You Can't Teach an Old Dog Green Tricks: Exploring the Effect of Ideology on Forestry Policy Decisions by the 1991-1996 British Columbia New Democratic Party

by
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Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

Abstract

This project explores the effect of ideology on the policy-making process through a case-study analysis of the NDP majority government which governed the province from 1991-1996. The focus is particularly on the NDP's forest policy, with a strong environmental platform and public support promising extensive reforms but delivering much less than expected. While traditional policy literature largely sidelines ideology as a factor in rational decision-making by individual policy actors, I argue that it plays a much larger role by determining the very scope of policy-options available to decision-makers. Combining Michael Freeden's Conceptual Approach to ideology with Frank Fischer's Discourse Analysis, I present a variety of party documents and interviews to argue that the BC NDP had the institutional ability and popular support to enact far-reaching reforms, but were constrained by their own ideological framework into a modest change to the status quo.

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Introduction

Governments the world over have struggled to address the degradation of the environment we all share[1]. Green parties are now present in most industrialized countries as minor political forces, but none has ever actually achieved a majority government (Gahrton and Lucas 2015). In the absence of green parties that are both 'pure' and major political forces[2], it would seem logical for green elected officials and their supporters to seek support and buy in from larger parties, especially in electoral systems that give smaller parties little input into the policy process. Indeed, most parties across the political spectrum make electoral promises and include environmental commitments in their platforms and policies. Unfortunately, the policies delivered by these non-green 'mainstream' parties have so far been insufficient to properly address the destruction of our shared environment. Nowhere is this more evident than in the struggled against climate change[3].

This project aims to explore and better understand the seeming inability of major parties to provide effective policy solutions to the critical environmental issues of our time. It posits that party (and as a result, government) ideology plays a significant role in determining policy outcomes, which is a theory largely absent from the mainstream policy literature. The Canadian province of British Columbia provides a fascinating setting to explore this theory. The province combines an important economic reliance on resource extraction with strong popular support for environmental protection despite lackluster Green party performances[4]. While three BC Green representatives do currently hold the balance of power in the provincial legislature, historically the responsibility of enacting policies to protect the environment has been dominated by the centre-left New Democratic Party (NDP). Adopting a case study approach, this project

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[1] McCarthy, Shawn. October 8 2018. "UN Report Calls for Urgent Action to Avert Catastrophic Climate Change." The Globe and Mail, Ottawa. Obtained from: https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-un-report-calls-for-urgent-action-to-avert-catastrophic-climate-change/

[2] A Canadian exception to this may be the provincial Green Party of Prince Edward Island, which was the first choice for a plurality of Islanders in the latest political poll. See: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-cra-poll-august-2018-1.4812816.

[3] McCarthy. 2018. "UN Report Calls for Urgent Action."

[4] The BC Green party did not obtain more than 5% of the popular vote until 2001 and has only recently elected a record 3 representatives to an 85 seat legislature. (Elections BC, https://elections.bc.ca/resources/learning-about-elections/electoral-history-of-bc/)

focuses on the 1991-1996 BC NDP majority government to explore the challenges it encountered after championing environmental issues in its election platform. The early 1990s were the heyday of environmentalism in the province, with public opinion and economic factors aligning in a way that should have facilitated bold environmental policy action (Tollefson 1998; Wilson 1998; Cashore 2001). My specific focus will be on forest policy, the target of substantial academic literature. Moreover, the forest industry was at the time and continues to be a crucial driver of British Columbia's economy.

My starting point in discussing environmental policy is Andrea Olive's definition (2016, 71): "environmental policy in Canada is policy that governs human behaviour towards the environment." This involves everything from punitive approaches in the form of environmental regulation to offering incentives for developing green tech or tax breaks on eco-friendly products. This very inclusive definition of 'green' policy will be contrasted with ecologism, which will be addressed in chapter 2 and involves a radical redefinition of policy priorities. Some form of environmental policy is espoused by parties across the political spectrum, the key question is what they are willing to sacrifice in order to meet environmental policy objectives (Gahrton and Lucas 2015; Olive 2016).

This project will show that the BC NDP had the institutional ability and popular support to enact far-reaching policy reform to protect the forests and diverse environments of British Columbia, concluding that they failed to do so primarily because party ideology constrained its policy options. Institutional ability in the BC case involves the legal power and financial resources to change forestry policy and I gauge popular support through public opinion polling. My analysis combines a series of interviews with key players in policy formulation at the time with Fischer's (2003) discourse analysis approach to government and party records, interpreted through the lens of Michael Freeden's ideological framework (Freeden 1998). During the 1990s[5], successive NDP governments enacted several important reforms in forestry policy praised by environmentalists (Wilson 1998; Careless 2018; Cashore 2018). However, they also failed to carry out their own ambitious reform agenda in several respects, refusing to compromise jobs and economic growth in favour of environmental protection.

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[5] The BC NDP was elected to a majority government in 1991 and 1996. This project will focus on the period from 1991-1996 in which the BC government implemented the majority of its forestry policy reforms (Wilson 1998).

This project should not be understood as a condemnation of the NDP's policy achievements during this period. Rather, by exploring the role of ideology, particularly the relationship between party ideology and 'green' policies, the project opens a distinction between parties that work to balance environment concerns and industry goals and those that assign inherent value to preservation and require society – and the party as an electoral organization – to sacrifice industry goals to enact 'green' policies. These sacrifices include the loss of jobs in resource-intensive industries and short-term economic stagnation, with their associated effects on support by key interest groups (unions, industry) and the voting public. This project thus sheds light on a key distinction between green and social democratic parties, which are increasingly competing for a similar voting demographic while championing policies that are sometimes hard to differentiate.

Structural Overview

The project is divided into three chapters. I conclude this introduction with an overview of BC forestry, its particularities and its relevance as a policy case study. In chapter one I identify a gap in existing policy theory in which ideology acts to limit acceptable solutions at the outset of the policy-making cycle. I then present the use of discourse analysis within Freeden's conceptual approach to explore the role of ideology in decision-making within a particular case. Chapter two presents the struggle of the BC NDP to deliver on promises of forestry policy reform while in government and how this can be framed as a clash of ideologies. Finally, I apply the theoretical frameworks described in chapter one to a variety of textual and interview sources to make a case for a greater consideration of the role of ideology in policy-making.

A Short History of BC Forestry

People living in British Columbia have always profited from the vast natural resources the province has to offer. Early in the province's colonial history, timber harvesting was spurred on by the construction boom of the gold rush, and gradually became a key component in the emerging provincial economy (Barman 2007). The nature of the staples economy concentrated natural resource jobs, including those in forestry, around particular communities, making them especially vulnerable to price

fluctuations and/or technological change. Logging activity spread up into the interior along the Trans-Canada Railway, with logs being shipped by rail East and West. The arduous and specialized nature of forestry fostered an exclusive social setting which shunned foreigners and helped associate logging with a true British Columbian identity (Barman 2007; Howlett, Pilon, and Summerville 2010).

The defining principle of British Columbian forestry policy is that the vast majority of forested land has remained in public hands, giving the provincial government almost absolute control over the use of timber resources. Early policy was dominated by the belief that long-term tenure agreements with limited restraints were the best way to promote both economic maximization and sound management practices (Tollefson 1998; Wilson 1998). Starting in the inter-war period, concerns about overcutting and poor replanting by timber companies urged the government to adopt a more hands-on approach to forest policy. The Sloan Royal Commission of 1945 restated the potential of forestry as a long-term economic driver for the province, but also urged a change in harvesting practices to allow for better forest renewal, arguing for a "sustained yield" policy. This led to greater government oversight in the allocation of forest tenure and silviculture policies with goal of maximizing economic benefits over the long-term (Wilson 1998).

