case, I seek to show how the local contexts are shaping the possibilities for either industrial development or climate change action in the region. In doing so, I provide a brief historical overview of the region, my research methods and how I approached the project, then I present my findings. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of this research.

2. Critical Context[10]

In 2013, the Malaysian state-owned energy company Petronas proposed to construct and operate the $36-billion Pacific NorthWest (PNW) natural gas liquefaction and export terminal on Lelu Island in northwest British Columbia. Lelu Island is located near Prince Rupert, in Tsimshian territory. A 900 km pipeline – the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission pipeline – was planned to connect the PNW LNG terminal with fracked gas from the Montney gas fields in northeast BC. Once at the terminal, the natural gas would be liquefied then loaded on to tankers for export to Asian markets. The Government of British Columbia, under the Liberals, had been enthusiastically promoting the development of an LNG industry and approved the project in July 2015, while the federal government showed their support of the project with their approval in September 2016. Despite this political support, and in the face of substantial resistance to the proposal, in July of 2017 the proponent cancelled the project, citing poor market conditions (The Canadian Press, 2017)

In Prince Rupert, the host city for the terminal, the PNW LNG project proved to be very divisive (Kelly & Morgan, 2016). Those who supported the project welcomed its potential economic benefits, which at the time of cancellation would have amounted to

[10] The following content contains some overlap the Energy Development in BC section in Chapter 1 and the Critical Context section in Chapter 2. It is included here as this chapter is intended to be stand-alone piece.

the largest private sector investment in Canada (Trumpener, 2016). Local concerns about the project varied; some key sources of resistance included threats to salmon populations, the involvement of First Nations, and issues with the decision-making process. My research explores these concerns as region-specific, yet connected to and the product of wider global forces.

Biersack (2006) speaks to how global forces drastically shape local places, and how even subsistence communities do not exist in equilibrium or isolation, but rather are part of a world system that is impacted by markets, social inequalities, and political conflicts: "Place is … the grounded site of local-global articulation and interaction" (p. 16). The introduction of an LNG industry in Prince Rupert must be understood as nested within this intersection of global and local forces. The community of Prince Rupert has been shaped by global processes, but of course also by the particularities of the local context. The response to the PNW LNG proposal reveals some of the dynamics inherent in this interaction, and as such, offers insights into the landscape that climate "solutions" must navigate if they are both to be accepted by local communities and to support these communities' capacity to thrive.

A community of 12,000 people, Prince Rupert has historically depended on resource and extraction-based industries with economic growth made possible by the dispossession of Indigenous people from their land. Colonization of the region arose through exploitation of resources that had been stewarded for millennia by Indigenous peoples. Since first contact with European peoples, "the North Coast has been a cauldron of extractive industries" (Menzies, 2015, p. 8). The extraction of the region's wealth first came in the form of fur, fish, forests (Menzies & Butler, 2008). More recently mining has been the focus of extraction, and—as indicated by the proposed introduction of the LNG terminal—the ambition of the provincial government is that oil and gas will be the new export commodities.

Extractive industries have played integral roles in shaping the socio-economic landscape of the northwest; these industries have enriched the province and its economic "hubs" in urban areas, while rural areas – such as Prince Rupert – have borne the burden of extraction. Extraction can result in ecological degradation (Garvie et al., 2014; Spice, 2018), impacts to clean water (Parfitt, 2017), risks to public health (E. Hughes, 2017),

and various socio-economic impacts on local communities (Stokes, Marshall, & Veiga, 2019). While most northern BC communities are dependent on staples-based economies (Markey, Halseth, & Manson, 2012), the specific contours of resource dependency are unique in different places. Although rich in resources, Prince Rupert—and much of the north—have consistently witnessed the bulk of this resource wealth leave their communities, heading elsewhere to support development in other places, namely urban centres such as Vancouver.

In order to understand the LNG project in-situ, it is important to understand the industries which have shaped this place: primarily forestry and fishing. I will explore each briefly to give context to the PNW LNG proposal and resistance. The forest industry has been a mainstay of the British Columbian economy for over a century, although it has frequently been criticized for centralizing the benefits of the industry and leaving communities not well supported (M'Gonigle & Parfitt, 1994; Marchak, 1995; J. Wilson, 1998). Forests are managed provincially, and BC is unusual in that 95% of forests are 'Crown' forests (Luckert, Haley, & Hoberg, 2011). Industrial forestry has typically consisted of high-volume and low-value-added export-oriented production, as well as large-scale clearcuts (McCarthy, 2006a). Forest governance since the end of World War Two has been largely corporatist, with affected parties being excluded from formal governance processes while the provincial Ministry of Forests and timber corporations meet behind closed doors (McCarthy, 2006a). The environmental impacts of mismanaged forests include overharvesting, habitat destruction, impacts to watersheds and a decline in fish populations, reductions in old growth forests, and fragmentation of wild landscapes (M'Gonigle et al., 2001). Concerns have also been raised regarding the failure of government to replant forests to ensure a healthy forestry industry into the future (MacLeod, 2012).

Numerous important moves to oppose poor forestry practice have been made in recent decades in the province: landmark events include First Nations resistance to logging and assertion of Indigenous rights on Lyell Island, Haida Gwaii, in 1985, and Indigenous resistance in Gitxsan and Wet'suwet'en territories in the 1980s which culminated in the landmark Delgamuukw decision of 1997. Furthermore, widespread opposition to old growth logging on Vancouver Island in the early 1990s, which became

known as the "War in the Woods," garnered international attention (Braun, 2002; Magnusson & Shaw, 2003; J. Wilson, 1998). In response to these actions, the NDP government reformed forestry policy across the province; in 1994 the Forest Practices Code was introduced, which had more stringent forestry regulations than seen before (Pierce, 2018). However, the BC Liberals came to power in 2003 and began deregulating the forest industry; forestry management under the BC Liberal government instead brought neoliberal policies that reduced the size of staff, oversight, and environmental monitoring (Carroll, Stephenson, & Shaw, 2012; McCarthy, 2006a). Prince Rupert and surrounding communities have not been spared from these dynamics; the forest industry, a consistent employer in the region, was hard-hit by neoliberal policies, resulting in mill closures in the early 2000s.

Fisheries are another key industry for Prince Rupert, with widespread participation in the fishing industry by both Indigenous and settler residents in the region. In Canada, fisheries are managed federally through the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The DFO has been criticized for its management practices; depletion of fish stocks, a lack of accurate information about fisheries, a lack of transparency, and poor management within the DFO have also been documented (Baum & Fuller, 2016). Overfishing in commercial and recreational fisheries has pushed salmon stocks in BC near collapse (Price, Darimont, Temple, & MacDuffee, 2008). In 2013, low returns of salmon runs led to an unparalleled shutdown of First Nations fisheries on the Skeena River, and to closures of fisheries which offer essential food and employment to many families in the northwest.

Despite fisheries being a public resource, the federal government has increasingly passed on its fisheries management responsibilities to license and quota owners by supporting the large-scale privatization and consolidation of access to fish (Ecotrust Canada & T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, 2018). As the cost of purchasing quota has skyrocketed in recent years, economic gains have been concentrated in the hands of wealthy individuals and corporations, to the detriment of small-scale fish harvesters, First Nations, and coastal communities (Ibid). As a direct result of these government policies, increasingly coastal communities have minimal access to, or benefit from, this resource, and 85-90% of Canadian seafood is exported (Ibid). These are not

solely economic losses; these changes have also resulted in a loss of social capital and culture:

> A generation of young people on the BC coast face insurmountable barriers to entering marine fisheries that once were at the centre of family and community life on the coast. Instead, with valuable licences and quota in the hands of a wealthy few, the future of our fisheries is a centralized corporate large boat fishing fleet that is the antithesis of the diversity and community engagement that used to be a hallmark of coastal small boat fisheries (Ecotrust Canada & T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, 2018, p. 5).

The traditional industries of the coast are struggling; while environmental changes have impacted forestry and fisheries, as seen with the rapid spread of the mountain pine beetle, wildfires, and warming ocean temperatures, it is also staggeringly clear that poor policy and government mismanagement has resulted in a monumental decline in both forestry and fisheries resources in BC in recent decades and that these changes have negatively impacted communities.

In British Columbia, the fishing and forestry industries should have been managed in a way as to safeguard these resource's continued sustainability; this pattern of exploitation—of overharvesting, and organizing the industry such that distant others benefit from resources extracted locally—creates a feeling of vulnerability in communities. When these "busts" appear to be the consequence of mismanagement of what should have been renewable resources, this builds a sense of distrust of the government (Ommer, 2007; Stocks, 2017; E. Wilson & Stammler, 2016). Integral to this distrust is the centuries-long colonization of Indigenous people, and their systematic exclusion from access to the economy, from meaningful decision-making about or access to their lands, and thus from the capacity for their communities to thrive (Lutz, 2008; Menzies & Butler, 2008).

2.1 The introduction of LNG

The decline of the region's traditional industries partially motivated the strong government push to establish a new extractive industry: shale gas development in northeast BC, with the corresponding LNG liquefaction and export industry in northwest BC. The former Premier of BC, Christy Clark, called LNG an economic opportunity that could transform the province (Renshaw, 2014). Clark predicted an economic boom with

the expansion of natural gas extraction and large-scale LNG export terminals; campaigning in the 2013 provincial election, she stated that an LNG sector would pay off the provincial debt and create more than 100,000 jobs (Zussman, 2016). The possibility of building government revenue, through royalty payments, without having to increase taxes, was very appealing to the Liberals, who were strongly neoliberal in their policy orientation.

