

Pipeline Resistance in North America: Keystone XL and the Northern Gateway

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“First Nations, with our constitutionally protected aboriginal and treaty rights, are Canadians’ last best hope to protect the lands, waters, plants, and animals from complete destruction – which doesn’t just benefit our children, but the children of all Canadians.”

— Pamela Palmater¹

“The determination of indigenous peoples in this country and elsewhere to protect Mother Earth is indomitable and I have no doubt that in the end they will prevail.”

— Dimitri Lascaris²

Early in June 2015, Canada endorsed a G7 statement calling for the global phase-out of fossil fuel use by 2100.³ This position stood dramatically at odds with the determination of Canada’s former Conservative government to prioritize the development of Canada’s oil and gas industry and create as many export pathways as possible for fossil fuels.⁴⁵ The development of export pathways is being contested by an emerging social movement in both Canada and the United States.⁶ The movement is integrating older North American environmentalist organizations with groups that have been less traditionally focused on environmental

¹Palmater, “We are We Idle No More?”, p. 40.

²Lascaris, *University of Toronto Divestment Lecture*.

³Chase, *Canada commits to G7 plan to end use of fossil fuels*.

⁴See: Ljunggren, *Canada will aggressively push merits of Keystone pipeline — PM*.

⁵One estimate of total investment in Canada’s bitumen sands is \$365 billion, which may speak to the determination of politicians to continue bitumen sands extraction even if it contradicts Canada’s commitments to climate change mitigation or respecting indigenous rights. Fekete, *A decade of bitumen battles: How 10 years of fighting over oilsands affects energy, environment debate today*.

⁶Regarding sources of contemporary policy change in the areas of energy and the environment, Nicholas Stern argues: “The creation and delivery of policy on climate change is in its early stages, and will be sustained and taken forward as a result of a collection of forces and pressures from: citizens, NGOs and firms; leadership from the top; and various political and other coalitions”. Stern, *The Global Deal: Climate Change and the Creation of a New Era of Progress and Prosperity*, p. 122.

protection, but which have been mobilized and to a degree unified by the perceived threat of climate change. The activity of this movement has been particularly concentrated on the proposed US\$8 B Keystone XL pipeline from Alberta to Texas and the \$7.9 B Northern Gateway pipeline from Alberta to the coast of British Columbia.⁷⁸ These activities are of both contemporary political importance and of interest to scholars. This social movement involves diverse actors with partially compatible interests who are becoming increasingly coordinated out of a shared sense of threat, a clearer joint identification of opposing forces, and to a degree by a shared vision of what a desirable future involves. Regardless of the specific outcome of efforts to resist these two pipelines, the coalitions that are forming — including between environmentalists, faith communities, and indigenous groups — are of contemporary political interest and raise important theoretical questions about distributive justice, the mechanisms of social change, and the forces controlling decision-making at the highest levels of North American society.

The main political science questions which this PhD project will seek to answer are how is the North American climate change activist movement evolving in response to involvement from a more diverse set of participants, and what consequences is that likely to have for resource and energy politics.

Both longstanding and new (climate-focused) environmental non-governmental organizations have been a prominent part of the anti-pipeline movement (part of what Naomi Klein has described as “Blockadia”), along with faith groups and indigenous organizations. Making use of the two as comparative cases will help to situate this movement within the literature on social movements generally, as well as to assess what its likely consequences will be.

Many of those opposed to the development of major new fossil fuel projects have identified the legal rights of indigenous groups in Canada and the United States as a promising mechanism for resistance. This connection has also been recognized by indigenous groups and authors. For instance, in their account of the Idle No More movement, the Kino-nda-niimi Collective identifies — as one of three main objectives of the movement — “The repeal of significant sections of the Canadian federal government’s omnibus legislation (Bills C-38 and C-45) and specifically parts relating to the exploitation of the environment, water, and First Nations territories”.⁹ The 2014 Supreme Court of Canada *Tsilhqot’in* decision adds to the importance of indigenous rights in responding to environmental issues.¹⁰

While many indigenous groups and much of the writing of indigenous individuals highlights environmentalism and respect toward nature as longstanding values, there are also conflicts that have arisen with environmentalists. In some cases, these conflicts are essentially pragmatic: as when members of a community wish to benefit financially from resource extraction which others see as damaging. Sometimes, disagreement is more philosophical, or based on the view that the environmental movement wishes to take advantage of the

⁷Krugel, *Hardisty, town at Keystone’s start, takes stock of rejection*.

⁸Enbridge, *Benefits*.

⁹The Kino-nda-niimi Collective, *The Winter We Danced: Voices from the Past, the Future, and the Idle No More Movement*, TK — Find page.

¹⁰See: Saul, *The Comeback*, p. TK.

rights of indigenous peoples to achieve outcomes that may not be in their interests, or based on conflicting views about how humans ought to interact with the rest of nature. Some cases involve elements of both, such as indigenous objections to environmentalist criticisms of the seal hunt, both in terms of the financial viability of community and because of culture and tradition-based defences of the hunt.¹¹ By seeking direct comment on these issues from a wide variety of individuals associated with indigenous groups, a richer understanding of patterns of conflict and cooperation between environmentalists and indigenous people may be obtained. This may also help illuminate other tensions within contemporary environmentalism, including differing perspectives on economic growth, the usefulness of markets for controlling environmental problems, and appropriate mechanisms for reconciling cultural traditions with sustainability.

The involvement of faith groups in the anti-pipeline movement is of interest for several reasons. Examining it will help to illuminate how coalitions function in which different factions vary in their presuppositions, objectives, and favoured tactics. It also increases the scope for historical comparison with major past social movements, which have also included substantial participation from faith groups — perhaps most importantly the civil rights movement in the United States, though there may also be relevant comparisons to some anti-war movements. Faith groups are also an attractive research subject because they are usually open to discussing their perspectives, motivations, and actions with academic researchers.

The principal sources of data for this project will be documents and interviews. Interviews will be conducted both remotely and in person. A preliminary list of interview subjects and anti-pipeline organizations is being developed, subject to ethical approval. The project involves special ethical considerations, since both members of historically oppressed groups and people currently under government surveillance will hopefully consent to be interviewed. Ultimately, the project will include travel through areas where opposition to the TransCanada Keystone XL pipeline has been active, between Alberta and the Gulf of Mexico, and where opposition to the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline has been active in Alberta and British Columbia, possibly including the Unist’ot’en camp, where the Wet’uwet’en First Nation and allies have been resisting multiple fossil fuel projects, including Northern Gateway, for over five years.¹² Participants in both anti-pipeline movements will be contacted and hopefully interviewed from Toronto before the travel part of the research. Conversations with them will help to develop a broader network of interview subjects with distinct perspectives on the questions being studied, as well as to refine topics of discussion for subsequent interviews.

Based on the Harper government’s record, it seems likely that Canada’s endorsement of the G7 statement was insincere: part of a strategy of speaking boldly about action on climate change when there was political pressure to do so, while continuing to use all policy instruments to support the unlimited growth of the oil and gas sector. Recent work by scholars including George Hoberg, G. Bruce Doern and Monica Gattinger highlights how such decisions may have been self-defeating for Canada’s recent governments: undermining

¹¹TK — Cite Watt-Cloutier on environmentalists misunderstanding the seal hunt

¹²See: Manno, *Unsundered*.

the social license of the fossil fuel industry and making foreign jurisdictions more skeptical about Canada’s commitment to helping to control climate change.¹³¹⁴¹⁵ While to some degree the anti-pipeline movement can be interpreted as a response to blunders by Canada’s government, it is also clearly part of a broader theoretical, political, and social phenomenon as politically-engaged actors seek to grapple with the relevance of climate change to resource and energy politics.

By undertaking a detailed study of the origins, composition, strategies, and tactics of this movement, my PhD project will contribute to scholarly understanding of North American climate and energy politics, how this region is integrated into the wider global debate, and how this social movement relates to previous substantial societal transformations which have been subjected to scholarly analysis. This project will examine the origins of the movement, the objectives and strategic decisions that have been developed so far, and the relationships between the elements that comprise opposition to pipelines overall. In particular, this project will focus on the relationships between environmental groups, faith groups, and indigenous groups: identifying places where their objectives and strategies overlap, as well as where they differ. Through detailed discussions with the people involved in the movement, this project has the potential to improve scholarly understanding of key dynamics in North American climate and energy policy, as well as contribute to the literature on diverse social movements and the variables that determine their effectiveness.

The intended audience for this research includes academics, policy-makers, social movement organizers, and members of affected communities. Just as democratic capitalism is experiencing an ecological critique, environmentalism is experiencing both a critique and a broadening which has important indigenous and theological dimensions. Through improved understanding of the ongoing anti-pipeline movement, I hope to find theoretical value in the clashes and both pragmatic and theoretical conversations arising from contact between world views. I also hope to find practical value for those hoping to work quickly enough to stave off the worst effects of climate change. For centuries going forward, the project of reconciling human technological civilization with the physical and biological capabilities and boundaries of the Earth seems likely to be pressing, barring human extinction or technoutopia. Documenting pipeline resistance now through the voices of the people committed to it could help us spread practices which are capable of changing policy outcomes and avoiding those which cannot.

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¹⁴Doern and Gattinger, *Power switch: energy regulatory governance in the twenty-first century*.

¹⁵Gattinger, “From government to governance in the energy sector: The states of the Canada-US energy relationship”.