It was not until the mid-1960s that popular discourse shifted to include the notion that provincial forests might contain value above and beyond the price of timber. Supporters of this more holistic view broadly followed in the footsteps of the American environmental movement, and called into question the single-use approach the BC government favoured with respect to forest policy (Blake, Guppy, and Urmetzer 1996; Wilson 1998; Olive 2016). The political dominance of Social Credit, a party largely committed to free-market solutions to economic issues, mostly kept these new ideas off the table while in power from 1952-1972 and 1975-1991 (Cashore 2001; Howlett, Rayner, and Tollefson 2009). This hands-off approach to timber supply and environmental issues was bolstered by the report of the Pearse Commission in 1976, which concluded that rates of cut were largely over-estimated and that most environmental concerns were overblown (Wilson 1998). Environmental policies relevant to the forest sector - establishing a Ministry of the Environment, forming a Wilderness Advisory Committee, etc. - were consistently subordinated to the interests of the all-

powerful Ministry of Forests (MOF), which continued its commitment to the forests-as-timber paradigm (Wilson 1998; Hoberg in Cashore 2001).

Social Credit's ideological stance against the government regulation of industry activities slowed its reaction to concerns about sustainability in BC forestry. This led the environmental movement to radical action in the 1980s, with the beginning of valley-by-valley confrontations between the logging industry (and workers) and environmental activists (Barman 2007). These repeated conflicts were rather dramatically named 'the war in the woods', and became a prominent political issue by the late 1980s. This strategy was vindicated not only by success in protecting several key wilderness areas, but also with increasing public support for environmental reform in the 1980s (Blake, Guppy, and Urmetzer 1996). This set the stage for a 'green' turn in NDP discourse at the 1991 election, with the long-time opposition party seeking to capitalize on the new salience of environmental issues (Wilson 1998; Barman 2007). However, this commitment to protecting the environment also created an ideological conflict within the party. At the climax of the 'war in the woods', the BC NDP was struggling to develop an electoral platform that would relate ideologically to traditional socialists, left-leaning liberals, and the emerging force of environmentalism, all within an industrial climate decidedly hostile to any government intervention in favour of environmental values.

Chapter 1.

Theory, Concepts and Ideology

A Gap in the Policy Process

The academic treatment of forestry in British Columbia has primarily been one of policy processes, focusing on what happened or didn't happen and why one policy option was chosen over another. Traditional policy literature spends a lot of time discussing policy cycles, advocacy coalitions, and institutions (Weible et al. 2012; Howlett, McConnell, and Perl 2016), but spends relatively little time discussing ideology. Even when attempts are made to combine diverse policy frameworks, the role given to ideology in the policy-making process is minimal (Howlett, McConnell, and Perl 2016). In Paul Sabatier's edited volume *Theories of the policy process* (2007), "individual belief systems" are mentioned a total of four times, and are considered as a variable affecting the rational choice of individuals rather than a variable guiding policy formulation (Sabatier 2007; Weible et al. 2012). Even the deep-seated normative preferences that Sabatier calls "policy core beliefs" (2007, 194) operate at the advocacy group level, rather than among legislators. Though Sabatier's advocacy coalition framework comes closest to admitting a role for ideology in policy implementation, it is a simplistic and narrow view which subordinates ideology to rational choice, and thus minimizes the diversity present within groups that share similar policy goals (Hajer 1995; Fischer 2003).

The advocacy coalition framework posits that interest groups have the final word on policy formulation, reducing legislators to mere reactionaries in the face of lobbying pressures. There is no doubt that interest-group advocacy exists in the BC forestry case (Stanbury & Vertinsky in Tollefson 1998; Howlett in Cashore 2001), where the lines of conflict are clearly drawn between the pro-development and pro-conservation camps. While the policy literature highlights the historical power and influence of the forest industry in BC (Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle 1998; Wilson 1998; Howlett, Pilon, and Summerville 2010), it is also true that a government's primary goal is always re-election (Hoberg in Cashore 2001). This should have put environmental advocates, which I will show later were largely backed by public opinion, in a position of strength vis-à-vis

industry interests. Neither of the explanations advanced by Sabatier (2007) to explain belief change, policy-oriented learning and external shocks, seem particularly helpful to explain the BC case. The shocks of price fluctuation for forest products have effected forest policy throughout the province's history (Wilson 1998), but the early 1990s was an era of relative prosperity for the industry (Wilson 1998; Cashore et al. in Cashore 2001). Policy-oriented learning, on the other hand, is expected to occur over long periods of time as the dominant actors within a coalition are repeatedly confronted with the results of their previous policy choices (Fischer 2003). In both cases, beliefs are the result of rational calculus and change occurs as a result of overwhelming scientific evidence against a particular belief rather than a normative shift (Sabatier 1988; Weible et al. 2012).

The institutional or new institutional approach in its various guises (rational choice, historical, sociological, discursive) broadly argues that the primary barrier to policy change is the entrenchment of existing structures and ideas. The older and more complex an institutional structure, the more difficult it is to implement policy-change in a new direction (Hall and Taylor 1996; Schmidt 2010). Even discursive institutionalism, which emerged specifically to highlight the importance of ideas in the decision-making process, seeks to explain "how and why public actors bring about institutional change through public action" (Schmidt 2010, 21). This differs from my project in that I argue that policy-makers did not act in spite of public action (public support) for institutional reform. Similarly, John Kingdon argues that ideas are most important in their agenda-setting role. Once a problem has reached a decision-maker's desk, a policy-solution is imminent, with competing agendas and rational-choice explaining the exact outcome (Kingdon 1984; Zahariadis in Sabatier 2007). The trouble is getting the idea on the agenda. Since forestry was easily the most discussed issue in British Columbia leading up to the 1991 election (Wilson 1998; Howlett, Pilon, and Summerville 2010), this project looks beyond agenda-setting to the specifics of policy formulation.

A broadly institutional approach has been applied liberally to British Columbia in the 1960s and 1970s, with the land tenure system being particularly singled out for raising the economic and political costs of reform (Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle 1998; Tollefson 1998). This argument is taken furthest by Burda et al. (1998), who simultaneously argue in favour of a new policy framework they call "eco-forestry". The claim is that both elected officials and the provincial bureaucracy are too deeply

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implicated with the forest industry to enact meaningful reform. Eco-forestry would entail a new institutional model that attributes value through ecological rather than financial considerations (Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle 1998). This resembles an ideological approach, with the crucial difference that it maintains the cost of diverging from existing institutions as the barrier to change, not a difference in normative considerations. However, even what limited institutional change has occurred over time in BC forest policy has troubled its defenders and fueled the search for an alternative approach (Crawford 2012). Wilson (1998) leads the rebuttal to purely institutionalist claims by highlighting how much provincial institutions have already evolved in BC history, often in ways contrary to industry interests (for example, in the raising of government revenues through stumpage fees). Though I will be analyzing discourse to build on Burda et al.'s approach to the BC forestry case, I diverge from discursive institutionalism by giving the ideas (ideology) of individual or groups of actors a specific role within the policy-making process. Rather than looking at the evolution of institutional ideas within a society (Schmidt 2010), I argue that the personal worldview of those in power limits the scope of the policy solutions they are prepared to consider, regardless of the state of ideas in the world at large. The goal is to show that ideological considerations can help explain the BC NDP government's policy record precisely because the political benefits to reform should have outweighed the institutional costs.