In addition to emphasizing the economic potentials of LNG, the Liberal government simultaneously positioned the LNG industry as an effective way to fight climate change. Christy Clark stated that PNW LNG would reduce global greenhouse gas emissions (Gilchrist, 2017) and consistently claimed that exporting LNG "is the greatest single step we can take to fight climate change" by claiming that LNG would displace coal in Asia (Horne & MacNab, 2014). Although these claims were heavily contested (Gillis, 2015; Horne & MacNab, 2014; Howarth, Santoro, & Ingraffea, 2011; Newell & Mulvaney, 2013; Pembina Institute, 2013), Clark's decisive win in the 2013 election was interpreted by the Liberals as a strong mandate for their plan to ramp up this industry.[11]

In some ways the introduction of a new LNG industry to a community like Prince Rupert seemed unproblematic: it potentially offered jobs and economic development to a region in need of an economic boost. However, it also came with risks for the community, in particular of reinforcing boom-bust dynamics in such a resource-dependent town (Stokes et al., 2019) and numerous ecological threats. Perhaps most crucially, such a development had the potential to extend a particular relationship between the local and global that was already showing some strain locally.

Despite some regional support for the project, opposition to PNW LNG emerged, focusing on a number of concerns. As described in Chapter 2, much of the opposition was place-based and concentrated in potentially affected communities, although there was NGO-driven resistance more widely. There was skepticism about the local benefits,

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[11] The climate impacts of developing an LNG industry in BC are multi-scalar. For the community of Prince Rupert air pollution was a large concern: the pollution associated with liquefying natural gas is high as the liquefaction process (cooling gas to -162 degrees) is very energy intensive and requires burning large amounts of natural gas. The northeast of BC, the upstream impacts of increasing natural gas production include habitat destruction, water quality and quantity concerns, and increased carbon pollution – notably high methane emissions. Finally, while not counted in BC's emissions calculations, it is important to consider the implications of burning LNG in Asia.

and concerns were raised about the efficacy of the consultative processes by noting the failure of both industry and government representatives to adequately consult with or respond to concerns raised by local communities. At a local level, those who opposed the PNW LNG project noted the negative impacts it would have on local ecosystems, most notably, vital salmon habitats. The export terminal was to be built on Lelu Island, at the mouth of the second largest salmon producing river in Canada, the Skeena River. Adjacent to Lelu Island is Flora Bank, an offshore area rich in eelgrass which is critical habitat for migrating Skeena salmon. The site location posed a threat to vulnerable fisheries, to local subsistence harvesters of salmon, and to the regional economy, as the Skeena salmon industry contributes $110 million to the regional economy each year (Hume, 2016). Additionally, issues were raised about the colonial natural resource decision-making frameworks; the PNW LNG project proposal was very divisive in First Nations communities and raised serious questions concerning Indigenous rights and title (Kelly & Morgan, 2016).

Much misunderstanding and mis-characterization exists around what was at stake for those who opposed the terminal. The multifaceted local resistance explored above was reshaped by the Premier of BC when she labelled those who opposed the PNW LNG project as "the forces of no:" My research uncovers a more complex configuration of motivations behind the opposition to PNW LNG. As I argue, opposition to LNG should be understood not as an example of NIMBYism — a small-minded rejection of any change to local contexts — but rather at least in part as an effort to move away from export-oriented capitalism and towards building more diverse and resilient economies. This chapter explores these latter visions and priorities, in order to understand how these local priorities and visions might be better engaged and potentially realized. This context raises the questions that drive this chapter: many in the local community did not see the proposed LNG terminal as offering a solution to their challenges, and indeed saw it as threatening things they treasured very much. This chapter sheds light on my interviewees' priorities, and speaks to how respecting these priorities can help us craft effective climate solutions moving forward.

3. Methods[12]

After doing background research on the case in the form of a media and grey literature review, I conducted three weeks of field work in 2018. Over this time, I spoke with eighteen individuals who were affiliated with opposition to the Pacific NorthWest LNG project, or other industrial projects in the region. Nine interviewees lived in Prince Rupert and five throughout northwestern BC (Kitimat, Terrace, Hazelton and Smithers). As well, four were based in southern BC (Vancouver, Victoria, Salt Spring Island) and worked for larger environmental organizations. I often talk about the northwest as if it's a homogenous region, but that is not the case: each locale is different – as evidenced with other coastal communities' support for different LNG terminal proposals. It is important to note that many of my interviewees were from Prince Rupert, where this terminal was to be located, and the bulk of the analysis in this chapter draws from those interviews. So, for example, the importance of fisheries in Prince Rupert and in relation to this proposed terminal would not necessarily apply to other proposals located in different communities.

Research was done using snowball sampling through referrals. I elected to speak with people who had grassroots experience resisting the PNW LNG, or other industrial project, in order to learn first-hand about the sources of resistance, and about why opposition to the project emerged the way it did. All interviews were conducted with informed consent, were recorded, and transcribed verbatim. Interviews were coded and analyzed for emergent themes using NVivo, a qualitative software package.

The aim of my research was not to produce generalizable results; my research did not seek to obtain a cross section of the population, nor a comprehensive view of people's feelings about the PNW LNG project, nor LNG in general. Rather my aim was to explore the views and experiences of those individuals who were involved in opposing the project. I wish to emphasize that my research speaks to why opposing PNW LNG was important *for those who resisted the project*, not for the region as a whole.

It is also important to note that this research does not speak to Indigenous responses to the PNW LNG project; while some of my interviewees are Indigenous, they were approached because of their involvement with resistance to the proposal. They were not

[12] The following content is substantially similar to the Methods section in Chapter 1 and in Chapter 2. It is included here as this chapter is intended to be stand-alone piece.

speaking on behalf of their communities, organizations, or Indigenous people generally. Finally, this research is exploratory; the subject of resistance to PNW LNG demands more research.

4. Findings

The first part of this section explores the insights of my interviewees based in Prince Rupert; in particular I present their reflections on the recent history of their community and the socio-economic implications of the region's traditional industries slowing down. This leads into a discussion about resource dependency and boom-bust economies. I then explore how the current model of export-oriented resource development has left rural communities feeling economically vulnerable, and due to the perceived mismanagement of the region's resources, people too felt distrustful of the government. What became clear in my interviews was that local opposition to LNG was grounded in a desire to transition away from export-oriented capitalism and towards building diverse economies where the benefits of resources would stay in community. The findings conclude with an exploration of my interviewees' visions for the future of their communities, and how they are seeking to realize these visions.

4.1 Resource Dependency

The economy of Prince Rupert, which was built primarily on forestry and fisheries, has experienced drastic downturns in both industries in recent decades. The historical legacy of these industries was very present in my interviews, and provides an important place to begin the analysis of resistance to PNW LNG. The following quotes provide historical reflections from long-time residents of Prince Rupert. When asked if much has changed in Prince Rupert in recent decades, one interviewee responded:

> For sure. I remember growing up, the town was always busy; there were no empty store fronts in the mall or downtown like you see today. Fishing was big, logging was big, the port industry was almost non-existent. Fishing and logging were the main industries. There's been a decline in both and there's been an uptake in the port industry. What was the last straw for Prince Rupert was the pulp mill closing down and it devastated a lot of families and it devastated the economy … I've seen the population shift from close to 18 000 down to 11 000 in a short period of time (PR-2).

> The pulp mill closed down in the 90s; it was the biggest employer here. So what happens when you have a big industrial employer in a small town -

> they closed down a lot of the small businesses, property values tank because people can't make their mortgage payments. People were losing equity because they couldn't keep up (PR-7).

My interviewees witnessed the decline of fishing and logging, they spoke about how these changes impacted communities on the coast; for several of my interviewees this lived experience coloured their perception of the introduction of LNG.

4.1.2 Fisheries

While the forestry industry is managed at the provincial level, fisheries are managed federally. A central theme that emerged from my interviews in Prince Rupert relates to fisheries politics, namely the downturn of the industry and the implications of government mismanagement. While the downturn of the fishing industry impacted the economy of the region, it also resulted in varying socio-economic changes in communities on the coast.

> Economics have changed in the region. The fishery is no longer the main generator of economy in the region, so there's less call for fishermen and boat builders and, that sort of things. Which is what our community has always been, it's been based around fishing and maintenance of fishing infrastructure (PR-1).

> It's the core reason why we're all here, whether we know it or not, whether we interact with it or not, whether we eat it or not, salmon is the reason why people are here and salmon is the reason this organization is here. Salmon is the backbone of all survival and industry and everything here. Whether it's symbolic or really personal and physical, it's an undeniable force here (N-11).

Fishing is not only economically relevant but is culturally integral to the coast as well. Although aspects of the fishing industry's downturn can be attributed to generalizable trends of overfishing and environmental change, many of my interviewees from Prince Rupert understood that poor management on the part of the federal government resulted in the decline of the fisheries. The perceived government mismanagement of resources created a sense of distrust amongst my interviewees, which in turn played out in the case of the PNW LNG proposal. An interviewee from Prince Rupert described how:

> 20 years ago, fisheries ministers changed the whole nature of the fisheries [which resulted in the region being] down to about a third or less of what the local fleet once was. And *that's due to primarily to policy changes and*

> *management restriction*; a lot of people just can't continue to function in the fishery anymore (PR-1, emphasis added).

Another resident of Prince Rupert noted how:

> [The] fishing industry used to be huge here, canneries all over the region … But the industry has declined a lot, partly because of policies around ownership, also a major part is because it's cheaper to process overseas. There's a trend here: exporting raw resources like fish, like wood (PR-3).