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1 Research question

One of the principal topics of interest in this project is the perspectives on strategy and tactics held by different members of the anti-pipeline movement.¹⁶ By ‘strategy’ I mean the view of the world which motivates their high-level objectives. For instance, anti-pipeline activists who are primarily concerned about climate change see blocking pipelines as a way

¹⁶These are connected in many ways to broader disagreements in the environmental movement. For one strong typology of these disagreements and discussion of how they are incompatible, see “Clashing Visions?” in: Clapp and Dauvergne, *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*, p. 245–9.

of constraining resource development in Canada’s bitumen sands.¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹ ‘Tactics’ refers to the means through which groups seek to advance their objectives, from petitions and meetings with public officials to direct action and civil disobedience.²⁰ These two levels of analysis cannot always be strictly separated, and the tactics employed by groups play a dynamic role in shaping their self-conception and objectives. As Taiaiake Alfred explains: “How you fight determines who you will be when the battle is over”.²¹ Questions about tactics and strategy also link up with questions about personal motivation: what got a particular activist involved in a particular struggle, and what has kept them active in spite of the disjuncture in scale between problems like climate change and what can be achieved through an individual’s efforts.²²

The cases of the Keystone XL and Northern Gateway pipelines have already been used in scholarly work within political science. For example, George Hoberg, Andrea Rivers, and Geoff Salomons have compared the procedural requirements of pipeline review processes in British Columbia and the United States, as well as the role of the courts.²³ Some surveys have also been conducted on public perceptions about NGP and how they correspond with other political views.²⁴ [TK — CONCISE SUMMARY OF SCHOLARLY WORK TO DATE ON KXL AND NGP]

Some recent Canadian work focuses both on theological and indigenous issues in climate change politics. For instance, Timothy Leduc’s work engages with secular environmentalism as well as indigenous and theological perspectives on climate change.²⁵²⁶

1.1 Place in the literature(s)

This project is less about the detailed timelines and review processes involved with these two pipelines *per se* and more an attempt to understand a contemporary anti-pipeline move-

¹⁷See: Swart and Weaver, “The Alberta oil sands and climate”.

¹⁸Droitsch, *The link between Keystone XL and Canadian oilsands production*.

¹⁹Arbuthnott and Dolter, “Escalation of commitment to fossil fuels”.

²⁰For example, Jennifer Hadden has examined climate activist organizations which have chosen or not chosen to use protest strategies, finding that “organizations harmonize their tactics with their peers due to information sharing, resource pooling, and social influence”. Hadden, *Networks in Contention: The Divisive Politics of Climate Change*, p. 166.

²¹Alfred, *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*, p. TK — Find page.

²²In terms of explaining individual motivation, some psychological theories may be useful, such as Mark Granovetter’s threshold model. It may help explain why some people become involved in anti-pipeline efforts, why they remain involved, and perhaps why the public at large has generally failed to prioritize climate change mitigation as an issue.

²³Hoberg, Rivers, and Salomons, “Comparative pipeline politics: oil sands pipeline controversies in Canada and the United States”.

²⁴A survey of 2628 by Jonn Axsen supports the view that “citizens with strong biospheric–altruistic values” are most likely to oppose Northern Gateway, while those with “strong traditional or egoistic values” are most likely to be supporters. Axsen notes: “only a minority of respondents in this study associate the NGP with climate change impacts”. This survey did not consider perceptions on indigenous rights. Axsen, “Citizen acceptance of new fossil fuel infrastructure: Value theory and Canada’s Northern Gateway Pipeline”.

²⁵Leduc, *Climate, culture, change: Inuit and Western dialogues with a warming North*.

²⁶Leduc, *A Canadian Climate of Mind: Passages from Fur to Energy and Beyond*.

ment deeply connected with the environmental politics of climate change.

1.1.1 Social movements in a North American and international context

The North American anti-pipeline movement, and the climate change activist movement more generally, can be analyzed with the benefit of the academic literature on social movements. These are broadly defined by Manuel Castells as: “purposive collective actions whose outcome, in victory as in defeat, transforms the values and institutions of society”.²⁷ Alternatively, in his 1908 Nobel Prize lecture, Rudolf Eucken described how:

“The social movement, too, reveals man as not entirely limited by a given order, but as a being that perceives and judges a given situation as is confident that it can change it essentially by its own efforts.”²⁸

William Gamson calls social movements “one product of social disorganization” and “symptoms of a social system in trouble”.^{29,30} Social movements are connected both historically and theoretically with the question of how large-scale social and political change occurs, whether voluntary human actions can induce it, and what factors contribute to whether one group or another achieves its aims.

Historical examples from women’s suffrage to the abolition of slavery to gay rights suggest that large-scale political change can be accomplished in the face of determined opposition by social movements, though countless examples of failure must also be acknowledged alongside the daunting special challenges of climate change as an issue.³¹

Academic work specifically on climate change activism as a social movement includes Jennifer Hadden’s research on climate advocacy and climate justice activism.³² Multidisciplinary research on climate change activism as a social movement is ongoing in Canada. Robert McGray, a professor of education at Brock University, is studying the student fossil fuel divestment movement in the context of neoliberal economics at Canadian universities. Joe Curnow at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education is studying race and gender dynamics within the fossil fuel divestment group at U of T. [TK — MORE]

While contributors to the literature on social movements are not exclusively academics, there is nonetheless a lively discourse about the role social movements are playing in the politics of many democratic states. There are also relevant analyses of successful social movements in more authoritarian states, including detailed discussions of tactics and their moral and philosophical justifications. My main methodological approach is to draw what

²⁷Smith, *Group Politics and Social Movements in Canada, Second Edition*, p. xix.

²⁸White, *The End of Protest: A New Playbook for Revolution*, p. 53.

²⁹Ibid., p. 53.

³⁰See also: Goldstone, “The weakness of organization: A new look at Gamson’s *The Strategy of Social Protest*”.

³¹For climate change as a moral issue, Stephen Gardiner has developed a perceptive and compelling set of propositions establishing how climate change is especially challenging for human beings to address psychologically and ethically: S. M. Gardiner, *A Perfect Moral Storm: the Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change*, p. xi–xiv.

³²Hadden, *Networks in Contention: The Divisive Politics of Climate Change*.

seems useful from both academic and popular theorists, while collecting empirical evidence from social movement activists which can be analyzed using those frameworks, while speaking independently to others who would interpret their statements through different conceptual means. Particularly because the anti-pipeline movement has been launched and run by people directly and powerfully influenced by popular theorists like Naomi Klein, it would be inappropriate to dismiss their work for lacking some of the trappings and methodological preferences of the legitimate academic community. In some cases, non-academics have written remarkably bold analyses of what climate stabilization would require in terms of policy and societal changes, for instance George Monbiot's provocative *Heat*.³³ [TK — CITE POPOVIC, ETC.]

When trying to understand the degree of policy-altering influence possessed by something as amorphous as a social movements, the challenge is exacerbated by the complex relationships which individual people may have with multiple movements. Anecdotal evidence and preliminary consultation for this project demonstrate a higher likelihood that an individual involved with at least one activism campaign or organization will be involved in several. They are part of a self-selected set of those with strong political opinions, aspirations to alter public policy, and a willingness to use political strategies and tactics in order to try to change outcomes. In some cases, individuals involved in multiple social movements may be able to provide especially valuable insight into tensions between coalition members; ethical, philosophical, and theological disagreements; as well as perspectives on acceptable and effective tactics.

Due to a lack of consensus about tactics and strategies — as well as disagreement about whether and how to appropriately align with other social movements — the anti-pipeline and climate change activist movements are in a state of liminality where boundaries and roles are unclear and where tensions are present and unresolved. This situation furnishes a major justification for studying responses to the Keystone XL and Northern Gateway pipelines now, when some prospect of each being constructed still exists. It also informs the kind of questions it will be worthwhile to raise with interview subjects, including in terms of forms of ideological disagreement which have arisen in organizations where they are involved and the consequences such disagreements have had internally and between groups. This liminal situation also enhances the value of paying special attention to the roles of faith and indigenous communities within this movement, since their differing backgrounds and objectives may be the cause of such tensions and ambiguities.³⁴ At the same time, considering the problem of climate change from their perspectives may provide useful contrast to the problem as understood by environmental activists. A further example of an important but turbulent interface is between environmentalist groups and expertise-based organizations like the Pembina Institute or the former National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE).³⁵³⁶ These expertise-based groups frequently pursue a somewhat ambiguous

³³Monbiot, *Heat: How to Stop the Planet from Burning*.

³⁴See: Saul, *The Comeback*, p. 171.

³⁵See, for instance: Flanagan, *Crafting an Effective Canadian Energy Strategy: How Energy East and the oilsands affect climate and energy objectives*.

³⁶.

approach to policy advocacy, seeking to distinguish themselves as both more neutral and intellectually rigorous than traditional environmentalist organizations like Greenpeace.³⁷

1.1.2 Indigenous politics

This research project also relates to the broad field of studying indigenous politics. Peter Russell provides a definition of the subfield as: “the political forces and ideas that shape the relations of Indigenous peoples with the larger societies in which they find themselves embedded”.³⁸ The relations between the Government of Canada and aboriginal communities, in particular, have been of considerable political note during the timespan when the building of Keystone XL and the Northern Gateway pipeline has been contested. Gaining a better understanding of how people who have been active in related social movements like Idle No More may illustrate common dynamics with the climate change activist and North American anti-pipeline movements. It may also further illuminate the complex interaction between critiques of capitalism and the nature of proposed solutions to environmental and other forms of social problem.

Recent scholarly work on indigenous politics in Canada includes examination of how the resolution of policy questions can be accomplished alongside respectful engagement with indigenous traditional knowledge, such as Inuit Quajimajatuqangit.³⁹ [TK — Find references from Macdonald/Neville syllabus] The development of university coursework focused on indigenous thought is also relevant. For instance, Taiaiake Alfred has helped to develop a Master of Arts in Indigenous Governance program at the University of Victoria; the University of Manitoba has accepted the recommendation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to require law students to [TK — details]

More specifically, the aboriginal struggle for greater influence over resource development decisions in North America can be interpreted in the context of decolonization. Russell explains: “The challenge of decolonization in this context is to work out ways in which the descendants of the original occupants and descendants of the settlers can share these countries on a basis of mutual respect and consent, rather than on the force of the majority”.⁴⁰⁴¹ This process, if it can be said to be occurring, is far from uncontested. In Canada, the recent Conservative governments of Stephen Harper have taken a number of legislative steps which can be seen as restricting aboriginal involvement in energy policy-making. [TK — ADD SPECIFICS] Furthermore, several instruments of state power have been used to monitor and arguably to intimidate aboriginal individuals and groups who are seeking an enlarged

³⁷In some senses, an analogous distinction can be identified between economists and political scientists and ethicists. For an interesting interpretation on environmental ethics from an economist, see: Collier, *The Plundered Planet: Why we Must — and How We Can — Manage Nature for Global Prosperity*.