The theoretical starting point of this project is therefore that the traditional factors considered in policy analysis cannot provide a satisfactory explanation of the decisions made by the NDP government between 1991-1996 in the area of forestry policy. In contrast, a major conclusion of scholars studying environmental politics and policy in various countries is that ideology in policy-making is complex, with personal views clashing with political strategy, leading to competing government priorities (Hajer 1995; Talshir 2002; Boardman and VanNijnatten 2009; Holzinger and Sommerer 2011; Gahrton and Lucas 2015; Olive 2016). In BC, the power to enact forestry policy is concentrated in the hands of the provincial government, which has provincial jurisdiction over resource extraction, government ownership of most of the land base, and executive dominance in provincial governance, with the leader of a majority government exercising complete control over policy formulation (Hoberg in Cashore 2001). In particular, this excludes a purely pragmatic or incremental explanation to the lack of policy reform. Pragmatism, a 'pick your battles' approach to policy-making (Sarkki et al. 2017), is

excluded because the NDP had the institutional ability to enact any desired reforms. Incrementalism, a 'baby steps' approach quite compatible with a social democratic ideology (Norberg-Bohm & Rossi 1998; Brewster 2010), does not explain why the NDP did not follow public opinion polling that suggested that reforming forestry would be politically advantageous. This gives us a case study of a social democratic party in a nearly ideal policy-making position, which opted to diverge from the 'green' commitments in its electoral platform to pursue forestry policies that made some effort to balance industry interests with environmental concerns.

The project thus explores the possibility that ideology acts as a filter in the policy-making process, constraining policy options within an implicit paradigm that can only offer a fraction of the choices hypothetically available to a policy actor. The belief systems described by Sabatier (1988) are moved from the sidelines of decision-making to a gatekeeper role. If policy development is seen as a cycle beginning with agenda setting (Sabatier 2007; Howlett, McConnell, and Perl 2016), then it seems quite probable that ideology is key not only in the agenda setting stage, but more importantly in the policy formulation stage where actors determine the range of acceptable solutions to the targeted policy problems. A policy problem such as environmental degradation may be on the agenda of diverse political or ideological factions, but each may present a radically different solution. A common example of this is the political reaction to an economic depression. Everybody agrees that a problem exists, but some will argue in favour of government intervention while others preach the exact opposite. Ideology not only prioritizes certain problems, but also certain solutions.

Freeden's Conceptual Approach to Ideology

The policy process behind BC forestry in the 1990s has been widely documented (Tollefson 1998; Wilson 1998; Cashore 2001), but the implicit nature of ideology makes it particularly difficult to track its effects. While ideologies are often presented as polar opposites in popular discourse, in reality most share a set of similar goals. These goals involve normative claims about value and human nature, and can be expressed as what Michael Freeden calls concepts (Freeden 1998). What really differentiates ideologies is the ranking of these concepts. Core concepts are fundamental to the nature of an ideology and are most relevant in illustrating the differences between them. However, core concepts are not sufficient to express an ideology as speakers of a common

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language often attribute various meanings to the same word. Freeden uses the example of liberty (1998, 77), which is claimed by most ideologies in some form, but will have a different meaning in a Liberal or a Socialist ideology (for example). What constitutes an ideology is the precise interpretation of core concepts according to the presence of supporting adjacent and perimeter concepts (Freeden 1998, 78).

This mapping of ideologies is "an invitation to an interpretation of the social and political world" (Freeden 1998, 128). Though it is important to remember that the conceptual approach extrapolates the limits of an ideology from the actual usage of its concepts, it remains a valuable tool for describing and comparing political actors (Ibid., 128). If Freeden's approach provides a framework for interpretive exploration of the structure and importance of ideology, there is still a need to identify each group of actors with their respective ideologies.

Discourse Analysis as a Path to Ideology

For this I will be calling on Frank Fischer's discourse analysis to extract ideological hints from a variety of textual sources. Fischer argues that 'normative frames' can be identified through a focus on a particular concept or expression that presents the boundaries of policy discourse (Fischer 2003). Discourse is used to identify the common motivation of policy actors, whose shared beliefs will have a disproportionate influence on policy outcomes (Schmidt 2010). The complementarity of Freeden and Fischer is not perfect, but provides an effective framework for the interpretation of those central ideas uncovered by discourse analysis.

For this hybrid analysis to be effective, there are inevitably trade-offs from the perspective of a 'pure' application of each theory. For my use of Fischer, I must posit that his 'normative frames' are roughly equivalent to Freeden's 'core concepts'. For Freeden, I must accept that the core beliefs of a small number of policy actors can be generalized to the point of ideological description. Thankfully, similar hybrids of language and ideological analysis have already been applied to the study of environmental ideas by several scholars including Gayil Talshir (Talshir 1998, 2002), Charles Taylor and Martin Heidegger (Taylor 1995).

I will be applying Fischer's method to identify 'normative frames' in the centrality of certain words or expressions. Fischer presents an environmental policy example in his own work, describing the use of 'sustainable development' in the Bruntland report as a key turning point in the framing by governments to discuss environmental issues (Fischer 2003, 147). Other examples of these might include terms such as 'resource management' or 'environmental protection'. Freeden's nuanced differentiation between core, adjacent, and perimeter concepts brings depth to Fischer's normative frames, with conceptual movement accounting for ideological reorientation as well as major normative shifts. As I compare various perspectives on policy-making (by environmental activists, politicians, etc.), this combination of Fischer's and Freeden's theoretical insights sheds light not only on the effect of differing core concepts on policy priorities, but also how the ranking of concepts can give a false impression of ideological compatibility. Normative frames not only narrow the scope of policy debate, but can actually disguise a non-core concept as vital to the dominant ideology. In the 'sustainability' example presented above, the World Commission on Environment and Development uses environmental language to present a developmental agenda under the guise of environmental concern (Fischer 2003). This is not a conscious act of deceit, but rather the result of ideological assumptions framing a critique of the dominant paradigm in acceptable terms. With methodological guidance from Freeden and Fischer, I explore the possibility that something similar occurred with the NDP in the 1990s.

Interviews and Primary Sources

I will be using several other documents to identify the NDP's ideological stance on forestry policy. The first is the NDP election platform for the 1991 election, along with a separate document outlining their position specifically regarding 'sustainable development' (BC NDP 1989). These documents were both published in 1989, and represent the best public presentation of the NDP's intentions pre-election. Both documents reflect views on environmental protection made famous by the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, more commonly called the Bruntland Report, which I have also included (Bruntland et al. 1987). To move from the NDP's pre-election promises to the reality of governing I will also be assessing the transcripts of the government's annual budget speeches from 1992-1996 as well as the preceding throne speech from each year. The approach to processing this variety of

material reflects a Freeden-oriented content analysis. Several discourse analysis techniques will help probe the materials reviewed. Word frequency analysis will contrast certain bold environmental quotes in the NDP's election platform with the most discussed policy issues within each document. Issue-specific coding will then be applied to all primary sources to uncover terms and phrases that suggest a particular ideological belief. The frequency analysis indicates which words or phrases are most common, and thus points us in the right directions for the substantive interpretation along lines suggested by Freeden and Fischer.

The empirical cornerstone of this project is a series of 5 interviews conducted with key policy players from the period: Ric Careless and Jim Cooperman, both prominent environmentalists; Johanna den Hetzog, an NDP special adviser who worked on the international aspects of forestry policy; Andrew Petter, Minister of Forests from 1993-1996; and Mike Harcourt, Premier of British Columbia from 1991-1996.

The 5 policy actors interviewed will give their own pictures of the goals and success of both government officials and environmental activists. In these semi-formal (semi-structured) interviews each participant is asked to answer a pre-determined list of questions. These questions have been included in the Appendix of this document. According to the answers of each participant, I ask follow-up questions related to their specific experience. Each interview is then transcribed and analyzed thematically for responses to environmental policy issues as described above. This should provide a convincing picture of the deep ideological differences that continued to separate government and environmentalists after 1991.