These quotes speak to my interviewee's perception that poor federal management of the fisheries negatively impacted their community. As one interviewee summarized "the feds [federal government] run the fishery but the truth is the implications of the mismanaged fishery falls to the province and the communities" (PR-1). These government policies led to a perceived sense of loss; my interviewees felt that in coastal communities, people's ability to practice self-sufficiency and be involved in decision-making had been impaired:

> We've become less self-sufficient and more beholden than we have been in the past. That also creates a lot of tension as well: people have always been independent, generated their own incomes, maintained their vessels and their enterprises, all of these things. It was quite disappointing to see how governments treated those individuals and the industry that they're a part of … Having come from the fishing industry, for years we had a degree of political clout, we had some ability to influence what was taking place but with the down turn in the industry and policy and management decisions that came into play we no longer had that strength in numbers… With the diminishment of the fishery and reductions of numbers of individuals involved in the fishery, that political clout diminished to the point where we became in many respects rather irrelevant in terms of the minds of thinking of our political leaders (PR-1).

The failure of past resource management regimes to adequately protect the northwest's resource base from over-exploitation adversely impacted my interviewees and has led to various socio-economic changes at the community level in recent years.

4.1.3 Distrust of government

Two of my interviewees in Prince Rupert who were employed in the fishing industry expressed their suspicion about the government's role in the mismanagement of the fisheries. While these interviewees did not speak explicitly of distrusting government, as the following quotes suggest there was an undercurrent of distrust and an overwhelming feeling that government was not looking out for their best interest:

> We have resources on our door step right here that have maintained this community for over 100 years, and in the case of the region, thousands of years. Had we properly managed this resource - I have to lay the responsibility at the foot of the federal government's Department of Fisheries and Oceans - we would still have that. It's my personal belief that Department of Fisheries and Oceans doesn't want to manage fish, they want out of it, the federal government wanted to get out of it under Harper. No longer did they want to manage fish, they wanted to privatize everything, so make the fishery a private fishery which is what they were doing through ITQ [individual transferable quota] structures. And that basically destroyed a lot of the region and the cohesion in the region as we lost that access to that fish. But that's an economy that exists here that is sustainable if we treat it right. We haven't. So instead what do they do? They wash their hands of it, and say well 'we're going to bring you a good industry, we're tired of these booms and bust cycles you guys go through with fish because fish have tails and they go up and down, so we'll bring you oil and gas' (PR-1).

An interviewee from Prince Rupert speculated that closing the fisheries could have been a government tactic to weaken strong aspects of society in order to pursue other resource extractive projects, which consequently led to this interviewee's further distrust of government and their ability to manage resources in a way that benefits communities. Accurate or not, this was an indicator of the level of distrust amongst community members and reveals attitudes towards the federal government:

> The commercial fishermen are the ones who have been stopping oil and gas development for decades. They are. If you just clear the [fishing] industry out of these crucial places where oil and gas has to travel, if you weaken the resistance because they don't have any income anymore, they're silenced basically and that's what's happening. They're silenced, people want jobs, and you can't blame them. When do you make the decision to give up, you're beat. And it's happening: people are giving up, they're beat (PR-5).

The above interviewee mentioned this idea – that the mismanagement of the fisheries and the introduction of LNG on the North Coast was a strategic move by government – again when they asserted "I think that industry and government shutting down the fishery is working. We're going to lose, I think we're going to have oil and gas here, I think we're losing really bad" (PR-5). Whether an accurate assessment of the government's motivations or not, these arguments reveal a level of distrust of government amongst several of my interviewees.

My interviewees emphasized the ways that the LNG industry was positioned as a much-needed remedy for unemployment in the region. "They [the government] were all acting like this [LNG] was going to be the economic saviour of British Columbia" (PR-7). My interviewees expressed their doubts about the government's estimates for the amount of employment that would be generated by the development, which contributed to their suspicion of the project. Another interviewee noted that support for LNG has: "become the same rhetoric that you hear across most of rural BC which is 'jobs, jobs, jobs.' And 'if this industry isn't here, well what will we have?' That dependence and fear-based decision-making that boom and bust economies bring" (N-11). For my interviewees, rather than an economic saviour, an LNG industry had the potential to be yet another boom-bust economy for the region.

4.1.4 Boom Bust

Because the region—and much of northern Canada—depends largely on the extraction and export of a few staple resources, the downturn of both the fishing and forestry industries led to economic vulnerability, and thus openness to new proposals for economic development. This was the context in which LNG projects were introduced on the North Coast.

> Part of what makes Chambers of Commerce and City Councils so eager [to approve LNG] is that they're trying to ensure jobs for their populace and having enough money to fix the water systems. The same old story. So when industry comes dispensing largesse and promises, it's pretty hard not to want to jump for that. Same in First Nations communities, not all of them, but you get the same divisions in First Nations communities … The pulp mill here – has anyone talked to you about that? That has been an albatross around the city's neck for 15 years. It has dragged the city down … that has been the reason why we can't fix our potholes and we can't support our library, why we need new industry – because of the cleanup that was left behind from the Skeena pulp mill. They went bankrupt, they fought in court …so the city was left with the bills (N-7).

The last part of the quote highlights the global-local dynamics present in Prince Rupert; global capital has influenced social, economic and political dimensions at the local level. The above quotes also speak to the lack of employment and income generating options in town.

Despite this need, several of my interviewees were dubious about the promises LNG offered. For instance, one interviewee was incredulous about the proposed short-term gains the LNG industry was offering communities: as one resident of Prince Rupert noted, "For me, that was a complete deal breaker: you're going to despoil our entire environment for something that lasts 30 years? … Are you kidding me? We're supposed to put all of our eggs in this basket?" (PR-7). This speaks to community member's awareness about the potential risks of LNG terminals, and their desire for alternative models of development; people in the region "have seen that the boom and bust cycle isn't how they want to live: they don't want to be going from one mega project to the next" (N-10). Thus, my interviewees equated the development of an LNG industry with following an old path dependency.

Another common theme that emerged from my interviews was resource dependency. For my interviewees who opposed the PNW LNG proposal, resistance to LNG was largely grounded in a lived experience which had given them an understanding of the boom-bust dynamic and a desire for economic development that transitioned away from it.

> We think of ourselves as an extractive resource economy… you always hear about the money generated while these things are going, the good jobs that pay for the nice homes and the toys and vacations, the American dream, what we enjoy. But then things collapse (PR-7).

This second quote speaks to how people have seen the impacts of boom-bust and have a desire to transition away from that dependency:

> There were hotels being built, we had 3 new hotels in Terrace. So, people were seeing the benefits from the industry so they really bought in. A lot of people bought second houses, rented them out. So, when nothing really happened, people were left holding the bag. Look at the hotel owners here in Terrace – if you were an existing hotel owner and you were just kind of doing okay before the big boom, 3 new hotels? Where is everyone staying now? *So how do you survive once the boom is gone?* Even if LNG Canada goes through, it will only be the construction phase where we see a boom so 4 years or so. And then what happens after that? It's not like they're going to get another mega project every 4 years. So, it's boom-bust (N-13).

The following quote speaks to a resident's lived experience with patterns of boom-bust in the region:

> Kitimat is acting desperate: 'we have to have LNG, we've lost all this employment'. But right from day one they should have seen that it was totally transient. But that's the nature of their economy: they're always looking for the next [industry] (N-10).

Typically, in extractivist economies, boom-bust refers to the wild swings of demand and prices in commodity cycles. But what the second last quote points to is different: that with capital-intensive extractivism, jobs in any great numbers only appear in the construction-of-infrastructure phase, so that becomes a local 'boom' which by its nature lasts only a few years. It is worthwhile to distinguish these two aspects of 'resource boom', particularly since advocates for industry typically pretend that the job-creation benefits will continue post-construction, which is essentially a deception.

My interviewees described people in the region as moving in one of two directions: towards a desire to embrace developments which improved their immediate situation, or an awareness that LNG likely only offered another boom-bust pattern, and so a dissatisfaction with the options available. The above personal reflections evidence the impacts this model of development has on communities; emerging from my interviews was a clear sense of the stakes of the past boom-bust economy and how that had landed people in a desperate situation in these communities. The desire to build alternatives to this economic model also arouse from my conversations, which I explore in the following section.

4.2 Desire for a new direction

> *"you're asking us to take all of the risks – which seem rather significant – and get none of the rewards?" (N-12).*

For my interviewees, the corporate, export-based global economic model was a subject of much critique. One interviewee who was deeply embedded in the local community but not active in resisting PNW LNG, understood that, for "companies it's the bottom line that's important; it's not the people, it's not their employees, it's not the communities that they operate in that's the bottom line" (PR-2). Another community member noted that extraction in the region "is usually to generate money at my cost to their benefit" (PR-1).

People I spoke with had detailed knowledge about the political landscape of resource development, as evidenced when one interviewee noted: "there is no legislation to make sure jobs benefit community first." My interviewees had a difficult time with this: people want the benefits from extracting and exporting resources – be it fish, forestry products, or LNG - to stay in local communities.

> I'm tired of the fact that more than 72% of our oil sands are owned by China - that's China's oil, that the companies that are investing in LNG were foreign. *The benefits, the profits: they don't stay here. The risks: we're the ones taking them. But they get the vast majority of the rewards and I think if we're going to extract our resources, develop them, then I think it should be for our benefit. It should be our decision-making and our control* (N-12, emphasis added).

In learning that the majority of the economic benefits from LNG projects would not stay in community, my interviewees were incredulous about developing an LNG industry on the North Coast. The following quote is from an interviewee that was active in resisting the Aurora LNG project:

> It's the weirdest political environment, I don't understand it, who does it benefit? I guess industry. Is the government really making much money off of it when they drop taxes? It was going to cost the taxpayer to ship the LNG out. As a business perspective it was not a money maker. So you're like 'what's going on here?' You're giving away our resource, you're paying to ship our resource out - a limited resource. The more you research, the more you find out, the more you're aghast at what is happening (PR-9).