³⁸P. Russell, *Recognizing Aboriginal title : the Mabo case and indigenous resistance to English-settler colonialism*, p. 7.

³⁹See: Leduc, *Climate, culture, change: Inuit and Western dialogues with a warming North*.

⁴⁰P. Russell, *Recognizing Aboriginal title : the Mabo case and indigenous resistance to English-settler colonialism*, p. 18.

⁴¹See also: Martin, *Canada and Aboriginal Canada Today: Changing the Course of History*, p. 49–51.

role in the policy process - notably, the C-51 security bill passed by the Harper government.⁴² [TK — ADD SPECIFICS]

The first Liberal majority government of Justin Trudeau has strongly emphasized both its intention of renegotiating relations between the federal government and Canada’s aboriginal peoples. At the same time, it has generally accepted the argument that some new fossil fuel pipeline development ought to proceed, such as the proposed Energy East or TransMountain pipelines.⁴³ At the same time, the new government has pledged to restore Canada’s environmental credentials, respect climate science, and be part of the global transition away from fossil fuels. These contradictory agendas establish opportunities for organized political actors to influence outcomes, as illustrated by the strong coalitions that emerged in opposition to the Keystone XL and Northern Gateway pipelines. They also illuminate some of the dynamics involved at the intersection of activism, social movements, and party politics. This includes the distinction between lobbying candidates seeking office as opposed to incumbents; the tensions between approved policy platforms and day-to-day governance; incrementalist versus radical approaches to policy reform; and the relationships between party identification, ideology, and activist activity.

Forms of engagement in indigenous issues undertaken by activist and environmental organizations are also of interest from the perspective of this project. At the low end, these include conscious efforts to consider and implement concepts like decolonization within activist organizations, recognition of indigenous land at meetings and events, and financial support provided to indigenous communities. Comparing what sorts of engagement have been undertaken by various groups — and what responses, if any, these have generated in indigenous communities — may help to illustrate some of the evolving dynamics of environmental activism in North America.

1.1.3 Stance on violence and ethical justification for it

Differing perspectives on the appropriateness and effectiveness of various tactics within the pipeline resistance movement, such as varying emphases on the importance of non-violence, can be understood in the context of debates within and analyses about previous social movements. “Violence” is a contested concept, particularly when it comes to deliberate damage to property and lost corporate profits. Opposition to violence also has variable motivations, including moral opposition to its use in and of itself, the argument that the use of violence reduces public support for the cause being advocated, and the argument that nation-states and corporations have access to much more physical force than activists. Different political philosophies about the acceptability of violence reflect differing perspectives on what is necessary to bring about rapid political and economic change.⁴⁴ Bob Nixon has also introduced the idea that environmental damage can be a form of “slow violence” — “a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is

⁴²See: O’Malley, *Bill C-51 hearings: First Nations could be targeted, Pam Palmater says: Bill ‘less about Jihadists under every bed... more about increasing the output of tarsands’: Stewart Phillip.*

⁴³Iverson, *Trudeau convinced that pipeline strategy must be top priority.*

⁴⁴For one extensive account of different approaches to rebellion, see: Hedges, *Wages of Rebellion: The Moral Imperative of Revolt.*

dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is not typically viewed as violence at all”.⁴⁵ From this perspective, violent tactics undertaken to try to advance environmental protection might be interpreted as a response in kind rather than an escalation.

Questions about the ethics of violence in the context of trying to change environmental policy connect with a broad literature on climate ethics generally, incorporating the work of people like Henry Shue and Stephen Gardiner.⁴⁶⁴⁷ This literature has both conceptual and practical importance, as the question of what sort of tactics are ethically acceptable when combatting climate change connects in practical terms with the sociological impact of different tactical decisions on policy-makers and the general public.⁴⁸ The literature is also linked to major questions in distributive justice, such as whether jurisdictions with fossil fuel resources deserve compensation for not using them in order to lessen climate change, as well as how the ethics of economic development integrate with the ethics of environmental protection.

Prior research on pressure groups and social movements has involved similar conceptual and methodological elements. For example, William Gamson’s work at the University of Michigan involved interviewing subjects on their views about violence, interactions with the police, and secrecy practices within voluntary organizations.^{49 5051} Designing an appropriate interview method will involve several special considerations including the effect of collecting any information on violence on the possibility that third parties may seek or force access to research materials. To moderate the risk to participants, I intend to make clear that I do not want interview subjects to discuss any criminal actions aside from non-violent acts of civil disobedience. Asking for information about other forms of protest action, such as sabotage, would unduly raise the risk of police or intelligence services trying to access my research materials through overt or clandestine means. Refusing to ask about civil disobedience, however, would unduly exclude tactics which have been visibly and apparently effectively used by the anti-pipeline movement.

1.1.4 Judicial politics

The aspiration that the courts may be an effective means of promoting improved climate change outcomes connects the study of the anti-pipeline movement with the study of judicial politics in Canada and the United States. An important aspect of this connection concerns aboriginal title and land rights, but it also includes the politics of eminent domain and the resistance of non-indigenous landowners against fossil fuel development on their land.

⁴⁵Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, p. 2.

⁴⁶See: Pachauri et al., *Climate ethics: Essential readings*.

⁴⁷S. M. Gardiner, *A Perfect Moral Storm: the Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change*.

⁴⁸Indeed, tensions may often exist among activists between those who feel that actions which are publicly perceived as more extreme are morally justified and so ought to be undertaken, and others who believe that activists must choose the tactics most likely to shift public or elite opinion as opposed to the most radical tactics which can be justified.

⁴⁹Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*.

⁵⁰Aside from perspectives on violence, potentially relevant variables in activist groups examined by Gamson include bureaucratization, centralization, the use of selective incentives, and factionalism.

⁵¹See also: White, *The End of Protest: A New Playbook for Revolution*, p. 53, 77.

Evolving legal doctrines play a key role in the long-term strategies of environmental organizations, indigenous rights organizations, and other increasingly influential political actors. As court judgments affect these strategic choices, the climate of public opinion influenced by activist organizations filters indirectly into the decision-making of judges and the forms of justification they provide for policy-relevant judgments.

1.1.5 The role of faith communities in North American social movements

Significant scholarly attention has also been paid to the role of faith communities in social movements pushing for political change. Notably, this includes research on the role of faith groups in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Scholars currently conducting research on the role of faith groups in the environmental movement include Randall Haluza-Delay.⁵² [TK — CITE EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC WORKS]

Many Canadian and American faith communities are highly active on political and environmental issues. All of the training sessions for the direct actions protesting the Keystone XL pipeline outside the White House in August 2014 took place in churches, and many churches provided free accommodation for people who traveled to attend the People’s Climate March (PCM) in Manhattan in September 2014.⁵³⁵⁴⁵⁵ The summer 2012 QuakerAction newsletter discusses the Occupy Movement, non-violent social action, institutional racism and the Seattle police, and the prospect of applying post-conflict reconciliation tools in the U.S. Congress.⁵⁶ The cover of the newsletter demonstrates the long-standing character of such involvement, depicting a Quaker-led protest against the Vietnam War. Much more widely noted was Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical letter *Laudato Si’*, which decries “sins against creation” include climate change, deforestation, and pollution.⁵⁷⁵⁸ Indeed, the encyclical probably represents one of the most important recent examples of a major push for climate change action within a mass membership denomination.

On the basis of consultation with representatives of faith communities which are involved in environmental activism, it seems especially promising that interviewing a good sample of

⁵²Haluza-DeLay, “Churches engaging the environment: An autoethnography of obstacles and opportunities”.

⁵³Organizers estimated participation in the march at 400,000 and also estimate that 1574 different organizations and 80 labour unions were involved. 2646 solidarity events took place at the same time in 162 countries. Disenhouse, *PCM Data Presentation*, p. 3, 6, 10.

⁵⁴Fisher, *Studying Large-Scale Protest: Understanding Mobilization and Participation at the People’s Climate March*.

⁵⁵While stated tactics of marches often include “awareness building” or influencing elites, they can also be important in terms of bringing activists up through a “ladder of engagement”. For instance, participants in the PCM and the 2015 “Toxic Tour” of Ontario’s Aamjiwnaang First Nation went on to play prominent roles in the attempted fossil fuel divestment campaign at the University of Toronto. White, *The End of Protest: A New Playbook for Revolution*, p. 236.

⁵⁶American Friends Service Committee, *QuakerAction Summer 2012*.

⁵⁷Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si’ of the Holy Father Francis on the Care of Our Common Home*.

⁵⁸Pope Francis ties together a number of related normative issues, including a human obligation to protect the non-human world, a critique of the destructive aspects of capitalism, and concern about equitable international development. See: McKenna, *Pope Francis says destroying the environment is a sin*.

active anti-Keystone XL and Northern Gateway activists from faith communities will help to illustrate the organizational linkages and alliances within the campaign. It may also yield useful information about tensions between major sub-groupings within broader movements: land owners opposing pipelines as compared with urban climate change activists, for instance.

A broad literature exists on the political activity of religious organizations in North America. At times, these activities have involved similar behaviours to the actions of protest groups. For instance, the 2009 Manhattan Declaration from Orthodox, Catholic, and Evangelical Christians described an interdenominational alliance against abortion, for “traditional” families, and against gay marriage.⁵⁹⁶⁰ Individuals and groups associated with the declaration have been in conflict before and since, emulating the sometimes turbulent relationships among environmental groups with different priorities and worldviews. Indeed, some of the signatories to the declaration have subsequently spoken out against the high-profile climate change advocacy of Pope Francis.⁶¹

2 Method

The design of this research projected is guided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS) and particularly the chapter on: “Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada”.⁶²⁶³ The TCPS, in turn, was significantly influenced by the Belmont Report, issued in 1978 by the U.S. National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, which laid out core principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.⁶⁴ For research in the social sciences, the American Association of University Professors published a report in 2000 on protecting subjects in social science research.⁶⁵

Particularly in the design of interviews and associated issues of data protection, this project will affirm the three core principles of the TCPS: respect for persons, concern for welfare, and justice.⁶⁶

Oceanographer and climate change scientist Roger Revelle described climate change as “a large scale geophysical experiment of a kind that could not have happened in the past nor be reproduced in the future”.⁶⁷ This suggests methodological challenges in the academic study of the environmental politics of climate change. Since the particular trajectory of greenhouse

⁵⁹Declaration, *Manhattan Declaration*.