Overall, this project is an addition to the policy frameworks literature that I believe fills a gap in our understanding of the policy process. Ideology is undoubtedly related to both institutional factors and to advocacy coalitions; the dispute is over the nature of that relationship. I explore its presence and argue for its importance by using the much-discussed case of forestry policy in British Columbia. As I will detail below, I believe the BC NDP majority government in the early 1990s had both institutional ability and popular support to enact radical reform but that its ideology prevented the NDP from following through on some of the more ambitious reforms envisioned in its 1989 election platform. While I contend that this case uncovers insights applicable to environmental issues in

varying situations, it is also important to take any discussion of ideology and policy-making in its proper context.

Chapter 2.

Parties and Ideology

Social Democracy as Ideology

From an ideological perspective, the New Democratic Party of British Columbia is commonly described as social democratic (Resnick 1977; Hak 2013). Social democracy represents a combination of socialism and liberalism that in BC and elsewhere filled the gap between the revolutionary socialists and the capitalist liberals (Resnick 1977; Fredman 2013; Hak 2013). In his conceptual approach to ideologies, Michael Freeden (1998) identifies equality, community, and a productive view of human nature (among others) as core concepts in traditional socialism (426-427). Not only is it important to increase and redistribute the fruits of industry for the good of all members of society, but human beings are 'meant' to work as a way to build character and self-esteem (427). Since the early British Socialists, socialist ideas have also included democracy as an adjacent concept (440), with authoritarian outcomes in so-called 'socialist countries' treated as aberrations, sometimes necessary, but never desirable (Freeden 1998).

Throughout the 19th century, socialists in Britain and continental Europe worked with liberal parties to address the inequalities created by the industrial revolution, leading to the creation of centre-left parties such as the British Labour party (Freeden 1998). While maintaining redistribution and communitarianism as goals, social democracy dramatically toned down the Marxist hostility to private property rights, and adopted individual (human) rights as a pre-condition rather than a barrier to the good of the community. In this way, North American socialism migrated from the periphery of the political process to form parties willing and able to operate within a predominantly liberal democratic framework, which are today called social democratic, by incorporating the twin ideas of individual freedom and democracy into their arsenal of core concepts. Of particular relevance to this project is that this acceptance of private property rights and individual liberties also required an acceptance of capitalism as the economic system by default. When social democratic parties attempt to moderate the inequalities created by capitalism through redistribution, the result is a compromise between the desire for

equality and the view that the benefits of work for humans as productive beings can still be (at least partially) fulfilled within a liberal capitalist economy (Freeden 1998).

This process occurred in Canada and British Columbia, with the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) gradually moderating their stance to appeal to a greater number of voters (Resnick 1977; Hak 2013; Laycock and Erickson 2015). By the middle of the 1960s, the BC CCF had become the BC NDP, with not only equality, community, and productivity as core concepts but also individual rights and democracy as fundamental ideological pillars (Hak 2013). There is considerable debate over the effect of counting liberty among the core concepts of social democracy, as a compromise between individual rights and communal welfare can take many forms (Freeden 1998). I will argue that the 'liberalization' that shaped social democracy in BC actually moved the concept of community from a core position to one of ideological adjacency, because it "brought the socialist core concept of welfare in line with reformist and market-tolerant new liberal views"(Freeden 1998, 471). This is particularly important in explaining the clash between social democracy and the new 'green ideology' in BC, which despite much overlap, contain significant differences which would lead to very different policy outlooks.

The BC NDP in Political Context

The history of the NDP in post-WWII British Columbia was largely defined by its opposition to the dominance of Social Credit. The election of W.A.C Bennett in 1952 as the head of a right-wing coalition under the Social Credit banner led to the establishment of a two party system in BC for nearly 50 years (Barman 2007; Howlett, Pilon, and Summerville 2010). Social Credit was initially conceived as an alternative to traditional Tory politics, but in British Columbia it quickly morphed into a right-wing coalition blending free market economics with a rural protectionist streak. It was clear that Social Credit was no friend of the environment, which contributed to the election of the province's first NDP government in 1972 (Wilson 1998; Barman 2007). However, much like when the NDP would eventually return to power in 1991, there were a number of factors pushing the NDP away from its radical roots to more a palatable social democratic platform.

Social democrats have never enjoyed the electoral support of the majority in British Columbia, and have won electoral victories in this First Past the Post system by presenting themselves as a sensible alternative to the unique Social Credit style (Barman 2007; Howlett, Pilon, and Summerville 2010). This is not to say that class struggle is not a major factor in British Columbia, only that emphasizing it is not the way to win a majority government for the party on the left (Hak 2013). The right, having no such inhibition, regularly presented itself as defending the province from the "socialist hordes" (Howlett, Pilon, and Summerville 2010, 112). While the NPD's predecessor, the CCF, had a strong(er) socialist core pre-WWII, by the election of the first NDP government in 1972, the party had abandoned radical change in favour of moderate reform (Hak 2013; Howlett, Pilon, and Summerville 2010). In the 1980s, this balance between the right and the left was complicated by the emergence of a new ideological pole: environmentalism (Wilson 1998; Tollefson 1998). The NDP had adapted to the constraints placed upon it by a capitalist economy premised on resource extraction and it was now faced with a movement that demanded a radical shift in our understanding of wealth and value (Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle 1998; Salazar and Alper 2002). This set up a clash of ideologies, with the social democratic NDP appealing to environmentalists for electoral support, but failing to grasp the disconnect between their respective worldviews.

The BC NDP in 1991: Setting the Stage for Reform

What makes BC forestry in the 1990s particularly relevant to the discussion of ideology in policy-making is the lack of restraints traditionally associated with a government that maintains the political status quo. The 1991 election followed 16 years of Social Credit rule and a series of scandals that had thoroughly discredited the ruling party (Hak 2013). As the only viable alternative to the incumbent, this gave the NDP an obvious advantage. But beyond the fact that many people in the province believed that the time for Social Credit was finally up, a number of factors specific to forestry and environmental issues gave the NDP great incentive to broaden their ideology to appeal to environmentalists.

A Legacy of Bad Forestry

The mostly unregulated pillaging of BC forests in the decades leading up to the 1991 election has been widely documented by policy researchers. This was in spite of several commissioned reports recommending varying degrees of reform, with reports mostly agreeing in their appraisal that the current policy was unsustainable (Tollefson 1998; Wilson 1998). Environmentalists had begun a valley-by-valley struggle to save the most valuable of the province's ecosystems with the Meares' Island and Carmanah Valley protests generating significant media attention (Barman 2007; Howlett, Pilon, and Summerville 2010). Public opinion in the cities was largely swayed by images of clear-cut forests and protesters chained to trees, although industry and union support for the status quo remained strong in rural areas that were often heavily dependent on forestry and sawmill operations to drive local economies. In the late 1980s, Clayoquot Sound had become a popular symbol of the struggle against environmental degradation. The growing social tension around these valley-by-valley conflicts led the NDP to include a commitment in their 'sustainable development' manifesto to "end the war in the woods" (BC NDP, 1989).

Popular Support

Relevant public opinion data specific to British Columbians is unfortunately lacking for the period, but a study by Blake, Guppy, and Urmetzer (1996) does provide a detailed analysis of public concern for environmental issues at the end of the NDP's first term in office. Of particular interest is the conclusion that over 60% of respondents claimed to be willing to sacrifice jobs for the environment and that over 40% recorded some participation in environmental activism (donated money, signed a petition, joined a boycott). The authors also note that concern for the environment is highly correlated with the Left-Right spectrum, which considering the very low levels of support for the provincial Green party, left the NDP with a near-monopoly of the environmentally-sensitive voter (Tollefson 1998; Wilson 1998). Jeremy Wilson, in his book *Talk and Log* (1998), reports that private polling in 1994 put public support for a ban on clear cut logging at 62%, and that a full 72% of respondents thought job losses in the forest sector would be necessary in order to achieve sustainability in the industry. These numbers, following 3-5 years after the initial election of an NDP government campaigning on a

heavily pro-environmental platform, suggest that the BC public would likely have been open to exploring an institutional overhaul of forestry in BC.