As these quotes suggest, my interviewees believe that extraction and industrial development in northern BC have not benefitted rural communities first and foremost.

> What we've seen taking place over the past 40, 50 years in terms of how the corporate structures have developed and created a world for their needs and their wants. And we just fit in wherever we're conveniently fit in. That's not how it should function, *it should be self-determining, we should be able to make decisions for ourselves. We should be able to make the decisions that are relevant to us, not to someone else* (PR-1, emphasis added).

People I spoke with wanted to regain self-sufficiency and community-based economic development; I found from my conversations a great desire to change the current model of industrial development so benefits can better flow to local people.

> We, as people who live in the region, have always had a fair degree of control over our lives. We're losing that because we no longer control the resource that's on our doorstep. That's being taken away from us - we no longer control much of our lives, it's all done from somewhere else by someone else. We're not comfortable with that, we'd much rather have an economy that we have a direct hand in and say in, and manage in some fashion (PR-1).

Interviewees argued that that "governments are very quick to create incentives for multi-nationals and things that create headlines for them. But to really create incentives for the things that matter, they always are falling very short on that" (PR-1). With this recognition in mind, my interviewees tried to engage with the state to try to improve how industry operates in the northwest but were often disappointed with the government's response: "One of the first things that we had taken to the province was a request for a regional strategic analysis of LNG. They told us to piss off basically… We tried to do these things in a holistic fashion for ages" (PR-1). Given the government's historical mismanagement of resources, my interviewees did not believe that government would advocate for their community's best interest. They expressed a suspicion of "outsider" motivations: no clear sense that companies or governments have the community's best interests at heart, which has led to a desire for solutions that keep benefits in communities.

4.2.1 Economic development in an era of 'reconciliation'

Interviewees agreed that not all industry nor business in the region is problematic. Rather, they made the argument that it is very tricky for industry to be properly attentive to the history of the region and to current socio-political dynamics unless they have roots in the community:

> They [the proponents] really need to understand the culture of the community - not just the municipality but the First Nations communities that surround it, because like it or not we're living in the age of reconciliation and it's long overdue. Companies that come in that don't have a longstanding base in Prince Rupert really have to take the time to relationship build - and meaningfully relationship build - through open collaboration and building that trust with the communities. Because it's easy to manage from afar in a land that you don't live in. My opinion is that they don't live here so they don't really care about what's happening. They may say that they care about it but until you actually live here and get to

> know the people here, know the concerns that are here, you don't gain a full understanding (PR-2).

Interviewees emphasized that the status quo way of doing business also needs to change; critical to this process of re-imagining and building new alternatives is addressing the inherent flaws of the current colonial decision-making framework. As one respondent shared:

> True reconciliation means collaboration and it means building an understanding, not just the government saying we hear you and we're going to make things better with the stroke of a pen because we've all seen how that has worked with the Indian Act and other policies against First Nations. But now I think if they truly mean what they say and they're going to walk the walk then they have to include First Nations in those policy discussions and what those policies will look like. They have a real opportunity here to make things better through consultation and meaningful consultation (PR-2).

Community members were both meaningfully engaging with questions of resource dependency and profits going to both foreign shareholders and Canadian capitalists alike, and were dedicated to working to develop solutions. As the following passages highlight, any economic development initiative must make sense for the community, and industry must be attentive to how extraction is inherently connected to colonization:

> I took community economic development to develop the kind of economy that supports communities, that has more local control, that puts the benefits back into communities instead of shareholders that live in Malaysia [...] I think our priorities should be to approach things in a way that is reflective of the principles of community economic development. Because that deals with all the things that are crushing us: massive unemployment, people pushed to the margins, addictions, trauma, suicide, climate, environment, culture, ab[original] rights and title, reconciliation (N-12).

> When I talk to hereditary chiefs who signed with pipelines companies, like signed impact benefit agreements, about why, it was never because they wanted a pipeline and it was never because they wanted this industry. It always because they wanted a future for their family or they were tired of being impoverished or finally they felt like they had to make a sacrifice. One guy said 'yeah we were being bribed, for sure. And we took it knowing that we were being bribed because when you are dealing with poverty you don't have a choice. Worrying about the environment or the future or climate change is a luxury that so many of us here in the north can't afford. We're trying to figure out how we're going to make it until tomorrow so worrying about what happens in the fall when the fish are supposed to be

> here, we'll cross this bridge when we get to it but right now I just need to figure out where I'm going to get my next meal for my family or how am I going to not freeze tonight. I have no heat in my house.' And that's really common. Hazelton has 85% non-employment. But when you hear Christy Clark or politicians come forward and say 'jobs, jobs, jobs LNG is going to solve all of this!' It's like so why do we have 85% non-employment in Hazelton and we have local businesses closing down because they can't find people to work. So, it's not a lack of jobs, it's because people have been so marginalized, pushed so far, oppressed, that they're actually not able to work. So, we have to deal with the history, with trauma, we need to heal as communities and as people before we can think about bringing in some major industry who only increases social impacts (N-12).

In including the above quote my intention is not to paint Indigenous communities as being desperate for economic opportunities. Rather, what I hope the quote does is highlight that it is not so simple as attracting new industry or creating more industrial jobs, as the Liberal government seemed to promote; what matters instead is the types of jobs that are created. Employment that address trauma, addiction, and dispossession is needed –and my interviewees felt the LNG industry was not in the position to offer that type of employment.

While the region's history of boom-bust economic development has left communities in desperate economic straits, it is not just economic growth that needs to be considered, but also the history – and continuation – of colonization. Interviewees expressed a desire for economic development that puts community needs into the conversation, and meaningfully addresses these needs. With the feeling that government did not have local people's concerns in mind, many folks have sought solutions outside the state-led approach, and instead are actively pursuing a bottom-up approach to development. An important theme that emerged from interviewees is the need to imagine alternatives, tell different stories, and be hopeful. These themes will be discussed in more detail below, but first I explore concerns related to climate change.

4.2.2 Development in the context of climate change

PNW LNG was estimated to be the single greatest point source of GHG emissions in all of Canada. When asking my interviewees how important climate change was to their campaigns, a number of interesting findings emerged. Firstly, when groups did campaign on the climate implications of LNG projects they used the government's

greenhouse gas reduction targets as a lead in; as a climate campaigner from southern BC said "we tried to nail Justin Trudeau on the climate angle of this more than anything because ... he had just come out with this climate plan and now you're adding one of the most polluting projects in the country? It's just crazy" (S-18). As the following quote suggests, one group focused on the climate impacts of the PNW LNG project as a strategy to reveal political commitments that were not being upheld:

> Climate change, greenhouse gas emissions - yeah, we made it important. Well, we worked on it. But the only reason we used it is because government had made commitments around greenhouse gas emissions and target emissions and Petronas was going to be the biggest greenhouse gas emitter (N-12).

Secondly, it became apparent that there was a difference in how ENGOs in the south campaigned on the PNW LNG versus northern ENGOs. One interviewee noted "It [climate change] had a big impact provincially and nationally but less so regionally. Some people cared and were concerned but it was mainly the salmon issue that was rallying people [in the north]" (N-13). As I discuss in the Discussion section of this chapter, environmental groups from the south cannot assume that the climate implications of fossil fuel projects are what motivates communities to resist.

The difference in tactics is evidenced again when an ENGO campaigner from southern BC said "in terms of your audience, people up north don't have - for whatever reason - quite the same connection to climate change as we do down here. So it made sense for them to talk mostly about the salmon and the local impacts" (S-18). How climate change is perceived as abstract and therefore more difficult to campaign on, and the importance of speaking to tangible, immediate risks were findings that emerged in other conversations:

> You're not going to be mobilizing huge amounts of the general public's concern through talking about climate change. It's just not going to happen, that can be something you can add in but it's the idea that this is a threat to all the salmon (N-10).

> Many people are overwhelmed with hopelessness or they're in denial, it's such an intangible: you can't eat it, you can't relate to it, there is no hero of stopping climate change. It's not easy to communicate about, as you will hear from every person you talk with … 'We need to do something about climate change' might not grab people; it is always local, it's always about

> what you can touch and smell and feel and care about and relate to and that you can't live without (S-15).

Environmental groups expressed how difficult it was to campaign on the climate change angle because people are overwhelmed by the climate crisis and feel helpless and therefore are not motivated to take action and oppose fossil fuel expansion:

> But the whole climate change conversation - using the fear around the impacts of climate change - is not working. Globally it is not working. People are less open to discussing things about climate change than they were 5 years ago. There's all these articles that talk about 'quit fucking harping about climate change, *what people want are solutions or adaptation* (N-12, emphasis added).

With this knowledge, my interviewees' groups focused instead on promoting alternatives: "We have gotten better at talking about solutions. One of the problems with talking about climate change is that it is so big and so scary … There are clear problems and it can be overwhelming and scary which is why people want to hear about solutions" (S-16). Another interviewee noted:

> I don't talk about climate, it's a bit wonky ... it's all about organizing people where they live, to do things in real life. That's what changes things. This idea of network change and empowerment, it's working to build capacity and movements, it's about belonging (S-15).

My interviewees' reflections on the climate implications of the PNW LNG project made it clear that people in the north want alternatives; people want solutions. These themes are the focus of analysis in the following section.