⁶⁰The Economist, *Trump’s papal problem reopens some old fault lines*.

⁶¹Mohler, *U.S. Evangelical leaders warn Catholics that Pope Francis is moving Church to the left*.

⁶²Canadian Institutes of Health Research, *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

⁶³See also: Ilnykyj, *Ethics and human subject research: practices and issues*.

⁶⁴United States National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, *The Belmont report : ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research*.

⁶⁵American Association of University Professors, *Institutional Review Boards and Social Science Research*.

⁶⁶Canadian Institutes of Health Research, *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, p. 6, 113.

⁶⁷Yergin, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, p. 435.

gas emissions and concentrations that humanity will follow in the decades and centuries ahead cannot be known at this point, the world will follow one specific climatic trajectory as opposed to any of the others which would have been possible with different policy choices and resultant changes in the physical world. This suggests a risk of not being able to understand the long-term shifts in the Earth's climate and their consequences for human societies. With arguably no comparable cases in human history, we are challenged with developing models for effective political change to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and concentrations, and thus the severity of global climate impacts. When focusing specifically on the nature of climate change activist and anti-pipeline movements, greater scope for comparative analyses seems possible due to the multitude of infrastructure projects being opposed, the broad variety of groups involved in opposing them, and the evolving political philosophies and practical connections between these groups. This research design proposes to target groups that have opposed the Keystone XL and Northern Gateway pipelines, but it is equally feasible to conduct a similar study on the Kinder Morgan TransMountain pipeline expansion between Edmonton and Burnaby, British Columbia; the TransCanada Energy East pipeline proposed between Hardisty, Alberta and Saint John, New Brunswick; or the Enbridge Line 9 pipeline conversion between North Westover, Ontario and Montreal. There is also likely scope to examine these social movements in contrast with those in other jurisdictions, allowing better understanding what strategic and tactical approaches have been selected in climate change and anti-pipeline activism, and what social, political, and economic effects have resulted.

The TCPS guidelines on aboriginal research highlight the importance of community engagement, based upon a “collaborative relationship between researchers and communities”.⁶⁸⁶⁹ This research may be deemed “likely to affect the welfare of an Aboriginal community” on the basis that it may be conducted in part on First Nations, Inuit or Métis lands, including in the United States; that recruitment criteria for interviewing include Aboriginal identity as a factor for the entire study or for a subgroup in the study; that aboriginal identity or membership in an Aboriginal community may be used as a variable for the purpose of analysis of the research data; and because interpretation of research results may refer to aboriginal communities, peoples, language, history or culture. Satisfying the requirements of the TCPS may involve seeking permission to conduct research from the internal governance structures of aboriginal communities.

I propose to undertake this research in three major stages. First, I will develop a detailed research plan and list of interview subjects. This will be done in collaboration with academic colleagues, but also in collaboration with some research subjects, including members of aboriginal groups. Including consultation with these individuals in the research design process should assist in developing the most relevant set of hypotheses and research questions, while also initiating the process of community engagement. In the second phase, I propose to undertake a series of interviews by electronic means from Toronto, including via telephone and Skype. The third phase will consist of a research trip, conducted by Greyhound bus, beginning at the intended Keystone XL terminus in Texas, passing north through the United

⁶⁸Canadian Institutes of Health Research, *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, p. 112–8.

⁶⁹See also: Harding et al., “Conducting research with tribal communities: sovereignty, ethics and data-sharing issues”.

States into Manitoba, and following the proposed Keystone route to Hardisty, Alberta.⁷⁰ I will then follow the proposed Northern Gateway route from Bruderheim, Alberta to Kitimat, British Columbia before traveling by boat to the Haida Gwaii to discuss concerns about the tanker traffic which the pipeline would create.⁷¹

The TCPS specifically requires institutional research ethics review, including review of a plan for community engagement.⁷² A community engagement plan will be included in the research ethics protocol which I submit to U of T after my department has approved my proposal. This engagement plan will include an email-based mailing list which will inform interview subjects and interested others about any publications arising from this research. This project was developed in part with the assistance of the Writing SSHRC Proposals course provided by the Office of English Language and Writing Support. I have also met with Dr. Dean Sharpe — Research Ethics Board Manager, Social Sciences and Humanities in the Office of Research Ethics — to discuss some of the special ethical issues involved in this project, as well as attended the Research Ethics in Social Sciences and Humanities training course offered by them. Consideration for the design of the research ethics protocol which will follow the approval of this proposal has guided the development of the research project throughout, particularly when it comes to the protection of interview subjects.

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.2 Interviews

As preparation for this research project, I conducted a test interview as part of a qualitative methods course. I spoke with Cheryl McNamara, a prominent organizer with the Toronto chapter of the Citizens' Climate Lobby.⁷³ This was a semi-structured interview. I prepared a list of 16 questions beforehand, which generally correspond to the questions asked in the actual interview. The interview was useful in several regards:

- it bolstered the plausibility of a semi-structured approach, with general lines of questioning tailored to the subject identified beforehand,
- it supported my expectation that in general climate activists will be willing participants in such research, though convincing busy activists that it will be a worthwhile use of time may be a challenge,
- it demonstrated that even subjects who have deep and long involvement with an organization may not be able to answer broad questions about the composition of its membership or its entire history,

⁷⁰For a discussion of the value of in-person as opposed to remote interviews, see: Mosley, *Interview Research in Political Science*, p. 7–8.

⁷¹In the case of NGP, Hoberg identifies tanker traffic as “the issue which galvanizes public opposition most effectively”. Hoberg, “The battle over oil sands access to tidewater: a political risk analysis of pipeline alternatives”, p. 281.

⁷²Canadian Institutes of Health Research, *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, p. 124–6.

⁷³Inyckyj, *Interview with Cheryl McNamara, volunteer with the Citizens' Climate Lobby*.

- it showed the value of getting consent from the subject to be able to follow up later about any references which I have not been able to track down myself,
- and it helped me better comprehend the logistics of recording and transcribing an in-person interview, and particularly the laborious nature of speech-to-text transcription.

The value of the preparatory interview also informs the step-by-step approach of remote interviews preceding in-person interviews for subjects outside Toronto.

Content analysis of newspapers and online news sources will be used to identify KXL and NGP opponents who may be amenable to interviews. This will be done in part through electronic databases of news stories, including Factiva and Canadian Newsstand. Media reports on anti-pipeline actions, or the operation of anti-pipeline groups generally, will be useful both to identify as many groups as possible that have been involved in the campaigns, and to identify group leaders and spokespeople. Interviews at every stage, including remote and in-person, will also be used to identify individuals and groups involved in resisting these pipelines.

In order to provide a measure of structure and consistency in the interviews, I will be developing a branching set of questions which will be used to guide the discussion. For example, one branch might concern any cooperation a non-indigenous activist organization has had with indigenous organizations or individuals. If such cooperation has taken place, a set of questions would be relevant and could be pursued in the interview. Interviews will begin with a set of questions posed to all subjects, including asking them to summarize their involvement in anti-KXL or anti-NGP work, as well as with any organizations that have worked on the pipelines. Planned lines of questioning include:

- Personal motivation — what got you involved and keeps you motivated
- Perspective on strategy and tactics, particularly conventional versus contentious tactics as described by Hadden and perspectives on violence
- Cooperation with faith communities
- Cooperation with indigenous organizations and individuals
- Practical or ideological disagreements with other anti-pipeline activists
- Perspective on anthropocentric versus biocentric ethics (in whose interests are you acting?)
- Perspective on the nature and possible severity of climate change
- Perspective on capitalism
- Perspective on intersectionality and solidarity
- Group governance and interpersonal conflict

Within each branch, there will be further sub-branches triggered or omitted on the basis of earlier responses. Visual layouts of these lines of questioning will be prepared before interviews and will be used during interviews themselves to note at which time signature in the recording each question was asked, in order to facilitate later comparison and analysis. Questions not included in any pre-planned branch, but which arise naturally as a result of conversation, will not be excluded.

With the written consent of the subjects, I plan to record all of the interviews which this project will involve, whether they take place by telephone, electronic means like Skype, or in person. Each interview will be approximately 0.5 – 2.0 hours, with the average interview expected to last about an hour. This written consent will be based on a menu of available options, ranging from unlimited use including publishing the recording or transcript of the interview to the most protective option, in which the recording will not be transmitted and will only be used to make a non-identifying transcript or summary before the file is destroyed by being overwritten multiple times on the hard drive or flash memory where it was stored. Specifically, the options which I intend to provide are:

Maximum protection I will make a recording of the interview which will not be transmitted electronically except from a digital recording device to a computer. Using the recording, I will promptly produce a summary or transcript designed to exclude any details which would identify the subject. Once this document is complete, I will destroy the recording file(s).

Recording retained — no quotation The subject agrees that I will retain the interview recording indefinitely for reference and I will not quote any part of it in any publication arising from this research.

Recording retained — anonymous quotation only The subject agrees that I will retain the interview recording indefinitely for reference and will only use anonymous quotations in any publication.

Recording retained — quotes attributed The subject agrees that I will retain the interview recording indefinitely for reference and that I may attribute quotations to them publicly.

No confidentiality The subject agrees that any recordings, summaries, transcripts, or notes based on the interview may be published.

I will explain to subjects both the degree of plausible protection afforded to them by each option, as well as the academic and methodological advantages and disadvantages of each.⁷⁴ Subjects will be told that while interviews are in progress, they are free to stop the discussion at any time. Subjects will also be told that regardless of which level of confidentiality they choose, my treatment of research materials will be governed by my data protection policy and by my policy regarding compliance with third party requests for access, such as any received from state security (police or intelligence) services.