A Favorable Economic Climate

While the public may have been in favour of a tougher regulatory approach, the health of the forest industry has historically been the determining factor in government's willingness to increase costs through stricter regulation (Tollefson 1998). At the time of Premier Harcourt's election in 1991, the forest industry was far from booming, but this changed rapidly during his first years in office. By 1994/1995, the forest products market was flying high, and the industry has historically been less opposed to major changes in the province's forestry policy in favourable economic conditions (Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle 1998; Wilson 1998). In addition, the much discussed boycott of BC forest products led by Greenpeace increased pressure on the industry to allow government to reform its image by promoting responsible forestry practices (Harter 2011, den Hertog 2018). In my interview with Mr. Harcourt (2018), he stated plainly that "*they [the industry] saw that we had to make these changes [to forest practices] or they were going to suffer a huge loss of customers.*" This was primarily relevant to the reform of forest practices, but could have been used as leverage to enact more comprehensive reforms. During the Premiership of Glen Clark from 1996-1999, the forest industry would once again suffer a downturn, which would bring a deterioration in the relationship between environmental groups and the NDP. In retrospect, the Harcourt-led BC NDP government, with strong public support for environmental protection and a robust forest economy, seemed to offer a window of opportunity for comprehensive reform.

This is not to suggest that the NDP had an easy path to reform. The party's heavy historical reliance on union support had created friction within the NDP between pro-environment members and forestry unions, in particular the Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada (IWA) However, the IWA also made it clear that it understood the need for reform, and was particularly interested in compensation and retraining for any members that might be negatively affected by environmental regulation (Wilson 1998; Hoberg in Cashore 2001). An agreement to support displaced forest workers was made between the IWA and the NDP even before 1991 election, in a joint press conference given on June 15th 1990 that included Mike Harcourt and IWA President

Jack Munro[6]. It would thus seem reasonable to assume that the union opposition to reform was not a deal-breaker on forestry policy issues. It not only made sense for the NDP to adopt strong environmental language leading up to 1991, but as late as 1996, it should have been politically realistic to follow through despite internal opposition from forestry unions. With public opinion in favour, industry profits high, and international pressure for better forestry, all the ingredients seemed to be present to allow for reform.

Green Ideology: A Radical Approach?

As is the case for social democrats, environmentalists or greens are hardly a monolithic group. In the simplest terms, environmentalists are variety of actors from different political perspectives coming together over a common goal: the preservation of earth's environment for future generations (Freeden 1998). Overall, green parties are usually seen as left-leaning, close to traditional social democratic parties with whom they have regularly formed coalition governments (Talshir 2002; Gahrton and Lucas 2015). However, for most authors a true 'green ideology' goes much further, constituting a distinct worldview that calls for a drastic reorganization of society's norms and values (Freeden 1998; Talshir 2002; Gahrton and Lucas 2015). This view is present in groups as diverse as the Ecofeminists (Mellor 1996), Communists and Anarchists (Freeden 1998), but also in the Deep Green movement which calls for a physical and spiritual return to nature (Stavrakakis 1997; Talshir 2002). Even in the case of British Columbian forestry, environmentalist Ric Careless (2018) admits struggling to finds consensus:

> The enviros were much more difficult [compared to government or industry] because they were split over a wide range of ideological concerns.

What I have tried to do in this project is to describe an ideological middle ground, which might be acceptable to most self-described environmentalists, but probably does not exist in any practical form. This is an attempt to create an ideological position broad enough to describe a substantial number of supporters, but narrow enough to have a small number of core concepts to be compared to those of the more established social democratic ideological camp. To describe this 'radical' environmentalism in Freedenite terms, I have chosen three core concepts, and combined them under the umbrella of

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[6] Stewart, Bell. 15th June 1990. "NDP Proposes Accord on Environment, Jobs." The Vancouver Sun, Vancouver, BC.

political ecology, a term borrowed from Michael M'Gonigle's work on sustainable forestry (Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle 1998; M'Gonigle in Tollefson 1998).

The first core concept is radicalism, or the desire to disrupt the existing political system (Stavrakakis 1997). This radicalism is the *raison d'être* of green ideology, which suggests that only through a change in political worldview can humanity move beyond exploitation to sustainable living. This was a key factor in keeping early environmental movements united, as actors of all political leanings can agree on protest if they are being excluded from the mainstream political process (Talshir 2002; Gahrton and Lucas 2015). This radicalism focuses particularly on society's obsession with economic growth, which puts it at odds with both traditional Marxism and liberal capitalism, and is seen as incompatible with the long term preservation of a habitable planet (Stavrakakis 1997).

The second core concept in BC's environmentalism during the 1990s was a communitarianism which ranks the needs of the individual second to the good of humanity, leading individuals and key decision-makers to conceive their personal objectives in terms of the larger needs and purposes of the community (Talshir 2005). Communitarianism is not unique to green thought, but it provides a necessary alternative to the highly individualistic liberal paradigm. This sense of community is not understood in the same way in all green parties, but it is nonetheless present. Only the good of the community can justify abandoning pursuit of highly individual goals, even if every individual is ultimately expected to benefit from putting environmental goals ahead of economic ones (Talshir 2005).

The final core concept is perhaps the most important, and involves an intrinsic valuation of nature, not through its value to humanity but in its own right. This approach condemns anthropocentrism and introduces a new consideration into the policy process: eco-centrism (Stavrakakis 1997; Freeden 1998; Talshir 1998). Most political parties now claim a place for environmental responsibility in their guiding ideologies, but these are presented as the results of a classic cost-benefit analysis. In contrast, a political ecology approach argues in favour of preservation even if society might benefit more economically and socially by (over) exploiting a particular resource. Along with the two factors mentioned above, this intrinsic valuation is what separates a green ideology from "mere environmentalism" (Gahrton and Lucas 2015, 9).Taken together, these three concepts form the core of an ideology known as political ecology that has been

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widespread (though not universally accepted) among BC environmentalists since the 1980s, but that the NDP was not able to accommodate despite its 'green turn' in 1991 because its own ideological stance re-cast the agenda-setting process and constrained policy options to those compatible with its own core concepts.

Political Ecology in BC Forestry

But what exactly did this ideological core of political ecology look like in practical British Columbian politics? While there was undoubtedly unrest about BC forest policy under successive NDP governments (as under their Social Credit predecessors), it can be difficult to identify the common ground that 'radicalized' environmentalists and allowed them to unite in actions of civil disobedience. In his edited volume *The Wealth of Forests* (1998), Chris Tollefson identifies a number of common policy reforms demanded by a majority of the province's environmental groups. These priorities were confirmed by the two environmentalists interviewed (Careless 2018; Cooperman 2018).

1. A comprehensive reform of the land tenure system, either to encourage industry-led management of forest resources or to increase government involvement in harvesting.

2. A significant reduction of the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) across the province.

3. The creation of large protected areas to promote biodiversity and preserve British Columbia's remaining old growth forest, doubling the 6% of land protected at the NDP's election in 1991.

4. An end to clear-cutting and a significant increase in regulation guiding the acceptable environmental damage accompanying timber harvesting.

These four reforms can all be considered 'radical', as each represents a major departure from established practice. All represent a burden on the forest industry, but only a reduction in the AAC and a rethinking of the tenure system would likely have precipitated a drop in industry profits that could not be compensated elsewhere (without extensive government intervention in the market). Finally, though each of these points taken individually cannot be said to represent a major ideological shift, taken together, they would have represented a policy revolution incompatible with continued expansion of forestry in the province (Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle 1998; M'Gonigle in Tollefson 1998).