4.3 Solutions

> *"It's also about bringing solutions forward. I put this on ourselves, on the environmental community, is that we need to do a better job of saying what we're for. What are we for?" (N-13)*

While the PNW LNG proposal divided communities, "it also helps force some of this conversation, [this] discussion that we need to have as communities around what we want to see, our future. It caused us to put a bunch of effort into being proactive about defining what we're for" (N-13). Another interviewee noted how LNG proposals in northern BC forced their organization to think through: "what do we actually want to say

yes to? What kind of developments are we interested in?" (N-11). While opposing destructive resource projects are important, one interviewee also noted how:

> I think that we have a huge opportunity in front of us to be proactive in defining a different path forward: the renewable energy revolution, the transformation of our economy to more of an information [economy], there are so many entrepreneurs with great ideas and ambition. Collectively we really need to focus on talking about something else; instead of talking about what we don't want, talking about what we want to see, our vision for the future. I think it's happening and we just need to highlight it and help push it forward (N-13).

LNG proposals in northwest BC pushed many of my interviewees to think critically about the types of economies they desire for the region. Due to the deep divisions that emerged as a result of LNG proposals, my interviewees were further questioning: "how do we make a bridge to a different economy, but also how do we get people to be able to talk to each other, to hear each other and not want to do battle with each other?" (N-7). An approach I observed was identifying and celebrating community strengths; my interviewees were lauding northwestern BC for what makes it a unique and desirable place to live:

> We're excited that there are a lot of people in the region doing really neat things. There are young people moving here for example because this is an affordable place to live and it has huge outdoor opportunities. And more and more people can work from anywhere because of the digital age, the new economy. We're seeing that in a major way here and in northwestern BC, [we're] excited about that bringing new energy to our communities and ideas. There are also people just moving here because it's affordable and they want to live here because of the lifestyle and they're creating their own businesses, doing value added stuff with products from here like wood products or making skis, or opening a brewery or coffee roasters, the more money that circulating in the community instead of going out, we don't buy our beer from Molson anymore, we buy it locally. There's shellfish aquaculture in Prince Rupert that the First Nations are doing, there's people doing manufacturing and selling it all across North America because we're right on the rail route here and shipping to Asia (N-13).

Community members I spoke with wished to highlight the economic benefits of the region's existing economies. They emphasized that saying 'no' to LNG was about saying 'yes' to the things that currently sustain the region and create a sense of community:

> The conversation we tried to bring up is existing jobs. Because they're like 'jobs, jobs, jobs' but yeah, you're knocking out existing jobs. In reality the

> existing long-term jobs would be knocked out - you might have 50 jobs in the end but the impacts to the tourism, the impacts to the Skeena River and impacts up and down the river and impacts to commercial fishing and impacts to livelihoods. Every boat, all the ferries and cruise ships going in and out right by that, [LNG projects] are not why people are cruising here (PR-9).[13]

My interviewees questioned the proposed LNG industry because of the risks it posed to a robust regional economy: wild salmon generates $110 million a year, while guide outfitting and wild mushrooms are worth $28 million and $21 million annually, respectively. As well, tourism in northern BC generates $1 billion each year (Upstream Media, 2016). These industries all rely on intact ecosystems and a healthy Skeena salmon population: "Those are the economies that are being put at risk, those are the economies that provide local jobs, that put the money back into our communities, not to some foreign shareholder in another country" (Ibid).

Contrary to Christy Clark's framing, people in region are not anti-industry. Many of the people I spoke with are pro-industry, "just pro the right kind of industry. And the oil and gas industry is not the right industry" (PR-9). This is further emphasized in the following quote by a local community member: "it's not all about the resistance for the sake of not building industry. It's about making sure that the growth is sustainable and done in an environmentally responsible way" (PR-2). As noted above, many argued that it is possible to manage the fishery, forestry and mining – the traditional resources of the regions - in a more responsible way.

Other interviewees echoed the need to respect and revitalize traditional economies; one person pleaded for government to: "detain the decline of the forest industry, detain the decline of the wild salmon fishing industry" (S-17). Many other interviewees spoke about the importance of the fisheries for the community and the need to support that industry again. When asked about alternative economies for Prince Rupert, one interviewee answered "Fishing. Fishing should be here, fishing feeds" (PR-9). Other people remarked that:

> The coastal communities who have been fishing salmon here for thousands of years, they are the ones who have been working to protect the salmon.

[13] Speaker was referring to the Aurora LNG proposal for Digby Island.

> We need to protect them by changing the fishing policy back to sustainable ocean fishing (PR-5).

> We're still trying to get them, under the new government, to understand the value of the fishery both in terms of food security and in terms of economic sustainability. Not getting a lot of traction but none the less we're continuing to try and pursue that (PR-1).

While some folks are working hard to revitalize the traditional industries of the region, others are involved in identifying new opportunities; because there is a sense of pride in the region, people want to develop economic opportunities which are rooted in community values and which allow residents to continue living in the region: "We need to have an economic policy in the north that makes sense and allows people to live where they choose to live and have decent employment opportunities" (S-17). The following quote speaks to the importance of agency, in allowing community members to define their own future, as opposed to being at the whim of boom-bust cycles and poor government management.

> *There's lots going on here so it's really exciting times in terms of telling those stories, and opening up peoples' imaginations.* Because when our kids go to school - over the past half dozen years, it's all been about trades and money for the trade schools, and becoming a pipeline welder and a machine operator. Well that's fine but there's a lot more too. Our kids need to understand that there's a lot more that they can do, a lot more opportunities out there than strictly trades. It's not about saying this is bad or this is good but highlighting the fact that there's a lot more going on here and there are a lot more opportunities for people in these communities and for kids coming out of high school (N-13, emphasis added).

This interviewee celebrated traditional economies but also recognized that new opportunities are emerging. The importance of this interviewees' sense of excitement and optimism about the future should not be overlooked.

When asked about other potential solutions for job creation and economic growth in northern BC, one interviewee asserted: "You've got to add tourism and you've got to add high tech … There are a lot of industries that need brains rather than brawn and you have to be able to get some resources to them like high speed internet access … Those are the industries of the future" (S-17). This interviewee goes on to assert:

> Add brain-powered industries as quick as you can. There is no reason why a bright kid graduating from high school in Fort St John or Kitimat has to

> leave home in order to be gainfully employed. You just have to put your brain to going to high tech, movie, there are all sorts of industries that need people with brains. And skills in an increasingly digital world (S-17).

Rooted in this desire for solutions was an understanding that the way business is conducted must change too. This is evidenced as one my interviewees asked: "what more robust, decentralized and local ways can we create revenue and reduce costs?" (N-11). Additionally, folks were working to develop alternative approaches to both resource extraction, and to working with governments and industry. As one interviewee noted:

> We have industrialized so many resource extraction industries and we need to go back to doing it slow and sustainably. Instead of having 5,000 jobs for 5 years, how about we have 500 jobs for 500 years. The Tahltan years ago came out with 'one mine at a time on our territory' they said 'yeah, a mine employs 500 people, that's more than enough. That will employ all of our people who want a job there plus hundreds of people from outside of here, so we're doing our part for our own people and for others. But one mine at a time. We'll let our territory heal before we consider doing another mine.' That's not how it works but it's such a beautiful approach (N-12).

> We've got a number of projects helping build the type of economy that we believe in. One thing we do is work with some mining projects for example, so we had a house group come forward and said 'we're interested in looking at this mine, can you look at their plans and tell us what changes you would make so it would be the type of mine that you would support?' We were like 'heck yeah' (N-12).

> We have a big project right now … our Responsible Development Initiative, and we're talking about mining - what does good mining look like? What are examples here in northern BC? Forestry, same thing. Energy, same thing. And what are opportunities we have? Getting away from this dominance on LNG and that's it. Well there's a lot of stuff going on in our region with economic development. Let's start telling those stories (N-13).

Community groups were also involved in promoting renewable energy projects in the region; as the following quote demonstrates, the strengths of these projects lie in their ability to address the economic and social needs of the community:

> You have some people who have to choose in the winter between paying their electricity bill because they have cheap ass electric baseboard heating with really shitty built housing on reserve housing, so some people are paying upwards of $1000 a month for their electricity bills. So, they're power gets shut off. So we're trying to bring in these combined heat and

> power units that will use wood waste ... the one mill that we have is 10 times more waste wood then we would ever need to heat and power all of the community, that little mill … And you would heat and power your home for a fraction of the cost. So, it's like win, win, win. You can use it for community buildings. If you're on social assistance the band is then on the hook to pay your heat and utilities, so this would save the band a bunch of money. It creates tons of employment, contributes to a more sustainable forestry, more sustainable housing. So that's happening (N-12).

The above quotes are evidence of community members actively working to develop alternative economic strategies for northwestern BC. My interviewees spoke about wanting to build diverse economies that respect the environment and people's commitment to place, create well-paying jobs which allow families to stay in the region, and are solutions-focused.

In this way, the LNG proposals revealed deeper political challenges related to resource extraction in the northwest: on one hand, there is a history of fragile, boom-bust economies, and of government mismanaging resources and excluding community in decisions that affect them. This has created a sense of suspicion and distrust towards government, which was exacerbated by LNG proposals. On the other hand, communities have a commitment to place and a desire to build diverse, creative solutions towards a more sustainable economy for the region. But because of this past, they distrust that government will respect that. This is summarized in the following quote:

> [People in the north] have to make a living somehow. I think government policy needs to not just adopt the next major industry proposals that come along, but there needs to be a really concerted focus on looking at alternative strategies for economic development (N-10).

Although contentious, resistance to LNG was hopeful in that it mobilized my interviewees to push for alternatives. My interviewees have a desire to build economies which center community well-being, and for economic development initiatives to meaningfully address their needs. People also want opportunities to rebuild self-sufficiency and to continue living in the region. To address this, people are actively conversing as a community; my interviewees were speaking about what their priorities are, and identifying community strengths such as a low cost of living and access to the outdoors. People are also identifying new opportunities for the region like renewable energy projects, and the information economy. As well, people are developing new

approaches to working with government and industry on industrial development. Finally, people spoke about the transformative importance of imagining different futures. As one interviewee reminds us "there's power to transform. And that's why I love living here - it's because you can see that opportunity" (PR-4).