⁷⁴See: Mosley, *Interview Research in Political Science*, p. 14–8.

Table 1: Approximate budget for field research

Digital recording equipment	
Zoom H4NSP Stereo Field Recorder	270
Audio Technica ATR-3350IS lapel microphones (x3)	135
16GB SD card	23
Microphone adapters (x3)	18
Travel and accommodation	
Unlimited North America Greyhound pass (2 months)	1500
Other transportation	500
Transport to Haida Gwaii	
Transport in Haida Gwaii	
Hotel accommodation (TK% of nights)	
Hostel accommodation (TK% of nights)	
Small gifts for people providing free lodging	
Meals (2 months)	
Incidentals	

While informal conversations will necessarily be part of the collaborative development of my methodology, as well as part of any research trip, I do not intend for such informal conversations to form an important part of the empirical data generated and analyzed by this project. This policy is motivated by several considerations: the imperfect nature of my memory, the desire to have all subjects feel like their contributions are being treated formally and equally, and the desire to provide records of these interactions which will not be compromised by my assumptions and ignorance.

To facilitate transcription, in-person interviews will be recorded with a high-quality digital audio recorder, and ideally with separate lapel microphones for me and the interview subject. By separating the audio tracks for the two speakers, it may be possible to accelerate transcription using speech-to-text conversion software such as Dragon Dictate.

Digital files from interviews will be stored both on a laptop and on a web server for backup. Files in both locations will be protected with whatever means are deemed necessary as part of the ethical review process, probably based on full disk encryption but possibly involving the encryption of individual files as an alternative or supplementary measure. During the phase 3 research trip, a volunteer will help with the administration of the web server and will make local backups of the files stored there as protection against any data loss.

2.2.1 Data protection

Chapter 5 of the TCPS concerns privacy and confidentiality.⁷⁵

This project may involve special confidentiality concerns because anti-pipeline activists appear to be under surveillance by intelligence and law enforcement bodies in Canada and the United States. An internal memo from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) states that there was “substantial non-compliance” with Department of Justice rules in the course of an investigation run by their Houston field office.⁷⁶ Tar Sands Blockade is one group that has been specifically identified as a target of FBI investigation. The FBI also met with TransCanada representatives and provided information on Keystone XL opposition to the corporation. Other anti-bitumen sands campaigners in the U.S. have also been contacted by the FBI, including in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Emails acquired through an access to information request showed that police in Colorado have surveilled 350.org, the Break Free Movement, the Rainforest Action Network, and WildEarth Guardians using undercover officers.⁷⁷ In Canada, the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association has alleged that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) has been conducting inappropriate surveillance on opponents of the Northern Gateway pipeline, as well as providing information on these opponents to oil and gas corporations.^{78,79} At times, indigenous groups have feared large-scale police action to close down anti-pipeline camps.⁸⁰ In some cases, indigenous activists protesting pipelines have actually been arrested.⁸¹ Generally speaking, there is a great deal of collaboration between internet and communication companies like cellular phone providers, Gmail, and Facebook with police and intelligence services.⁸²

There is at least some evidence that police and intelligence services have learned lessons from their previous abuses directed at activists. For instance, the UK’s Security Service allowed for the publication of Christopher Andrew’s sometimes unflattering official history.⁸³ The FBI has even used its own illegal conduct toward Martin Luther King Jr. as a teaching tool for trainees.⁸⁴

⁷⁵Canadian Institutes of Health Research, *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, p. 57–68.

⁷⁶Lewis and Federman, *Revealed: FBI violated its own rules while spying on Keystone XL opponents*.

⁷⁷Fang and Horn, *Federal Agents Went Undercover To Spy on Anti-Fracking Movement, Emails Reveal*.

⁷⁸Bronskill, *Rights group presses watchdog on CSIS records about Northern Gateway pipeline*.

⁷⁹CBC News, *CSIS surveillance of pipeline protesters faces federal review*.

⁸⁰For instance, in 2015 the media reported on fears that the RCMP would shut down a camp established in 2009 by the Wet’suwet’en to try to block the Northern Gateway Pipeline and two other pipeline projects. Trumpener, *RCMP planning mass arrests at pipeline protest camp, northern B.C chiefs fear*.

⁸¹CBC News, *Chief Stewart Phillip arrested at Kinder Morgan protest: First Nations leader joins more 100 protesters arrested so far at pipeline test drilling site*.

⁸²Christopher Soghoian concludes: “With few exceptions, the large companies to whom hundreds of millions of consumers entrust their private communications actively assist in the collection and disclosure of that data to law enforcement and intelligence agencies — all while simultaneously promising to protect their customers’ privacy”. Soghoian, *The Spies We Trust: Third Party Service Providers and Law Enforcement Surveillance*, p. 69.

⁸³Andrew discusses operations undertaken against the Communist Party of Great Britain, trade unions, and the opposition Labour Party as well as pacifist and women’s rights organizations. Andrew, *Defend the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5*.

⁸⁴Wilber, *Aspiring agents learn from mistakes of FBI’s ‘shameful’ investigation of Martin Luther King Jr.*

This concern that security service attention directed at anti-pipeline activists raises the risks associated with studying their work may be somewhat mitigated because the principal interview subjects for this project are deliberately seeking media attention and increased public awareness. While it's essential to bear in mind that many climate change activists are part of marginalized communities and have been subjected to undue scrutiny by state security services, prohibiting them as research subjects on that basis risks perpetuating and reinforcing their marginalization.

An important tension should be acknowledged between the objective of maximizing data protection in all circumstances (including clandestine attempts at access by governments or private organizations) and being able to perform the most academically valuable analysis possible. For example, a database linking information on individuals, interviews I have conducted, campaigns undertaken by activist organizations, and organizational membership could reveal important patterns within the anti-pipeline activist movement. At the same time, a standard security precaution such as using cryptonyms or identification numbers for interview subjects would have little value in such a context. By the time a pseudonymous person is placed in such a context, anyone with witting or unwitting access to my data files would be able to identify the subject regardless.

Planning a research project on environmental activism requires awareness of the objectives and capabilities of state-run intelligence services. A successful project in this field must also be informed about their methods and willing to use them when it is both ethical and necessary. For example, link chart analysis may be crucial for understanding circumstances in which a heterogenous collection of political actors are devoted to opposing the *status quo* in the jurisdiction the activists consider relevant, but where they also find themselves profoundly opposed to similar actors pursuing similar objectives by other means. 'Divide and conquer' is also a broadly recognized strategy used by governments to entice a subset of opponents to accept governmental will in exchange for concessions, which undermines support for positions which are more broadly supported and potentially more empirically and ethically justified than what governments are proposing.

My ethics protocol will include a detailed explanation of my policy regarding compliance with third party requests for access to research materials. I intend to refuse requests from police and intelligence services in Canada and the United States which are not accompanied by a valid court order mandating compliance. If legally permissible, I intend to inform research subjects that any such request has been made which would involve them. Through the design of my interviews, I intend to avoid raising any subjects which would properly be the subject of any such government inquiry, specifically by directing subjects not to discuss any past or future criminal activities aside from civil disobedience (See: TK — link to explanation of why this is important) My methodology and data protection practices are informed by the knowledge that governments, fossil fuel corporations, criminal hackers, or other individuals or groups may seek clandestine access to research materials and are designed to restrict the risks associated with such attempts without undermining the scholarly value of the research.

2.3 Text selection

Both for the sake of designing and interpreting interviews, I will be reading broadly within relevant literatures. Textual selection shall be undertaken through a variety of channels, though some of the most important will be academic research consultations in support of a thorough literature review; the branching out from written sources to other written sources; and the consideration of texts recommended or provided by interview subjects or other correspondents.

I will make use of the research consultations offered by the U of T library system to further develop a bibliography of background literature in areas including direct discussion of these pipelines, indigenous politics, judicial politics, and faith and the environment. Sources identified in these consultations can in turn be expected to lead to others worth examining.

Once the first round of interviews (conducted remotely) begins, I expect that interview subjects will autonomously bring up both academics and other writers who have influenced their thinking. Particularly when discussing key areas of contention — such as the relationship between successful climate change action and capitalism as an economic system — it may also be desirable to prompt subjects to respond to certain thinkers who may have influenced them. There also may be some value in raising concepts developed by others with interview subjects who are not already familiar with them, in order to evaluate whether the concepts seem to correspond with the perspectives of the interview subjects, or if they can offer a critique of them based on a quick summary.

2.4 Case selection

This project involves the study of two social movements that have arisen in response to proposed pipelines. TransCanada's proposed Keystone XL pipeline would run from Hardisty, Alberta to the Gulf of Mexico in Texas. The Enbridge Northern Gateway would run from Bruderheim, Alberta to Kitimat, British Columbia, where diluted bitumen would be transported by tanker through the Hecate Strait. Both pipelines are multi-jurisdictional, and Keystone XL is international, which has had a substantial effect on the process of considering approval in the United States. Relevant governments include the federal governments of Canada and the United States, as well as the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota and the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. The routes of the proposed pipelines cross the traditional territory of many indigenous groups. [TK — MORE DETAILS]

It may seem strange to seek to study two pipelines which may or may not actually be built. While the Obama administration ultimately rejected approval for the Keystone XL pipeline, the possibility of the project being revived by a subsequent administration — particularly one led by a Republican — means the prospect of the pipeline is not entirely over. The 2016 Republican Party national platform includes this on Keystone:

“Our Canadian neighbors can count on our cooperation and respect. To advance North America's energy independence, we intend to reverse the current Administration's blocking of the Keystone XL Pipeline. Apart from its economic value,

that project has become a symbol in the contest between the public's desire for economic development and the government's hostility to growth. We stand with the people.”⁸⁵