Contrasting social democracy and political ecology thus focuses on comparing the core concepts present in the discourse of each. I have argued above that for the BC NDP, social democracy includes equality, individual liberty/democracy, and a productive human nature. For the political ecologists, this means radicalism, community, and an intrinsic valuation of nature. There is definitely overlap between these two cores, with equality and democracy being common to both worldviews. On the other hand, the different ranking of some concepts (i.e. community) and the total absence of others suggests a clear difference in the normative priorities of each. Discourse analysis is the tool that can illustrate how this difference in normative goals played out in the real world of politics and policy-making.

Chapter 3.

BC NDP 1991-1996

Analysis

Evidence of a Green Turn?

My analysis of the NDP commitment to reforming forestry policy starts in 1989. Foot-dragging by the Social Credit government and continued protests at logging sites across the province had hurt the credibility of existing forestry policy and greatly increased public awareness of forestry issues. In the lead up to the 1991 election campaign, the NDP published a 'sustainable development' platform for the first time, illustrating the growing importance of environmental issues for the public. However, this document presented a paradox, summarized by the following commitment: "New Democrats are committed to creating employment and economic growth without harming our environment" (BC NDP 1989). Despite the bold promise, the language used in the entire document suggests a strong favouritism towards economic development. A word frequency count applied to the NDP's 'sustainable development' manifesto puts the words environment/environmental high on the list (5th), alongside words such as 'resource' and 'development', but a discussion of serious environmental issues (that require serious action) are nearly invisible. Words such as 'waste, conflict, problem, and pollution' are nowhere to be seen in the top 10, with only 'waste' breaking the top 20 most used words (Table 1). In a document that claims in its introduction that "the thrust of sustainable development is that significant changes in the pattern of economic activity are necessary to halt the steady degradation of the environment which sustains both economic activity and life itself" (BC NDP 1989), you would expect language pertaining to environment issues to dominate discussion. Instead, this initial analysis suggests the paradox of a document dedicated to the environment in which the economy is the primary concern.

Table 1.   Top 15 most frequent words in the NDP's Sustainable Development document (BC NDP 1989).

Word	Count	Similar Words
British Columbia	78	-
Resource	77	Resources
Forest	66	Forests
Government	58	Governing, Governments
Environment	44	Environmental
Development	37	Develop, Developed, Developing
Level	37	Levels
Manage	34	Manage, Managed, Management, Managing
Sustainable	34	Sustain, Sustainability, Sustainable, Sustaining
Economic	32	Economically
Province	32	Provinces
Industry	32	Industrial, industrialized, industries
Waste	29	Wasteful, Wastes
Areas	27	-
Credit	25	-

The paradox continues in the NDP 1991 election platform. Presenting 20 commitments to British Columbians, commitment #5 declares that "a prosperous British Columbia needs a dynamic market economy" (BC NDP 1989). However, commitments #17, #18, and #19 promise to better protect and police the province's forests because "the big companies have been left to police themselves in our forests" (BC NDP 1989). There is an apparent conflict between the desire for economic prosperity through market economics and sustainability. The NDP promises to "replace every tree cut," but cannot guarantee the protection of forests without intervening in the forest economy. Nevertheless, the NDP's promise to "generate[ing] growth without harming the environment" (BC NDP 1989) in the lead-up to the 1991 election was a clear appeal to the 'green' portion of the party's base. It generated significant friction between environmentalist and union factions within the NDP (Wilson 1998).

A similar pattern is evident in the United Nations Bruntland Report published in 1987, alerting the world to the unsustainable nature of current economic practices. This report was hugely influential, with several of my interviewees mentioning it as an inspiration (Den Hertog 2018, Harcourt 2018), and Frank Fischer using it as an example

of the power of language to frame policy discourse (Fischer 2003). The use of terms such as 'sustainable' allows for discussion of economic issues in an environmental context. However, by privileging words associated with development over those associated with environmental issues or solutions, these issues become intertwined, and adopt an assumption of continued economic growth (Hueting 1990; Hajer 1995; Fischer 2003). This has resulted in an anthropocentric (production oriented) discussion of environmental issues that is incompatible with what I have described as political ecology (M'Gonigle in Tollefson 1998), suggesting that we can have our cake and eat it too.

I argue that these documents present a 'green turn' for the NDP because for the first time in BC history environmental issues are presented as a central political issue. The party does not explicitly say that it is willing to sacrifice jobs for the environment, but it recognizes that environmental issues are legitimate and that they must be included alongside economic considerations. Political manifestos often display an ideological vagueness meant to appeal to broad electoral audience, even if the compatibility of the different concepts presented is unclear (Freeden 1998, 77). This initial analysis suggests that the NDP have integrated environmental concerns into their ideological makeup in a new way. If a productive human nature and equality as core concepts of social democracy, conserving the environment has perhaps found a place on the periphery or even adjacent to the core. While the inclusion of a new concept opens up new policy considerations, it also invites conflict between policy goals that may not always be compatible.

The conflict arises because, in the real world, legislators govern with limited resources and must make trade-offs to prioritize certain policy initiatives over others. This is particularly the case with environmental policy in which there are few win-win situations, leading to a broad implementation gap in many Canadian jurisdictions (Cashore et al. in Cashore 2001; Howlett 2001). In the documents discussed above, the NDP express the desire to promote equality by redistributing the fruits of human productivity, but also pledge to limit this productivity in order to preserve the environment. In this way, policy actors (such as an incoming government) that have not yet been faced with the practical problems of implementation may easily hope to achieve policy change motivated by both core and adjacent concepts, even if the latter is sacrificed to the former when incompatibility arises. A study of a government's policy

accomplishments is key in the quest to identify the complex, often internally inconsistent ideology of policy actors.

Budget and Throne Speeches

The BC annual Budget Speech and Speech from the Throne lay out both a government's short-term spending priorities and its long-term policy vision for the province. What emerges in the budget speeches is a seeming separation between environmental issues and the economy, as if they were two independent issues, with the economy clearly dominating proceedings. The budget speech in 1992 devotes merely 5 lines to "protecting our environment", with a single funding commitment of $4.5 million "to improve pollution monitoring, enforcement, and environmental protection". In 1993, the budget devotes a single line to forestry, announcing a project fund for advanced silviculture, and makes no mention of the environment. It is only in 1994 that forestry makes a significant appearance in the budget, and takes up a healthy 19 lines. This includes the announcement of the Forest Practices Code and the Timber Supply Review, with the conclusion that "years of overcutting and poor management practices have led to a decline in both the quantity and quality of the remaining resource". And yet is it the economic value of forests, the fact that "the health of our forest industry is critical for the survival of communities across British Columbia," not environmental values that motivates this attention. In 1995, the Budget speech contains similar language dealing with forest communities and the economic value of forests, opening the section on forestry with: "protecting jobs and ensuring prosperity in communities across British Columbia requires getting the greatest benefit from our natural resources." Not a word is included on environmental degradation or on spending to redress environmental damage. A similar story unfolds in 1996, with a few lines on the importance of forestry as an industrial resource (as well as a similar comment about the state of salmon stocks), but not a word on the environment. There is no doubt that budget speeches focus on economic objectives and expenditure headlines, but a single moderate spending commitment for the environment across 5 budget speeches is a meagre commitment for a government described as the greenest in BC history (Wilson 1998).