5. Discussion

Local opposition to the PNW LNG project was not chiefly motivated by climate considerations, despite the climate-focused campaigning of ENGOs from the south. Resistance to the project emerged from - and revealed - a different set of challenges that northern communities are struggling with, and a more complex set of needs and priorities that must be addressed. What emerged from this research is the importance of how the history of boom-bust economies in the region has resulted in a distrust of government-led development, and has also left communities economically desperate.

As I note in my methods section, my sample is not of the sort that allows me to discern what communities want; I have focused on the experience of activists. That said, several of my interviewees expressed how both provincial and federal governments have operated - and continue to operate - with the assumption that capital accumulation is what is most important and subsequently did not pay adequate attention to how resource development affects communities. My understanding is that, for my interviewees, the PNW LNG project was not a good enough proposal for their community; they had other ideas about the directions in which the region should move. These ideas were not necessarily climate or industry-specific, but rather were about building diverse economies which honour place and allow people to continue living in the north. One interviewee summarized this well when stating:

> There's a need certainly to be doing a lot more focused research on what other kinds of activities could be going on in the region that are compatible with what we already have here and the ecological values of the region, because that's a lot of the reason why people choose to move here. People make a choice about a way of life so things that threaten that way of life are not well received (N-10).

Embedded in the desire for alternatives was my interviewees' longing for a different kind of economy, not just a different industry. It is important to make that distinction: it was not solely about creating employment, but supporting the growth of jobs that address

colonization, including addiction, trauma, marginalization, and which support self-sufficiency, sustainability and the desire to build their communities in a healthy way. As well, people not only wanted jobs with these impacts, but for government to manage resources in a better way, and to ensure the benefits of those resources support the community first and foremost. Approaches to economic development must be developed hand in hand with communities so they enhance community resilience and self-sufficiency. In rejecting PNW LNG, my interviewees revealed their commitment to economic diversification, to protecting place, to being involved in decision-making, and to ensuring the resilience of their communities.

Opposition to PNW LNG revealed a community seeking a different future for itself than the one on offer. Drawing from Gibson-Graham's work, McCarthy (2006) reminds us "that discourses that assume capitalist subjects and hegemony – 'capitalonormativity' – in fact blind us to the multiplicity of economic relationships already present around us. Thus, the search for and recognition of alterity is a vital political act" (McCarthy, 2006b, p. 804). Many people in these communities were working hard to break away from the hegemonic conceptualization of economic development and to build and popularize viable alternatives, which are based on social and environmental protection. Given the threats facing communities in the north - from resource dependency, and extraction to climate change - this place-based imagining of alternatives to export-driven economies, and towards diverse economies with increased community input into decision-making, is crucial.

What emerged in my interviews was an attempt to shift the prevailing conversation from boom-bust economies and resource dependency towards the potential of alternatives. One interviewee noted "you've got T'Sou-ke First Nation and Haida Gwaii doing sweet stuff but is it going to replace their energy? No. Is it going to be profitable? Probably not. Well what is it? *It's something else, it's a story, it's a step*. It's not what we thought" (N-11). Part of the transition that interviewees envisioned involved building new narratives and telling different stories about the economy of the region. People I spoke with were actively imagining and working towards building solutions; this demonstrates a shift towards a diverse economy, one which supports community resilience.

It is evident from my interviews that people in the region were willing to make changes at the community-level to move away from boom-bust economies and to create solutions. This emphasis on economic transition was an unexpected finding. Before visiting these communities and speaking with people, I anticipated that climate was going to be more of a local concern: due to the greenhouse gas emissions of the project, the way the media framed the issue ("Pacific NorthWest LNG project 'deeply concerns' climate change experts," 2016), and how ENGOs in the south campaigned on the issue ("'Irreversible' damage to climate means Pacific NorthWest LNG must be stopped," 2016). However, my research found that opposition to LNG on the North Coast was not motivated by climate considerations as noted in the following quote:

> I think that locally the climate impacts weren't as big of a rallying point for people. But as soon as you went provincially, and especially nationally, it was. Basically, people were buying into this idea that LNG was clean and it was going to help us transition to clean energy and all that stuff. Our work showing that Pacific Northwest LNG was going to be the biggest climate polluter in the country blew that out of the water. I think it really started to make a lot of people realize how big of a climate issue LNG facilities are. That was the start…. It had a big impact provincially and nationally but less so regionally. Some people cared and were concerned but it was mainly the salmon issue that was rallying people (N-13).

We need to understand that this resistance was about building solutions that work for communities; the fact that the community resisted an LNG terminal does not fundamentally mean they oppose fossil fuels, or are in favour of climate action. This is an important finding because those seeking to build coalitions for climate action cannot assume that communities who have resisted fossil fuel projects will necessarily be on board. Communities want solutions that will work for them, and so they must be engaged in building climate solutions. My research also points to the need for coalition-building strategies that meet communities where they are and meld community concerns, dialogically, with the more global project of climate justice.

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that challenging economic conditions can also push people in other directions, towards, for example, populist responses that are focused on seizing on LNG development as the only option for community economic development. Opposition to LNG infrastructure, and the desire to promote alternatives, is not a unified story. At the time of writing, other discourses are emerging in the region –

one in which is extractivist populism. Since conducting my interviews in the summer of 2018, there has been a dramatic rise in populist rhetoric in northern BC. 'The North Matters', a grass-roots movement supporting LNG development in northwestern BC, emerged in Kitimat in late 2018 (Link, 2019). This movement can be understood as a response to the resistance to LNG terminal proposals, by those who share the concerns about economic growth, but not those about diversifying the economy. In this discourse, the solution to economic disruption is more economic development, even if that development is in another extractive industry.

Kojola (2019) reminds us, "Populist messages resonate when there is a sense of crisis (Moffit 2016), which is common in resource-dependent communities that face economic depressions and a sense of insecurity created by boom-and-bust cycles" (quoted in Kojola, 2019, p. 378). My research acknowledges how economically vulnerable the region is, how a history of boom and bust development and poor governance policies have resulted in tenuous employment and job scarcity in northwestern BC. Therefore, rather than assuming that communities who have opposed fossil fuel projects are necessarily interested in climate action, it is important for government, industry, ENGOs and researchers to recognize the priorities of the communities. If they desire to build projects or develop climate solutions with these communities, they must meaningfully address this economic insecurity, to provide opportunities for meaningful employment and economic development that are consistent with the community's priorities.

The Pacific NorthWest LNG case sheds light on an important tension when it comes to building climate solutions: communities have diverse needs and priorities, and resisting fossil fuels does not necessarily bring the community towards embracing climate action. If communities are economically vulnerable, they can turn as much to extractivist populism as to climate action. If we want to build coalitions to support climate action, these need to be grounded in climate solutions that engage with local concerns. This has been documented in Devine-Wright (2009, 2011, 2013), who highlights the importance of social acceptance of energy projects, and of community input into decision-making.

While not the motivating factor of *all* opposition to LNG projects, climate change is a rapidly growing threat that all communities, including rural communities, must adapt to.

Thus, the challenge remains: how to think about economic development in the context of the climate crisis. Secondly, the climate concerns highlight the vulnerability of this moment, and the importance of ensuring that these communities are supported in their ambitions so that we do not see a rise in extractivist populism.

6. Conclusion

We need to build "a different vision for Canada – one that sees our well-being as dependent upon a transformative program of decarbonization anchored in principles of social, environmental and Indigenous justice" (Gunster, 2019, p. 13).

Although divisive in local communities, several key considerations emerged from resistance to the Pacific NorthWest LNG project. Firstly, building diverse economies must be the base for climate solutions; climate action has to be grounded in building sustainable economies that support communities. This highlights the importance of grounding these conversations in communities, in their insights and ambitions. This case reinforces importance of a just transition conversation. Even in areas without a large oil and gas workforce, there still needs to be a conversation as to how to transition economies away from unsustainable economic structures.

We need to develop strategies which respond to the needs of all economies for sustainability in this context of the climate emergency. Climate change offers an opportunity in this regard, a potential nudge towards sustainable economies. However, climate action needs to be pursued with attentiveness to the underlying challenges that rural communities face, or we will simply lose the climate fight because rural, economically-vulnerable communities could see their only option as to support fossil fuel development.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

1. Research Questions and Objectives

Extractivism has shaped Canadian society. In British Columbia, industries such as forestry, fishing, and mining have drastically shaped the social, political, economic, cultural and ecological landscape of the province. The most recent manifestation of extractivism in BC is the effort to develop a liquified natural gas (LNG) industry with its corresponding increase of fracked gas production. Beginning under the Liberal government, but continuing under the more recent government of the New Democratic-Green alliance, the political agenda has focused on developing an LNG industry in the province.

Curious to explore localized reactions to this proposed industry, in this thesis I examined the proposal to build the Pacific NorthWest (PNW) liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal on Lelu Island on BC's North Coast. Escobar (1992) describes "resistance" as a struggle over meanings and discourses, not solely material conditions. I found this to be true in the PNW LNG case, that the resistance expressed not only concerns about this proposal but a different vision for the region altogether. The core inquiry that motivated this research is what can we learn from resistance to new energy infrastructure that could help us to craft solutions to climate challenges? After reviewing the literature and identifying gaps, I devised the following research questions:

1. How did those who opposed the PNW LNG project understand the issue, and frame resistance to it?
2. What are the underlying dynamics expressed in the opposition, and how have these shaped community priorities going forward?
3. What are the broader implications of this resistance in the context of BC's trajectory of extractive development?
4. What are the implications of these findings for those seeking to build a movement for effective climate action?