Concerning Northern Gateway, during the election campaign Trudeau said: “the Great Bear rainforest is no place for a ... crude pipeline” and expressed support for a tanker moratorium along B.C.'s north coast.⁸⁶⁸⁷ In June 2016, the Federal Court of Appeal ruled that the Canadian government had failed to adequately consult indigenous peoples and so quashed the 2014 federal approval for the project — a decision lawyers from Enbridge said they would appeal.⁸⁸⁸⁹ The National Energy Board subsequently suspended its review of the request from project proponents to extend the “sunset clauses” from the project.⁹⁰ Nonetheless, there has been talk of building the pipeline with an export terminal in a different location, or of building a refinery to be served by the pipeline on the B.C. coast/ [TK — Cite] In any event, the purpose of this project is not to evaluate the fate or significance of these potential pipelines. Rather, it is to better understand social movements which have emerged in opposition to fossil fuel projects, a task which should align with the circumstances of Keystone and Northern Gateway, both of which have been opposed by groups recently enough to permit their members to be identified and interviewed. Also, the potentially temporary nature of any rejected fossil fuel infrastructure is an important feature in activist campaigns, which have decried ‘zombie’ projects which are frequently re-initiated after apparent rejections. The campaign against Keystone XL, in particular, has become emblematic of efforts to combat climate change by preventing the construction of extraction projects and transportation infrastructure.⁹¹

Other factors add to the relevance of undertaking this research now. The 2016 Paris Agreement begins the process of establishing a post-Kyoto framework for international collaboration on climate change.⁹² The new Trudeau government has expressed an intention to emphasize environmental protection, distinguishing itself at least rhetorically from the previous Harper government. This project also involves special consideration of two types of participants in these social movements: indigenous people and members of faith communities. The Trudeau government has also called for reconciliation with Canada's indigenous peoples, including through implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of

⁸⁵2016 Republican National Convention, *Republican Platform 2016*, p. 50.

⁸⁶Wood, *Trudeau talks pipelines and oilsands investment as Alberta meeting wraps*.

⁸⁷Canadian Press, *Trudeau promises to safeguard northern B.C. coast from pipelines*.

⁸⁸Omand, *Northern Gateway pipeline approval stymied after court quashes approval*.

⁸⁹In their public response, the project proponents emphasized that: “the Aboriginal Equity Partners and our commercial project proponents are fully committed to building this critical Canadian infrastructure project while at the same time protecting the environment and the traditional way of life of First Nations and Métis peoples and communities along the project route”. Carruthers, *Northern Gateway responds to decision by Federal Court of Appeal*.

⁹⁰National Energy Board, *National Energy Board suspends review of Northern Gateway sunset clause extension request*.

⁹¹The 2011 mass arrests outside the White House received a particularly large amount of media attention and feature in much subsequent commentary. See: Meisel and J. K. Russell, *Case Study: Tar Sands Action*.

⁹²See: Donner, *Can Canada reconcile its climate policy and the temperature targets in the Paris agreement?*

Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which specifically includes provisions for free, prior, and informed consent from indigenous peoples.⁹³⁹⁴⁹⁵⁹⁶ [TK — Brief justification and explanation for why aboriginal participants may deserve special research attention] A great deal of activity is also ongoing in the nexus between faith communities and environmentalism. Following the promulgation of the *Laudato Si'* papal encyclical in 2015, discussion about faith and climate change has become more intense and widespread.⁹⁷⁹⁸ For example, Caritas — a Catholic non-profit organization — has been active on environmental issues in Brazil and India. Churches are also taking action on climate change: from taking part in protests to selling their holdings in fossil fuel corporations. In October 2016, seven Catholic institutions, including the U.S.-based SSM Health Care which runs 20 hospitals in four states, committed to divest from fossil fuel corporations, partly motivated by the encyclical.⁹⁹ [TK — Brief justification and explanation for why members of faith communities may deserve special research attention]

2.5 Hypotheses

Issues of contemporary importance in the pipeline resistance movement can be readily identified through journalistic accounts, academic work, and the writing of activists. Discussing these issues with active participants in the efforts to resist Keystone XL and Northern Gateway should help to evaluate the actual relevance of some of these questions to climate change activists, as well as the scope of disagreement or contention within the movement.

2.5.1 Unity and coherence in the climate activist movement

Two dominant trends within social movements in a diverse variety of contexts seem to be growing power to alter decision-making (at least on narrow questions) and increasingly notable and theoretically engaging disagreements between and within movements. Social movements with broad aspirations of policy change are motivated by a vision of the future which looks quite different in some ways than a hypothetical future where *status quo* policies were maintained. Sometimes these long-term aspirations are clearly compatible, or can be reconciled through political and philosophical reflection. In such cases, genuine and powerful solidarity seems to be possible between movements with compatible agendas (gay rights and climate change mitigation, for instance) At other times, disagreement is fundamental and cooperation can only ever be hesitant and transactional (as when fossil fuel companies seek

⁹³Though the Trudeau government may be backing away from this commitment, as of July 2016: Ivison, *First Nations hear hard truth that UN indigenous rights declaration is 'unworkable' as law.*

⁹⁴APTN National News, *Trudeau backs away from election pledge on First Nation veto.*

⁹⁵See also: Picard and Nepinak, *Open letter to the Right Honourable Prime Minister Trudeau.*

⁹⁶Leahy, *Reconciliation Means Overhaul of Oilsands Pipeline Reviews, First Nations Tell Trudeau.*

⁹⁷See: Maza, *One year later, how a Pope's message on climate has resonated.*

⁹⁸See also: The Global Catholic Climate Movement, *Eco-Parish Guide: Bringing Laudato Si' to Life.*

⁹⁹Roewe, *On Francis of Assisi feast day, Catholic groups divest from fossil fuels.*

to improve their image by collaborating with environmental groups).¹⁰⁰

Another dimension across which the compatibility and depth of interconnection of social movements can be assessed is in terms of whether large groupings of them spread between countries can really be considered to be having a coordinated influence on public policy. In *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*, Naomi Klein asserts the existence of “Blockadia” — a unified movement opposing fossil fuel infrastructure development in North America and around the world.¹⁰¹ Klein explains:

“The power of this ferocious love [for places where people live and where they care about] is what the resource companies and their advocates in government inevitably underestimate, precisely because no amount of money can extinguish it. When what is being fought for is an identity, a culture, a beloved place that people are determined to pass on to their grandchildren, and that their ancestors may have paid for with great sacrifice, there is nothing companies can offer as a bargaining chip. No safety pledge will assuage; no bribe will be big enough. And though this kind of connection to place is surely strongest in Indigenous communities where the ties to the land go back thousands of years, it is in fact Blockadia’s defining feature.”¹⁰²

One purpose of this project is to assess the accuracy of this analysis. Is “Blockadia” a meaningful, united, self-aware movement? Or are diverse groups with uncoordinated or even contradictory motivations and strategies being inappropriately amalgamated? These questions can also be considered in a broader context than climate change activism alone. For example, Micah White considers protest tactics and social movements more broadly, incorporating the anti-globalization, novel forms of political organization emerging in Europe, Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, and other contemporary and historical social movements that overlap in important ways with anti-pipeline and climate change activism.¹⁰³ Climate activist groups including 350.org have made major efforts to portray their opposition to the fossil fuel industry as a united global phenomenon, and this characterization has been accepted by at least some journalistic sources.¹⁰⁴¹⁰⁵¹⁰⁶

Views on movement-building vary enormously within the climate change movement, ranging from those who see solidarity with other causes generally associated with the political left (such as income inequality or LGBTQ rights) as essential for success, and others (like the Citizens Climate Lobby) who see pan-ideological consensus as indispensable for addressing

¹⁰⁰See: “Fruits, not Roots: The Disastrous Merger of Big Business and Big Green” in: Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*, p. 191–229.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 342.

¹⁰³White, *The End of Protest: A New Playbook for Revolution*.

¹⁰⁴The Guardian newspaper has even launched a ‘keep it in the ground’ campaign intended to build public support for that objective: Randerson, *A story of hope: the Guardian launches phase II of its climate change campaign*.

¹⁰⁵Domonoske, *Protesters Around The World Target Fossil Fuel Industry*.

¹⁰⁶By contrast, other newspapers have been far more dismissive, with The Economist calling 350 “the number of the miffed”. The Economist, *The number of the miffed*.

the problem.¹⁰⁷¹⁰⁸ Such tensions cannot easily be resolved. Both those who argue that broad support is necessary to achieve substantial change quickly enough to stop the worst effects of climate change and those who believed that only a focused coalition will have the discipline to make progress quickly enough have coherent theories of change and historical examples to support their perspective. Disagreements about what sort of coalition is desirable have been expressed in many ways, including a typology of liberal versus anti-capitalist environmentalism, or Nixon's distinction between "postcolonialists" focused on displacement and "ecocritics" driven by a preference for purity in the non-human world.¹⁰⁹ Collier criticizes some environmentalists as "romantics ... who believe we must radically alter our relationship with nature and scale back consumption".¹¹⁰ Some have even argued that a preference for an intact natural environment is a luxury which is permitted by economic development and which therefore must naturally follow it. Some of Paul Collier's work argued that having high standards for environmental protection may be of lesser importance than reducing rates of extreme poverty globally. This argument is strongly contested by a view that emphasizes how rich societies export much of the environmental damage associated with their lifestyle to poorer societies elsewhere, not so much moving beyond a polluting past as maintaining a privileged present position at the expense of others.¹¹¹ Collier's more recent work is much more sympathetic to the idea that global regulation of greenhouse gas pollution is necessary, and provides some characteristically surprising and economics-inspired mechanisms for achieving emissions reductions.¹¹²¹¹³ To some extent, the literature on advocacy coalition frameworks may be useful here, including as a guide for how preferences and beliefs of actors are translated into policy outcomes, an illustration of the role of policy-oriented learning, and the interplay between primary and secondary beliefs and issue prioritization within social movements.

Another set of questions concerns individual as opposed to collective action. Many environmentalist criticisms of politics emphasize how contemporary societies in democratic and capitalist states emphasize individual choice in responding to environmental problems, though a strong case can be made that such problems can only be solved through collective effort.¹¹⁴ The implausibility of addressing environmental concerns individually is mirrored in

¹⁰⁷Advocates of the pan-ideological perspective may be disappointed to learn that nearly everyone surveyed at the People's Climate March self-identified between "moderate" and "extremely liberal". Fisher, *Studying Large-Scale Protest: Understanding Mobilization and Participation at the People's Climate March*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸On questions about coalition-building, see also: White, *The End of Protest: A New Playbook for Revolution*, p. 77.