In contrast to the budget presented two weeks later, the 1992 Speech from the Throne follows the path set forth in the NDP's election platform, by devoting several paragraphs to environmental issues and presenting several initiatives (such as the

Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE)) without however providing much detail. Even when attention is drawn to these issues, they remain within an economic frame. The section on environment issues begins with "our children's future and economic well-being depend on a healthy and sustainable environment" and ends with "[…] will promote better stewardship and obtain greater benefits for this generation and those that come after us". More balanced, the 1993 Throne Speech hails the impact of CORE, that is seeking "solutions that balance our long-term economic, environmental and social values", as well as the imminent Environmental Assessment Act which will alleviate "concern and uncertainty with both investors and the environmental community". A similar trend is visible in 1994, with a significant portion devoted to forestry, but only a vague commitment to "recognize environmental values." In 1995, the Throne Speech announced that "no longer are decisions left in the hands of large resource companies alone. Working people, environmentalists, and communities now have a place at the table". This represents a weakening of the NDP's strong environmental commitments in 1989 that decisions would no longer reside *solely* in the hands of large resource companies. Finally, the 1996 throne speech includes the most environmental references of any of these texts, but they serve primarily to highlight what has been done, as with the doubling of BC Parks, and the creation of Forest Renewal BC. All this remains framed as a process to "put this crucial industry on the road to long-term sustainability".

The absence of environmental concerns from successive budgets and their framing in the accompanying throne speeches illustrates the denouement of the clash of concepts identified in the NDP's 1991 election platform. Environmental concerns remained important to the NDP's policy agenda in the government's rhetoric. However, when faced with spending decisions involving trade-offs between industry and the environment the government clearly identified its priorities in 6 successive budgets. This reflects the expected clash of concepts within the NDP's ideology, with the core concepts of human productivity leading to material equality eclipsing the adjacent concept of environmental protection.

With both social democracy and political ecology highlighting environmentalism, the greatest difference between them is thus the relative rather than absolute priority given to environmental issues. If the NDP had been able to enact a complete forest policy reform package and promote maximum economic growth, they would likely have

done so. The key difference is the value and rank of each concept within its respective ideology when factored into the cost-benefit analysis inherent in policy-making. While the NDP documents discussed above paint their own ideological picture, the friction and resulting trade-offs around environmental policy are best expressed by the policy-actors themselves.

Interviews[7]

Again and again the discussion of forestry is framed in terms of productivity, of sustainability as the means to greater economic prosperity rather than as a responsibility that human beings owe to nature. This content analysis suggests that the NDP did not protect the environment for its own sake, but rather subordinated it to human material needs. However, Fischer is hesitant to attribute social meaning without recourse to an interpretivist angle, as he argues that this creates "special problems of access" (Fischer 2003, 139). To this end, I have conducted 5 semi-formal interviews with crucial players in the forestry policy process in the 1990s. Though this continues to provide only a limited number of viewpoints, it allows for "the understanding of events and actions in relation to the subjective meanings, motives, or purposes behind such actions or events, particularly those held by the relevant participants" (Fischer 2003, 141).

What is striking about each of my interviews is how closely they align with one another in their description of NDP forest policy. Several themes emerge consistently[8]. First, both government and environmental representatives agree that the NDP accomplished meaningful reform of forest practices and succeeded in protecting a large percentage (about 14%) of the province's forest land base. Second, both groups recognize that the NDP consciously chose a position of compromise in order to balance a healthy economy (and jobs) with environmental protection. Finally, each participant acknowledged the contributions of government officials and the environmental

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[7] A full list of interview questions is included in the Appendix.

[8] The following paragraph refers to the responses of each participants to the questions listed below.

1. Did you feel environmental issues were a priority for the incoming Harcourt government in 1991?
2. Would you say industry or government lobbyists were easier to deal with?
3. Do you feel that the BC NDP succeeded in meeting their environmental objectives in the 1990s?

movement to reforming forestry policy and recognized that the NDP of the 1990s provided the greenest government BC has ever had.

That being said, there remains a clear difference in the evaluation of the NDP's success in actually implementing policy, especially with regards to their policy goals of 1991. Contrasting assessments of the government's environmental agenda are obvious when reading descriptions from the NDP and environmentalist camp.

> We didn't put it in the context of environmental issues, we were focused on sustainability issues. In other words, the interaction of a prosperous economy, a healthy environment and social equity, social justice issues. So, the environment wasn't sitting out there all on its own, it was an essential component interacting with economic and social issues as well.
>
> (Harcourt 2018)
>
> It's not jobs or the environment, it's jobs for the environment and a good environment for jobs.
>
> (Petter 2018)
>
> Mike Harcourt's and the NDP's position going into the 1991 election was about changing and ending the 'War in the Woods' and making sure that we would have both the economy and the environment.
>
> (Den Hertog 2018)
>
> So, I think the primary objective [of the NDP government] was to improve forestry practices, because that's the only thing they acted on, they didn't deal with tenure and they didn't deal with rate of cut.[…] The NDP has always had difficulty because they have union people in there who have a huge influence. So, there was always that tension between the environmental sector and the union sector within the NDP.
>
> (Cooperman 2018)
>
> […] there was a lot of tension around Clayoquot on Vancouver Island and so the government coming in was trying to figure out how to solve that because their power base came both from the unions and the forest workers in the rural areas, and also from the more environmentally and socially progressive folks in the cities, so they were trying to cobble it all together. Harcourt clearly had a long-standing concern about environmental issues going back to when he was mayor of Vancouver.
>
> (Careless 2018)

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I would argue that Harcourt's description is more cautious than his 1991 election platform, but the approach is recognizably the same. The key word is sustainability, which fits well with promises to "replace every tree cut" and not so well with "creating employment and economic growth without harming our environment" (BC NDP 1989), but the focus on compromise remains. There is no doubt that the NDP wanted to be known as the best option for those BC citizens concerned about the environment without sacrificing their commitment to individual rights and free enterprise. Jim Cooperman appreciated the NDP's reform of forest practices but expressed frustration that they did not address land tenure or rate of cut, which in hindsight he concludes were not NDP goals. Ric Careless and Johanna den Hertog had a different take, highlighting the social unrest caused by bad forestry practices as the primary concern of the incoming Harcourt government.

Each interview participant approaches the point from a different angle and the two camps are clearly discernable. The NDP approach is one of balance, presenting environmental issues as one component of a greater reform package. Unsurprisingly, the environmentalists were much less concerned with factors such as employment and industry profits than were the members of government, but they also identify a lack of cohesiveness within the NDP around environmental issues. Despite this recognition of the party's internal conflict, Cooperman is clearly disappointed that the NDP did not deal with tenure and rate of cut while in power.

And this disappointment is to be expected. NDP participants claim that their government's goal was to find a balance between the economy, jobs, and the environment. This makes perfect sense for a social democratic party, and is broadly reflected in the party's electoral platform. However, what is reflected in the party's budget speeches several years running and in the subsequent policy literature is a lack of true reform to forestry policy. Though both groups report being able to work together, if there are differences in the valuation of goods (which of the environment, the economy, and jobs should be prioritized), at the end of the day one group will be disappointed. Despite feeling that their camp had more influence than ever before on BC politics (Careless 2018, Cashore 2018), the environmentalists interviewed indeed expressed their disappointment in the results achieved after 10 years of NDP government.

> If you're overcutting the forest, it doesn't matter if you clear cut or selective cut, you're just going to end up with one massive overcut, and that's what happened. […] So, I think there was a focus, it came out of Clayoquot, we've got to get the guys to do forestry differently, and that led on to the Forest Practices Code, but it didn't address, in my mind, the fundamental issue.

(Careless 2018)

Here Ric Careless reflects on the difference between his interpretation of environmental protection and the NDP's. Improving forest practices is a good thing, but it is not sufficient to preserve the value of forests. That requires a reduction in tree cutting, which will most likely result in economic losses. There was in fact a modest reduction in AAC over the 1993-1996 period, but environmentalists continued to view this level of cut as unsustainable (Wilson 1998). The NDP argued for a holistic approach to jobs and the environment, but the environmentalists interviewed and the policy literature suggest that this approach had a limited effect on the long term health of BC forests, even if it undeniably had a positive effect (Tollefson 1998; Wilson 1998; Rayner in Cashore 2001). The friction between the government agenda and environmentalists' goals was occasionally palpable:

> There were some NGOs, I include the Greenpeace international effort in this, that were not easy to deal with, because they very much focused on only one message, which is "stop clear-cutting", protect Clayoquot etc. You know, nuances weren't what they were particularly interested in, at all.