I pursued the above research questions by conducting semi-structured interviews with individuals who opposed the Pacific NorthWest LNG project. This chapter summarizes

the conclusions reached in this thesis and the implications of my findings. I also explore the limitations of this work and conclude with questions that deserve further investigation.

2. Findings and Broader Implications

1. How did those who opposed the PNW LNG project understand the issue, and frame resistance to it?

At the local level, the project's potential impacts to salmon and Indigenous rights and title, in particular as they arose from the location of the liquefaction terminal on Lelu Island, were central motivating concerns, as well as the related threats these impacts would pose to existing economies. As one interviewee summarized:

> The most important thing was salmon, then Indigenous rights and the lack of due process, then climate. And it was climate because it was more difficult to show the environmental impacts directly… The salmon was really what it was all about (S-15).

Indeed, a key finding in Chapter 2 was the importance of salmon; many of my interviewees continually stressed its importance to their communities - ecologically, culturally, socio-politically, spiritually and economically. Salmon are described as the "lifeblood" of the region: they represent a sense of cohesion between communities located throughout the vast territory of the Skeena watershed. Resistance can be understood as the communities' desire to protect that which they value: in this case it was salmon and all that salmon supports and represents for the region. In other words, my interviewees can be understood as saying "yes" to the things that currently sustain the region and create a sense of community, rather than "no" to change, as asserted by then-Premier Christy Clark.

While opposition at the local level was grounded and framed in relation to local community needs, a different perspective emerged from climate campaigners in the south. While ENGOs based in southern BC campaigned on the importance of salmon and Indigenous rights and title to the region, they also focused on the climate impacts of the PNW LNG project, with this frame being directed predominantly directed to urban and southern audiences across Canada. Before visiting these communities and speaking with people directly, I had anticipated that climate was going to be more of a local concern, due to the projected greenhouse gas emissions of the project, the way the issue was

framed by the media and southern ENGOs. However, my research found that opposition to LNG on the North Coast was not motivated primarily by climate considerations; my interviewees in the north had more localized and immediate concerns that their communities were facing and thus framed opposition around what was important to them, and climate change felt like an abstraction.

2. What are the underlying dynamics expressed in the opposition, and how have these shaped community priorities going forward?

As described above, salmon are both ecological and symbolically integral to the region. While local people expressed their concerns to government regarding the PNW LNG project's potential impacts to salmon, my interviewees felt that their concerns were dismissed when they should have been central in shaping the future of the region. The provincial government's dismissal of opposition to the Pacific NorthWest LNG project as the "forces of no" was used pejoratively by then-Premier Christy Clark as a way to reject local people's demands. Instead of being silenced as NIMBY-ism, opposition to PNW LNG needs to be understood as being a reaction to extraction and resource mismanagement, and to the continued colonial ecological violence taking place within contemporary settler-colonial society.

In recent decades, the economy of the northwest – which was built primarily on forestry and fisheries – has experienced drastic downturns. A key finding that emerged from Chapter 3 was the perception among my interviewees that, due to poor policy decisions, government was responsible for the mismanagement of these natural resources. This tension then re-emerged within the context of LNG, as the community did not trust that government had their best interest at heart. Distrust towards government was further amplified in an environmental assessment (EA) process which failed to meaningfully address their local concerns regarding threats to Skeena salmon.

My research reveals that my interviewees were not opposed to all resource development; however, local community members took issue with mismanagement, poor decision-making processes, and the economic benefits of development leaving their communities. What emerged from my research was that opposition to LNG was grounded in a desire to transition away from export-oriented capitalism and towards

building diversified economies, where the benefits of resource development stay in community.

3. What are the broader implications of this resistance in the context of BC's trajectory of extractive development?

Local opposition to PNW LNG was in part motivated by being excluded from decision-making processes. My interviewees spoke of how the environmental assessment process was flawed and that government failed to meaningfully engage the community. This speaks to the urgent need for more enhanced participation in project development and implementation. Much has been written about the inadequacies of the environmental assessment at both a provincial and federal level (Baker & Westman, 2018; Van Hinte et al., 2007; West Coast Environmental Law, 2018) and currently, both the BCEAA and CEAA are undergoing revisions. I hope that the considerations I have raised in this thesis are taken up in these reviews. Particular concerns raised by interviewees included a lack of confidence in the professional reliance model, inadequate consultation, and how information about large-scale industrial projects failed to be properly disseminated in communities.

Another area where government failed to meaningfully address the community's concern was in the need for economic development in the region. Arguments in support of fossil fuel production in Canada centre around job creation and economic benefits (Hackett & Adams, 2018). Clark promised 100,000 jobs would be created from LNG industry and that economic growth would benefit rural areas. However, LNG was not the type of industry that could provide the types of jobs that my interviewees were hoping for. Firstly, the introduction of LNG on the coast threatened existing economies as Skeena salmon contribute $110 million annually to the regional economy. My interviewees did not support an industry that threatened these livelihoods. Secondly, as my interviewees looked deeper into Christy Clark's purported promises of LNG, they realized that their communities were not positioned to benefit from this project in the ways they wanted. Clark's claims conflated permanent jobs with temporary construction jobs, and foreign workers would account for almost 40% of the work force needed to build the PNW LNG terminal (B. Jang, 2014). PNW LNG would have used "fly-in, fly-out" workers which is documented to greatly reduce the local economic benefits in the

areas where development takes place, as the "practice enables companies to bring in the labour they need rather than rely on local labour markets" (Lee, 2015, p. 6).

In Chapter 3 my interviewees discussed their desire to build economies that put economic benefits back into communities and benefits community members first. My interviewees also spoke of wanting economic development that addresses trauma, addiction and the impacts of colonization. They perceived that the LNG industry was not capable of doing so. As the PNW LNG case highlights, addressing economic vulnerability is not as easy as creating temporary construction jobs, it is about understanding what communities want and need. In the case of PNW LNG, the government failed to do that. This case highlights both the failure of EA processes and the failure of government to meaningfully address local economic concerns, and highlights an important takeaway for policy makers: regardless of the results of the current EA review, governments need to rebuild trust with communities, and acknowledge communities' desire to be listened to. Greenberg "characterizes trust in government and organizations as stemming from perceptions of their *competence* and whether they *share similar values* with stakeholders and communities" (quoted in Shaw et al., 2015, p. 43). In order to rebuild trust, both the federal and provincial governments need to be cognizant of, and responsive to, community needs.

What is needed in the north is a bold plan to address climate action and create good, well-paying jobs—jobs which allow communities to flourish. Just transition is an approach to environmental policy-making that aims to minimize the impacts of decarbonization on workers in affected industries and communities (Cooling, Lee, Daub, & Singer, 2015). Pioneered by labour unions in the 1980s (McCauley & Heffron, 2018), a just transition in the North American context focuses on transitioning workers away from fossil fuel-dependent economies (Hackett & Adams, 2018; Hussey & Jackson, 2019; Mertins-Kirkwood, 2018). As the PNW LNG case highlights, a just transition might not be solely about supporting oil workers; it could also be about supporting communities like Prince Rupert who are not just transitioning away from fossil fuels but also from industries such as forestry, fishing and mining.

The transition to a low-carbon economy has traditionally been framed as a choice between jobs and the environment, as mirrored in the PNW LNG case. However, this

does not have to be the case. A renewal of traditional economies is currently taking place in BC's north: "In many ways, northern B.C.'s economy after fossil fuels could look a lot like its past. Smaller, community-oriented initiatives that represent local culture, values and ecosystems would replace pipelines and fracking" (Hosgood, 2019). There exists a real opportunity here, one that government would be wise to support.

4. What are the implications of these findings for those seeking to build a movement for effective climate action?

Given the current need to drastically shift our energy systems and successfully navigate the transitions we are facing, we need to better understand what community-level priorities are in BC. If we do not listen to local concerns, we will encounter gridlock. What emerged from my research is the recognition that neither government, industry nor environmentalists should force projects on communities. This is the same for solutions. Any solution going forward needs to be attentive to the desires and concerns that have been expressed by community members. In the case of the northwest, developments to address climate change must be attentive to needs for economic development in rural regions.

The need to transition is coming at a time when the northwest's mainstay industries—forestry and fisheries—are in decline. Moreover, British Columbia's north is one of the fastest-warming regions in the country (Hosgood, 2019) and is already experiencing the impacts of the climate crisis. The purpose of the latter part of Chapter 3 was to explore place-based solutions to export-oriented extractive projects. I found that community members were already working to develop solutions to the threats facing their rural communities – from resource dependency and extraction, to climate change. What emerged from my findings was a feeling of excitement about this development; my interviewees were interested in telling different stories and defining a new direction.

While there is no singular pathway forward in navigating tensions that resource-dependent communities face, there are some factors that ought to be addressed by government, climate campaigners and academics alike: any proposal must consider the context and history of the case, and be particularly attentive to the ways in which history informs a community's desires in the present. Another key area that demands attention is the centrality of respecting Indigenous rights. This was not the dominant focus of my

analysis but clearly this an area of research that is vital; we cannot overlook the role of settler colonialism in the ecological crisis, or the centrality of Indigenous land rights in this transition. Much more research is needed to properly detail the origins of this injustice – which arises from capitalist-colonial logic that violently dispossesses Indigenous people from their land time and time again – and to make sure that low-carbon transitions do not risk perpetuating these injustices.