¹⁰⁹Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, p. 236.

¹¹⁰Collier, *The Plundered Planet: Why we Must — and How We Can — Manage Nature for Global Prosperity*, p. xi.

¹¹¹See: Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, p. 253.

¹¹²For example, see his discussion about how requiring labeling of the origin point of fossil fuels might affect consumer behaviour (though Alberta's oil industry often uses it's location and economic presence in Canada as a positive feature, in comparison to oil imported from elsewhere): Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*.

¹¹³Collier, *The Plundered Planet: Why we Must — and How We Can — Manage Nature for Global Prosperity*, See also:

¹¹⁴See: Maniates, "Individualization: Plant a tree, buy a bike, save the world?"

some available literature on participation in environmental action. For instance, fewer than 15% of People’s Climate March participants took part alone.¹¹⁵ Theoretical discussions and practical programs for encouraging environmental sustainability also differ on the appropriate scale for collective action. A long-held perspective in the environmental movement is that humanity must coordinate globally to manage our shared vulnerability on an integrated planet (the “spaceship Earth” concept). This has frequently been countered by a narrative in which the ability of distant authorities to effectively manage environmental problems is rejected, and strategies based around local action are substituted.¹¹⁶ [TK — MORE — other examples — maybe move within proposal]

Inevitably, activist groups are populated by people who have strong political views on at least a few subjects, and who are furthermore willing to try to effect political change through their own actions. Perhaps particularly within environmental groups, a diversity of opinion is usually present about which tactics, alliances, and objectives are desirable. For this and other reasons, interpersonal conflicts seem to be an endemic feature of such groups and, in at least some cases, constitute the major force counteracting recruitment to deplete the supply of volunteers and organizers. To better understand the dynamics and significance of these conflicts, it is desirable to interview activists about conflicts and conflict management within their organizations: how often such conflicts have taken place, and over what issues, as well as what actions if any have been taken in response. Volunteer-based groups lack many of the disciplinary mechanisms available to entities like governments and corporations, and so mechanisms for maintaining internal cohesion are an important part of understanding the functioning and effectiveness of social movements overall. Interviewing subjects about interpersonal conflicts may help to better illustrate the internal dynamics of the climate change and anti-pipeline social movement, revealing social and psychological mechanisms through which group cohesion is both challenged and maintained.¹¹⁷

A distinguishing characteristic of climate-focused NGOs like 350.org is an overt narrative about the very existence and day-to-day operations of the fossil fuel industry being at odds with human flourishing.¹¹⁸ 350.org founder Bill McKibben has said:

“It’s not that we have a philosophical difference with the fossil fuel industry — it’s that their business model is destroying the planet.” [TK — Cite]

The push for fossil fuel divestment campaigns to be initiated at hundreds of universities around the world was also justified in terms of withdrawing “social license” from the fossil fuel industry and fostering public antagonism toward it. In a way, the climate-motivated

¹¹⁵Fisher, *Studying Large-Scale Protest: Understanding Mobilization and Participation at the People’s Climate March*, p. 11.

¹¹⁶For an account of some such local efforts, see: Hoffmann, *Climate Governance at the Crossroads: Experimenting with a Global Response After Kyoto*.

¹¹⁷For a discussion of belief formation and preservation in the context of social movements, see: Hoggan, *I’m Right and You’re an Idiot: The Toxic State of Public Discourse and How to Clean It Up*, p. 27.

¹¹⁸Arguably, climate change isn’t even the first time the fossil fuel industry has imposed a massive pollution problem on the world and employed scientists to mislead policy makers and the public about its existence and seriousness. The case of tetraethyl lead as a gasoline additive and its investigation and criticism by Clair Cameron Patterson may be worth considering as an earlier example of fossil fuel industry misconduct.

anti-pipeline movement is an effort at policy-making by other means. If the relevant jurisdictions, including Canada's federal government and the government of Alberta, are unwilling to constrain fossil fuel supply as a means of achieving Canada's climate change targets, blocking infrastructure construction may achieve the same ends. On the opposite extreme, there are those who see partnerships with the fossil fuel industry as a path to successful climate change mitigation. They may hold this view because they recognize the political power of the industry and therefore reject any approach which antagonizes them as unlikely to succeed. Alternatively, they may believe that the wealth and expertise of these corporations position them to develop non-fossil fuel energy options (though the question of whether they would abandon their fossil fuel assets when such technologies are considered sufficiently available must be asked). There are also those who point to some industry support for measures like carbon pricing as evidence that the fossil fuel industry is not fundamentally antagonistic toward effective climate action.¹¹⁹ Some analysis has also emphasized anti-industry and anti-capitalist discourses in the climate change activist movement as a major cause of disengagement on the issue by the political right.¹²⁰ This is problematic not least because any climate policy which will succeed in preventing warming of much more than 2 °C will need to remain in place for decades: almost certainly including multiple changes of government.

Within analysis of social movements, 'theory of change' is an important concept. It underlines differences between those who see greater utility in either mass politics or elite-driven approaches, as well as those which seek to drive change primarily through education, shaping public opinion, winning the support of already-influential actors, or other means.¹²¹¹²² At least occasionally, activists produce self-conscious 'power analyses' through which they evaluate the circumstances in which they have found themselves so far, and the means through which they have sought to achieve their objectives.¹²³ The theory of change espoused by a group may be implicit or explicit, and improved understanding of it might be achieved both through direct questioning and the indirect analysis of statements. Inconsistent theories of change among those who advocate similar objectives are likely an important source of ongoing fissures and disagreements within the climate change activist movement, particularly in the areas of allyship and intersectionality. An additional related issue is pacing: meeting the 2 °C or 1.5 °C temperature target from the Paris Agreement requires urgent action. How can that be addressed within a worldview that sees major political or economic change as a necessary precursor to controlling emissions?

¹¹⁹See: Kay, *How We Learned to Stop Hating Big Oil*.

¹²⁰Hoggan, *I'm Right and You're an Idiot: The Toxic State of Public Discourse and How to Clean It Up*, p. 36.

¹²¹In *The End of Nature*, Bill McKibben confesses his earlier naivety about the concept, summarizing his implicit notion as: "people would read my book — and then they would change". In a sense, the foundation of 350.org can be seen as McKibben's next attempt at a more promising mechanism.

¹²²See also: Dovey, *Power switch: Bill McKibben's climate challenge*.

¹²³For example: Meisel and J. K. Russell, *Case Study: Tar Sands Action*.

2.5.2 Climate change and capitalism

A related set of questions concern capitalism and responses to climate change. Many activists allege that a successful movement to avoid dangerous climate change must be anti-capitalist. One justification for this view is that capitalism fundamentally requires never-ending economic growth, which by extension requires ever-more raw materials to be used and ever-more waste to be produced. Some of those who advance this criticism couple it with advocacy of “de-growth” or of a steady state economy in which the biophysical impacts of human activity are constrained. Another justification focuses on the political rather than the physical consequences of capitalism, emphasizing how political systems in which corporations play a dominant role will not be able to address the problem of climate change. Both of these arguments are challenged by liberal environmentalists and others.

Liberal environmentalists are perhaps defined by their willingness to at least accept markets for externalities as a means of trying to correct market failures (taxes on harmful intoxicants, for instance, or on pollution). Steven Bernstein argues that they “predicate ...environmental protection on the promotion and maintenance of a liberal economic order” where “privatization of global commons ... and market norms are not only perceived as compatible with environmental protection, but also necessary for successful incorporation of concern for the environment in the practices of relevant state and non-state actors”.¹²⁴ Liberal environmentalists also tend to be optimistic about technological and technocratic solutions to environmental problems.¹²⁵ At the extreme, environmentalists with high confidence about the potential of technological development in cooperation with the resources of large-scale financial capital can address climate change largely through the operation of markets established by governments and supplemental efforts to try to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.¹²⁶ Technological and market optimists have a much different image of what success looks like than bioenvironmentalists who are focused on rebuilding ecosystems, rebuilding human resilience of natural shocks, and overcoming consumer capitalism as a dominant global ideology. As Clapp and Dauvergne note:

At the same time, market liberals consider the antiglobalization proposals of social greens and bioenvironmentalists as wrongheaded and dangerous to global well-being. Shutting down economic globalization will, in the view of market liberals, cause far more environmental harm (linked to increased poverty) than growth. Moreover, they argue that the bioenvironmentalists and social greens are far too pessimistic about the benefits of new technologies, which in the view of market liberals will reverse most growth-related environmental damage. ... [T]hey see the social green proposals for localism as nothing more than a recipe

¹²⁴Bernstein, *The Compromise of Liberal Environmentalism*, p. 213.

¹²⁵On the ‘technocratic’ side, see for instance “Prices and markets” (p. 100–7) and “Trading schemes” (p. 107–111) in: Stern, *The Global Deal: Climate Change and the Creation of a New Era of Progress and Prosperity*.

¹²⁶At a minimum, some question the plausibility of any program of environmental protection which requires substantial perceived sacrifices in quality of life. Daniel Kahneman, for instance, has argued that: “No amount of psychological awareness will overcome people’s reluctance to lower their standard of living.”

for protectionism, endemic poverty, and parochialism.¹²⁷

The presence of both pro- and anti-capitalists in the anti-pipeline movement therefore establishes it as an active area of the development of political thought about the relationship between market capitalism as a form of political organization and the resolution (or non-resolution) of major environmental problems.