(Den Hertog 2018)

Greenpeace is by no means representative of all environmentalists (Harter 2011), and there is no question that the CORE and Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) discussions bringing industry, labour, and environmentalist together were considered a success by all involved. But I think the use of the term 'nuance' in the quote above is worth highlighting. It seems to me that what is meant by 'nuance' is actually compromise, which the NDP favoured and those under the political ecology banner saw as incompatible with conservation goals. The hindsight evaluations of each of the parties could not state this more clearly.

> I think we pretty much accomplished our objectives.

(Harcourt 2018)

> [...] the NDP were trying to bridge multiple agendas. Harcourt in particular, Clark not as much, embraced the idea of protected areas. So in that way I would say they absolutely did [meet their objectives]. Their land use plans as a way of diffusing conflict, no question. We've got over 80% of the province under land use plans that are being honored, well semi-honored, they're honored inside the parks but not the way they should be outside and that happened under the Liberals. And the NDP government was concerned about creating enough jobs for workers, I think they would say they were successful on that.

(Careless 2018)

> So, I would say that on the parks agenda we were successful on and continue to be successful on that, but the industry forestry policy outside of the parks were a very heavy failure.

(Careless 2018)

I believe that these interviews illustrate that the core concept of a productive human nature, inherited by the NDP from its socialist roots, is incompatible with a political ecology vision that demands a sacrifice of material well-being to preserve the environment. The environmentalists clearly highlight that they had significant success in their search for better forest practices and protected areas, and slowing the rate of forestry growth. However, when the NDP was asked to reduce forestry activity (through a significant reduction in annual cut) it chose to maintain economic activity (and jobs) instead. In Freedenite terms, a core concept of the NDP's social democracy (a productive human nature) prevailed over the core concept of nature's inherent value held by political ecologists.

Why does all this influence the policy process? When the NDP of the 1990s approached environmental issues under the mantra of sustainability, attempting a balancing act between industry, jobs, and the environment, it was limited in its means by adopting the same ends as its predecessors. If your goal is to protect the environment and foster growth (in the short or long term), you are excluding measures that would likely be more effective in protecting the environment but would also hurt the economy. While the NDP's sustainability platform advertises a growing economy *without* environmental damage, in practice the policy produced was one of *maximizing* growth and *minimizing* damage. This is a defensible policy if you believe, as I argue the NDP do, that nature is subservient to society and that society must preserve nature primarily to maximize its own benefit. As the world currently lacks a proven alternative to liberal capitalism, this may be the best policy to foster equality and increase standards of living.

However, the environmentalists who have adopted the ideological outlook of political ecology, prioritizing the preservation of nature over the maintaining economic growth, are bound to disagree.

Glen Clark's description of environmental activists as "the enemies of BC"[9] in the late 1990s, as a struggling economy turned public opinion against growth-restricting policy, is a sobering reminder of the NDP governments' priorities. A survey of Clark's 1996 election platform makes this new direction evident. While 3 of 20 commitments addressed environmental issues in the 1991 platform, in 1996 only a single commitment to build on the NDP's existing achievements (Forest Practices Code, Forest Renewal, etc.) remains (BC NDP 1996). Jim Cooperman remembers:

> […] As time wore on, the NDP became less of an environmentally focused government, and more of a resource force, you know. That happened when Glen Clark took power, and he angered all of us when he called environmentalists enemies of BC. And so that really changed the whole dynamics there. With Glen Clark, I actually dropped the NDP, I was so angry, and a lot of other people did too.
>
> (Cooperman 2018)

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[9] Hunter, Justine. April 22, 1997. "Forest Protests Promised: Premier Glen Clark Says Greenpeace Campaigners are enemies of BC." The Vancouver Sun, Vancouver. Obtained from: ProQuest Database.

Conclusion

I think that most could agree that BC forests were far better off following NDP tenure than if it they had not governed during the 1990s. The ambitious reform agenda that produced the Forest Practices Code, Forest Renewal BC, and more than doubled the province's protected land base was both brave and effective. More importantly, I think the policy record shows that the NDP successfully carried out the mandate given to them by the BC electorate.

Nonetheless, my analysis is also concerned with what could have been, and the goal of this project was to explore an alternative explanation to the inaction of policy-makers. Why were environmentalists disappointed by the NDP's performance? Why didn't the NDP attempt a significant reduction of the Annual Allowable Cut or a reform of the tenure system? I argue that the nature and demands of 'radical environmentalists' in BC were in many cases not even seriously considered as policy options, because they ran counter to the NDPs own ideological core concepts. This resulted in only one of the goals championed by environmentalists being fully met (the doubling of protected areas) and the discourse of policy actors suggests that a difference in normative goals had a role in this story. This clash of ideologies understood in Freedenite terms imposed a narrative frame on the politicians of the day.

These questions might not be warranted if the NDP had not made such bold claims in the lead up to the 1991 election: "Creating employment and economic growth without harming our environment" set the bar rather high. I have explored the resulting paradox and argue that the answer turns largely on the NDP's ideological character as a social democratic party. This limited the party's policy options while in power and drove them to largely abandon environmental concerns as the economy struggled and their productivist core enlarged its significance within their overall ideology and policy program.

Once ideology is recognized as a frame for the policy process, it becomes important to include it in both academic discussion and political discourse. The NDP continues to market itself as an environmentally-sensitive party, but can it truly meet the expectations of those who believe that nature has inherent value? Are the BC Greens, currently supporting the NDP's minority government, themselves worthy of that mantra?

As was mentioned above, self-proclaimed defenders of the environment are far from unanimous in condemning economic growth.

The Harcourt era represents a golden age in British Columbia's quest to achieve balance between industry, jobs, and the environment. So long as the economy prospered, that was an easy sell. But as industry struggled and public opinion turned, the NDP clearly chose productivity over preservation. Andrew Petter argues that "it's hard to drive opinion, even when in power" (Petter 2018). In the struggle to reform BC Forestry in the 1990s, for environmentalists the true test of strength was to drive the opinion of those in power.

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Interviews

Ric Careless (environmental activist) in discussion with the author, August 6, 2018. Telephone.

Jim Cooperman (environmental activist) in discussion with the author, August 8, 2018. Telephone.

Johanna den Hertog (NDP policy advisor) in discussion with the author, August 9, 2018. Telephone.

Mike Harcourt (former premier) in discussion with the author, August 16, 2018. Telephone.

Andrew Petter (former minister of forests) in discussion with the author, August 15, 2018. In-person.

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Appendix.

Interview Questions

Listed below are the base set of questions used in each of my five interviews. According to the answers of each participant, I asked follow-up questions related to their specific experience. Each interview was then transcribed and analyzed thematically for responses to environmental policy issues as described in Chapter 1.

1. Please describe your role in the forestry policy-making process for the BC NDP in the 1990s.

2. To what extent did you interact with pro-environment, union, or industry interest groups in the context of your role?

3. Would you say industry or government lobbyists were easier to deal with?

4. What did you feel was the government's primary objective with regards to forestry policy in the 1990s?

5. Did you feel environmental issues were a priority for the incoming Harcourt government in 1991?

6. Which environmental issues were most important for pro-environment groups at the time?

7. How would you say the Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Environment differed in their conceptions of sustainable forestry, if at all?

8. How did the government's policy direction change after the climax of events at Clayoquot Sound in 1994?

9. How would you say the international pressure brought against BC forestry by environmental groups affected the BC NDP's policy during the 1990s?

10. Do you feel that the BC NDP succeeded in meeting their environmental objectives in the 1990s?

11. Are there any key events from the period that have stuck with you?