In order to build an effective climate movement, climate activists need to meaningfully engage communities, involve them in building solutions that are attentive to local desires, and build relationships based on mutual trust and reciprocity. Furthermore, climate campaigners must understand the differences between rural and urban communities and that issues for urban audiences are often fundamentally different than local concerns. People at the local level were not resisting the PNW LNG project primarily because of its climate implications and to assume so would be problematic. In sum, climate activists must not campaign in a way that erases local concerns. For policy makers who are interested in building a movement for effective climate action, many of the same lessons apply: one must be attentive to a community's history, build meaningful relationships, be guided by community desires, and rebuild trust.

3. Contributions to the field

Rural-urban divides are not a new phenomenon (Hackett & Adams, 2018; Kojola, 2019; L Temper & Gilbertson, 2015; Woods, 2008). However, they have yet to be explored in relation to the PNW LNG case. The issues and concerns raised in this conflict are important and distinctive and, while much media attention was garnered (Ghoussoub, 2017; Hume, 2016; T. Jang, 2016; Tasker, 2016), few academic articles have been published. I engaged a new case with on-the-ground, primary research during a particularly difficult time for the community.

Throughout this thesis, my findings and analysis counter the narrative that resistance is somehow illegitimate; thus, my work is significant because I talk about a phenomenon that mainstream press, industry, and political circles seek to dismiss. My work also contributes to a body of literature that characterizes opposition to energy projects as more than NIMBY politics, and which seeks to better understand local priorities (Devine-Wright 2009, 2011). Devine-Wright's research examines this trend

elsewhere – in the United Kingdom, mainly – whereas my work shows that it is happening here, in BC.

My contribution is that I took an approach that drew from the experiences of those involved. Although many of the themes are familiar from other cases, what I found is specific to this case and thus offers a distinctive perspective on the conflict. This does not mean my analysis gives a complete perspective, or the only perspective, and I do not claim as much. My work offers a snap shot of an important issue, one that deserves more analysis.

4. Research Limitations

This work tells a specific story, that of my interviewees' experiences. This research explores opposition by engaging a specific group of actors: those who opposed the PNW LNG project and other industrial projects in the region. As such, this is a group of people who were highly sympathetic to the cancellation of the project. While these were important people to speak with, I recognize that if I had chosen a different set of stakeholders I would have reached different findings. Throughout my writing I try to make clear that I am only speaking to the experiences of my interviewees; I am not trying to make general claims about the region. It is important to engage with others on this topic—from those who supported PNW LNG, to First Nations and people who work in industry—to gain a more holistic understanding of the communities' priorities moving forward.

A limitation is that I had a relatively small sample size of eighteen people. All those I interviewed made invaluable contributions to this research; however, there are other important actors who would have made provided key insights. The lack of Indigenous perspectives in this work is a significant limitation; although I see this as an essential part of the resistance in the region, it proved difficult for me to analyze. This is primarily due to the absence of previous relationships with community members. Moreover, the short period of time in which I had to conduct fieldwork limited my ability to build meaningful relationships that would have facilitated Indigenous involvement, and ensured the research was responsive to their priorities. This work is also limited by its accessibility. In reflecting on how academia reproduces privilege, and how research is produced which most often remains within the walls of the academy, I intend to explore

others way to communicate the findings of this research. I aim to contribute a shorter piece into the public sphere.

My research subject – opposition to LNG – is a politically sensitive topic in northwestern BC; as a researcher I became more cognizant of, and sensitive to, how industrial project proposals impact communities. While there are some transferable findings from this work, each case is distinct. It is important to note how the LNG Canada project was approved during the writing of my thesis and has not experienced much opposition from the community of Kitimat, although the associated Coastal Gaslink pipeline is vehemently opposed by Wet'suwet'en hereditary leaders from crossing through their territory.

This project must be understood as being inherently limited by my position; as a white woman of settler ancestry the questions I asked in interviews, the people I spoke with, the way the data was analyzed, and how the research was framed and written were all influenced by my position. It is important to acknowledge that being an outsider to the region has shaped my research process and my findings. This research is preliminary; further analysis of resistance to new energy infrastructure in BC is needed. Recommendations for future research include the need for a broader cross-section of community responses, and in-depth engagement with First Nations communities. As much of the limitations of this work arise from not having prior relationships with communities, I wish to emphasize how future research should first and foremost serve the wishes of communities involved and be developed out of trusted relationships.

5. Looking Forward

We are currently living in climate constrained world; we need to consider the implications of industrial development in the context of climate and listen to communities to guide this transition. Indeed, this is underway: people are responding to historical injustices, the climate crisis, and unjust industrial development, thereby illustrating that better worlds are possible (Escobar, 2017; Roelvink, St. Martin, & Gibson-Graham, 2015). My interviewees spoke about their interest in economic autonomy and experimentation; out of the PNW LNG proposal emerged a desire to build solutions; people I spoke with were articulating what types of economies they want, and in doing so, demonstrating the viability of alternatives.

> I think that we have a huge opportunity in front of us to be proactive in defining a different path forward; the renewable energy revolution, the transformation of our economy to more of an information [economy], there are so many entrepreneurs with great ideas and ambition. Collectively we really need to focus on talking about something else: instead of talking about what we don't want, talking about what we want to see our vision for the future. I think it's happening and we just need to highlight it and help push it forward (N-13).

In the context of opposing problematic industrial projects, communities in northwestern BC are working to build alternatives. This conceptualization of diverse economies is in alignment with the work of Gibson-Graham (1996, 2006, 2008). Encouraged by the innovative organizing energies of those who believe that another world is possible, Gibson-Graham's work sheds light on noncapitalist practices and sites around the world that are flourishing. In doing so, their work articulates "a new discourse of political economy centered on economic diversity and ethical actions, and generating a new economic politics that acknowledges and nurtures already existing alternatives" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 76).

Economically vulnerable communities, often out of necessity, are orienting away from, and building economies outside of, the dominant capitalist system. This remains inadequately explored, especially in the Canadian context. The conditions in the northwest are interested in developing alternatives. In better understanding these dynamics, Gibson-Graham's work offers promise: their work on alternative economies emphasizes the importance of solutions grounded in place: "a postcapitalist politics involves working collaboratively to produce alternative economic organizations and spaces in place" (2006, p. 77). Gibson-Graham's work puts what I found in my interviews into conversation with academic literature - with others who are trying to think about what alternative economies look like, and who are highlighting that this is already happening. Resistance is part of that insofar as it helps a community clarify what it values and acts together on what it values. Understanding why communities resist carbon-intensive projects also sheds light on the types of projects communities could support; listening to these concerns may help us build a stronger movement towards a just energy transition.

Gibson-Graham's work is helpful in generating a roadmap forward. By illuminating the transformative potential of place-based alternatives, "this new political imaginary gives us a larger world in which to start where we are, building our alternative economies here and now" (2006, p. 77). Any solution going forward needs to be attentive to the desires and concerns that have been expressed by community members. My interviewees were arguing for a movement away from extraction and the logics of accumulation towards economies controlled by communities; Gibson-Graham's work supports this. Many of my interviewees were working to build alternatives that prioritize long-term, community-based livelihoods over export-based, boom-bust industries. Although the transformative potential of diverse economies was not the focal point of my research, it became clear by speaking with people that there was an interest, thus demonstrating that this is an area that deserves more critical analysis.

6. Conclusion

If we are to successfully navigate the transitions we are facing, it is important to understand what is at stake for communities, and why resistance to energy projects emerges. This need is especially acute in the case study examined here, in which the political leadership of the day explicitly failed to engage with the community's concerns. This period of transition presents an opportunity to reimagine how we understand resource extraction, energy and the economy. It also provides momentum to address the systems of oppression that have necessitated the proliferation of extractive industries. Climate campaigners, government, and academics can support this shift; however, the solutions must come from those who live in an area and be driven by those who are going to stay. The wants and needs of communities must be prioritized in order to achieve a just energy transition.

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Appendix

Appendix A
Interview Questions

1. Can you introduce yourself, describe your position, and how you came to be involved with the Pacific NorthWest LNG proposal?

2. Can you describe how your organization campaigned in relation to the project: What strategies did you use, and why did you choose those strategies?

3. How effectively do you think your concerns were represented in media coverage?

4. How important was climate change/reducing greenhouse gas emissions in shaping your campaign?

5. What do you see as the lasting impacts of the proposal, and the campaign against it? How did the campaign change you or your organization?

6. Based on your experience in this campaign, what are your organization's priorities moving forward?

7. Also based on your experience in this campaign, what do you think provincial or national priorities should be moving forward, in relation to energy development and/or climate change?

8. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix B
Human Research Ethics Board Approval

University of Victoria | Office of Research Services | Human Research Ethics Board
Administrative Services Building Rm B202 PO Box 1700 STN CSC Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 Canada
T 250-472-4545 | F 250-721-8960 | uvic.ca/research | ethics@uvic.ca

Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	Karena Shaw	**ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER:** Minimal Risk Review - Delegated	**18-173**
UVic STATUS:	**Faculty**	ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE:	15-Jun-18
UVic DEPARTMENT:	**ENVI**	APPROVED ON:	15-Jun-18
		APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE:	14-Jun-19

PROJECT TITLE: **Flashpoints of Possibility: What resistance to fossil fuel development reveals about pathways to energy democracy**

RESEARCH TEAM MEMBER Student/Research Assistant: Emily Bishop, MA Student, UVic

DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING: **Lorene Kennedy Field Research Award (pending); SSHRC Partnership Grant**

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.

Modifications
To make any changes to the approved research procedures in your study, please submit a "Request for Modification" form. You must receive ethics approval before proceeding with your modified protocol.

Renewals
Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.

Project Closures
When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.

Certification

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Participants.

[redacted]

Associate Vice-President Research Operations

Certificate Issued On: 15-Jun-18

18-173 Shaw, Karena