Another central disagreement among movements concerned about climate change concerns the plausibility of technical solutions, ranging from government-set efficiency standards to carbon pricing mechanisms and even geoengineering. From one set of perspectives, technical solutions are seen as more desirable than those requiring large-scale political or philosophical changes, in part because such changes are difficult to bring about and uncertain to control climate change even if they are achieved. Alternative views emphasize that purely technical solutions cannot prevent catastrophic climate change, either because climate change is itself a symptom of a broader problem like consumerism or colonialism or because power elites which might technically be able to control greenhouse gas pollutions through such means will continue to bow to incentives which keep them from doing so. Perspectives on geoengineering may be especially worth examining in detail because of what they reveal about the subject's attitudes toward technology, equity, and human interaction with nature. Scholars and advocates have begun appealing for serious consideration of geoengineering intended to counteract the planetary warming caused by greenhouse gases.¹²⁸¹²⁹

2.5.3 Environmentalists and indigenous people

Significant examples of recent North American environmental advocacy have emphasized indigenous peoples as politically important actors, as well as disproportionate victims of environmental harm. For instance, the opening contingent at the People's Climate March was restricted to people from frontline indigenous communities and the 'Climate Welcome' organized for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau by 350.org and others emphasized indigenous presence and leadership.¹³⁰

Among indigenous peoples, skepticism about environmentalism and environmental groups can certainly be observed. For some, the opposition to resource development that often characterizes such groups is seen to block necessary economic development and perpetuate poverty.¹³¹ Others object to the prioritization of the interests of non-human animals over the traditional practices of indigenous communities, such as whaling and Canada's annual harp

¹²⁷Clapp and Dauvergne, *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*, p. 245.

¹²⁸See: Keith, *A Case for Climate Engineering*.

¹²⁹S. Gardiner, "Is 'Arming the Future' with Geoengineering Really the Lesser Evil? Some Doubts About the Ethics of Intentionally Manipulating the Climate System", p. 284-312.

¹³⁰See: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sindark/15149190788/in/album-72157647868371652/> and <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sindark/15149190788/in/album-72157647868371652/>

¹³¹The paradox of those most impacted by environmentally degrading practices sometimes being strongly opposed to environmental regulation is discussed in: Hochschild, *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*.

seal hunt.¹³² At the same time, proponents of fossil fuel extraction likely seek to deliberately exacerbate tensions between environmentalists and indigenous groups, for instance with the objective of preventing the formation of effective coalitions.¹³³¹³⁴

2.5.4 Environmentalists and people of faith

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis explicitly calls upon Catholics to try to change government policy through self-organized groups:

“[L]ocal individuals and groups can make a real difference. They are able to instil a greater sense of responsibility, a strong sense of community, a readiness to protect others, a spirit of creativity and a deep love for the land. They are also concerned about what they will eventually leave to their children and grandchildren. These values are deeply rooted in indigenous peoples. Because the enforcement of laws is at times inadequate due to corruption, public pressure has to be exerted in order to bring about decisive political action. Society, through non-governmental organizations and intermediate groups, must put pressure on governments to develop more rigorous regulations, procedures and controls. Unless citizens control political power — national, regional and municipal — it will not be possible to control damage to the environment.”¹³⁵¹³⁶

This theory of change would be familiar to secular environmental activists. Furthermore, the general concept that political change to reduce the severity of climate change should be sought by faith organizations has been espoused by the last two Archbishops of Canterbury, the United Church of Canada, and many other groups. At the same time, some people of faith and politicians have raised theological objections to political action to protect the environment, sometimes even arguing that climate change cannot be a problem because god would not allow it to be. For example, Former U.S. House Majority Leader Dick Armey said in 2009:

“I take it as an article of faith if the lord God almighty made the heavens and the Earth, and he made them to his satisfaction and it is quite pretentious of we little weaklings here on earth to think that, that we are going to destroy God’s creation.”¹³⁷¹³⁸

¹³²See: Leduc, *Climate, culture, change: Inuit and Western dialogues with a warming North*, p. 3–4.

¹³³See, for example, the Fraser Institute paper: Bains, “Opportunities for First Nation Prosperity through Oil and Gas Development”.

¹³⁴Contrast with: Lukacs, *By rejecting \$1bn for a pipeline, a First Nation has put Trudeau’s climate plan on trial*.

¹³⁵Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si’ of the Holy Father Francis on the Care of Our Common Home*, p. 131–2.

¹³⁶See also: The Global Catholic Climate Movement, *Eco-Parish Guide: Bringing Laudato Si’ to Life*, p. 33.

¹³⁷Fang, *Lobbyist Dick Armey’s Pollution Gospel: ‘As An Article Of Faith,’ It Is ‘Pretentious’ To Believe In Global Warming*.

¹³⁸See also: Stromberg, *In the GOP’s House, God won’t allow global warming?*

This perspective is in sharp contrast with other people of faith who discern in religious texts and teachings a positive obligation to care for divine creation, which is understood as vulnerable to human depredation. The splits between socially progressive elements within faith communities who are willing to pursue political objectives through secular means, members of the faithful who reject political activism of any kind, and conservative elements who are active in promoting an anti-environmentalist agenda seem to have ongoing political relevance.

Religious thinking also has relevance for tactics and justifications. By ‘justifications’, I mean both the reasons used by actors to defend the particular tactics they have employed, such as civil disobedience, and the broad rationale for philosophies and worldviews, such as what god giving humans ‘dominion’ over the Earth means politically. While politics in Canada and the U.S. is not generally explicitly religious in its content, top-level policy-makers continue to make reference to god in justifying policy positions, and atheists are broadly distrusted, particularly in the U.S.¹³⁹ One potentially relevant contrast between the Keystone XL and Northern Gateway cases is the more explicit religiosity of American political discourse.

At least some faith groups are overtly involved in efforts to change public policy. For example, the Canadian group Citizens for Public Justice (which “seeks human flourishing and the integrity of creation as our faithful response to God’s call for love and justice”) is urging people to take part in ongoing federal climate consultations.¹⁴⁰¹⁴¹¹⁴²¹⁴³ They also catalog climate action being undertaken by denominations including Anglican, Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, Mennonite, Presbyterian, Unitarian, United, and interfaith.¹⁴⁴ There have also been notable individuals from faith communities involved in climate change activism. For instance, Wiebo Ludwig has criticized efforts to control environmental problems through the regulation of fossil fuel industries, noting how these corporations often gain control over their ostensible regulators.¹⁴⁵ Ludwig may have gone on to adopt sabotage as a tactic, and may have inspired acts of sabotage along the proposed Keystone XL route which took place after his death in 2012.¹⁴⁶

The intersections between theology, ethics, and politics continue to have relevance beyond the deliberations inside faith communities, and extend to the practice of politics in general, even within ostensibly secular states. Looking at climate activism within faith communities may also illustrate divisions between those who understand religious faith as naturally compatible with political activism, or who even see pushing for political change as a theological obligation, and those who either see faith as separate from contemporary politics or who actively support the *status quo* on the basis of theological justifications. Such conflicts

¹³⁹For some pertinent examples, see: Singer, *The President of Good & Evil: Questioning the Ethics of George W. Bush*, p. 90–114, 134–42.

¹⁴⁰Citizens for Public Justice, *Add Your Voice to Canada’s Climate Plan*.

¹⁴¹See also: Munn-Venn, *Can faith inform Canada’s climate policy?*

¹⁴²Gunn, *Time to get on Board with pope’s encyclical*.

¹⁴³Gyapong, *Faith communities must be moral dimension in fighting climate change*.

¹⁴⁴Citizens for Public Justice, *Faith & Climate Change*.

¹⁴⁵Hedges, *Wages of Rebellion: The Moral Imperative of Revolt*, p. 202–3.

¹⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 204–7.

can be seen in the backlash against Pope Francis’ calls for environmental action, as well as previous calls from high profile figures like Archbishops of Canterbury Rowan Williams and Justin Welby.¹⁴⁷ These disagreements overlap with related normative conversations about the appropriate role for free market capitalism in structuring society, international relations (particularly involving developing and least developed states), the relative importance of individual and collective action, and intergenerational ethics.¹⁴⁸¹⁴⁹¹⁵⁰

3 Chapter breakdown

Introduction The place of this project in various literatures, specifically social movements, contentious politics, and the advocacy coalition framework

Methods

Major components of anti-pipeline resistance movements in North America

Climate change and indigenous resurgence

Climate change as a challenge to communities of faith

Capitalism and planetary stability

Conclusions Growing overlapping movements; the thinking of centrist politicians being affected, along with public opinion; potential for a distinct avenue of success through the courts

4 Research timetable

- August 2016 — Submit draft proposal to committee
- Begin ethical review
- September 2016 — Finalize proposal and receive approval
- Complete ethical review

¹⁴⁷Speaking about climate change, Williams remarked: “It is crystal clear to me that we are talking about moral issues here. We are not merely talking about how to make ourselves feel more comfortable. We are talking about what we owe to our fellow human beings. Given the scale of the threat, given the fact that it weighs most heavily on those least able to protect themselves, my inclinations is to say that if this question of whether carbon emissions is not a moral question then I do not know quite what is.” Breeze, *Rowan Williams Interview: Climate Change*.

¹⁴⁸Regarding intergenerational ethics, see: Schmid, “All Environmental Policy Instruments Require a Moral Choice as to Whose Interests Count”.

¹⁴⁹Pachauri et al., *Climate ethics: Essential readings*.

¹⁵⁰S. M. Gardiner, *A Perfect Moral Storm: the Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change*.

- Complete preliminary list of interview subjects
- First-round interviews by telephone or Skype (develop complete list of remote interview subjects)
- Second-round interviews by telephone or Skype
- Research trip planning
- Field interviews along the proposed Keystone XL route
- Field interviews along the proposed Northern Gateway Pipeline route
- Transcription and analysis
- Review of initial hypotheses, identification of surprises

5 Bibliography

Note: ‘Link rot’, in which links become ineffective because online resources are removed or relocated, is a persistent problem for academics referring to online sources. As a means of partially mitigating this problem, I will be submitting web addresses to the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine (<https://archive.org/web/>) for archiving. If an online resource has become unavailable, please try searching for it there. I intent to use the same procedure for the final thesis.

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6 Relevant material by category

These are works which have not yet been examined in detail, but which may have been identified as references in other works, recommended by committee members, or otherwise deemed relevant to this PhD project.

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6.2 Social movements

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[TK — Much more, do a Robarts research consultation]

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[TK — Much more, do a Robarts research consultation]

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[TK — Much more, do a Robarts research consultation]

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