

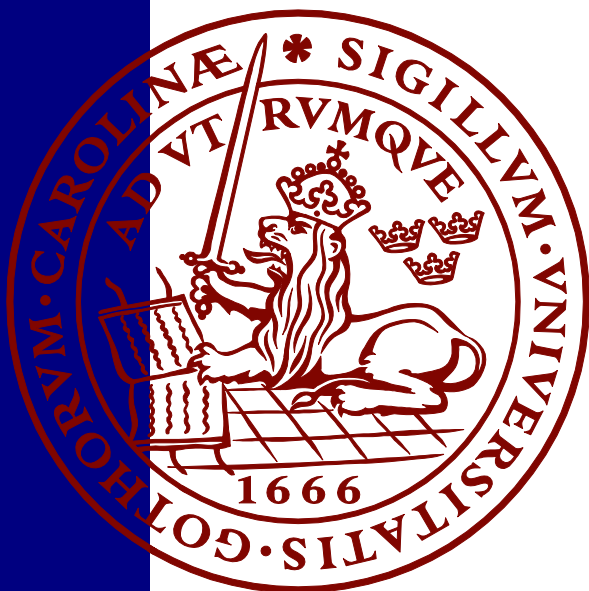
Stuck in the Tar?

The Implications of Canadian Mainstream News Media
Representations of a Just [Energy] Transition from Alberta's
Bitumen Sands

Alicia Gowan

Master Thesis Series in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science,
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Lund University
International Master's Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science
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LUCSUS

Lund University Centre for
Sustainability Studies



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Submitted May 11, 2021

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Abstract:

Alberta's Tar Sands are one of the most environmentally and socially destructive fossil fuel projects on Earth. Socio-political resistance or acceptance will determine the Tar Sands' future: whether production continues or whether it is phased out to ensure meaningful climate action in Canada. I examined how news media communicates a "Just Transition" from the Tar Sands and proposed that their written formulations have wider social implications. My analysis revealed that news media framed the Tar Sands as being part of Canada's future energy landscape with a techno-corporate-managerial role in the energy 'transition'. Additionally, news media failed to discuss the Just Transition in a meaningful way. The implications are climate misconceptions and Just Transition illiteracy, foreclosing the opportunity to inform the public on transformative solutions, which could risk public acceptance of climate action. My findings raise questions on the news media's role going forward and broader issues of climate communication.

Keywords: *Alberta Oil Sands, media studies, climate communication, critical discourse analysis, Just Transition, fossil fuel hegemony*

Word Count: 11990

Abbreviations:

Abbreviation	Term
CC	Climate change
ATS	Alberta Tar Sands
GHG	Greenhouse gas
PM	Prime minister
US	United States
MNM	Mainstream news media
KXL	Keystone Export Limited
CDA	Critical discourse analysis
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CTV	Canadian Television Network
CCS	Carbon capture and storage
ESG	Environmental-social-governance
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

I would like to respectfully acknowledge the First Nations and Métis peoples who have lived on the lands in northern Alberta since time immemorial. I acknowledge that the Bitumen Sands are located in Treaty 6, Treaty 8, and Treaty 10 territory. These treaties encompass the traditional territories of Dene, Cree, Stoney, Nakoda, and Sioux First Nations. I recognize the Métis presence and nationhood in northern Alberta.

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“You can’t reach good ends through evil means,
because the means represent the seed and the end represents the tree”
Martin Luther King Jr.

1 Introduction

Together with 196 countries, Canada adopted the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels (UNFCCC, 2021). However, Canada’s commitments are presently “insufficient” (Climate Action Tracker, 2020) in remaining below this level. This is primarily due to “modest” (Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019) climate action efforts within Canada’s oil and gas sector, going against “low greenhouse gas development” (UNFCCC, 2021) in the Paris Agreement. The biggest contributor to this sector is the Alberta Bitumen or Tar Sands¹ (ATS); Canada’s largest fossil fuel mega-project and greenhouse gas (GHG) contributor (CER, 2020).

As Canada and the world work on reducing GHGs to meet the Paris Agreement, demand for fossil fuels, like crude oil from the ATS, are projected to reduce over time (CER, 2020). Despite this, many climate researchers argue that GHGs in top-polluting countries, like Canada, have either remained unchanged or increased, and that any adjusted or newly introduced climate policy must be bold and *transformative* to avert climate catastrophe (Jenkins, Sovacool, Blachowicz, & Lauer, 2020; Ferns, & Amaeshi, 2019). As climate change (CC) concerns heighten, the present fossil fuel intensive energy system is *not* compatible with meaningful climate action due to its GHG contributions (McCauley, et al., 2019; Evans & Phelan, 2016; Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019). Consequently, there is a worldwide call for decarbonizing energy sectors (Delina & Sovacool, 2018; Johnstone & Hielscher, 2017; Swilling, Musango, & Wakeford, 2016). A *transformative* ‘energy transition’ in this context implies a phase-out *from* the contemporary fossil fuel energy system *towards* sustainable pathways, such as switching to renewables and lowering energy consumption. Considering its contributions to CC, this would imply a shift away from the ATS in Canada.

As Newell and Mulvaney (2013) argue, within energy transitions it becomes a necessity to underscore critical political economy questions of “who wins, who loses, how and why” in relation to who “bear[s] the social costs of decarbonizing energy sources and economies” (p.133). Much of the climate science proves the urgent need for an energy transition; it is up to decision-makers to act

¹ Although technically Bitumen Sands, they are most known as “Oil Sands” in popular culture. Since I assert that “language matters” in this thesis, I chose to call them “Tar” Sands to reposition the term away from the end product, highlight their extractive nature and underscore the need for a phase-out.

swiftly to avert a climate catastrophe (García-García, Carpintero, Buendia, 2020; Johnson, et al., 2020). Thus, the crucial debate becomes *how* this energy transition should occur.

Transitioning towards a sustainable energy system is not only a technical and economic endeavour, but it is also a socially complex affair (Dominish, Briggs, Teske, & Mey, 2019). In the case of the ATS, it is necessary that workers and their communities are not disproportionately burdened by this energy transition (Harrahill & Douglas, 2019). Otherwise, those connected to the industry may suffer from socio-economic and cultural hardships (Harrahill & Douglas, 2019). The “Just Transition” rhetoric has emerged as a means to make the most out of climate action while minimizing adversity on workers and their communities (Evans & Phelan, 2016; & McCauley et al., 2019). A Just Transition is therefore proposed as a possible and necessary foundation, that is grounded in justice, to shift Canada and its workforce towards a low-carbon society.

1.1 Scope

The need for a Just Transition has been acknowledged by internationally recognized institutions including the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2015), and was incorporated in the Paris Agreement (ITUC, 2016). As a result, a Just Transition is being increasingly featured in political discourse and endorsed by climate action proponents (environmental discourse) (Newell & Mulvaney, 2013; Evans & Phelan, 2016). In Canada, it is recognized by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC, 2019) and environmental policy think-tanks such as the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019). In 2018, the concept was adopted by the Federal Government when the ‘Just Transition Taskforce’ was created to inform the government on possible approaches to support a just and fair coal phase-out in Canada (ECCC, 2018). Prior to re-election in 2019, Prime Minister (PM) Justin Trudeau promised to introduce a “Just Transition Act” to ensure that “no one gets left behind” in the process of creating a “new clean economy” (Trudeau, 2019).

Three critical events have occurred since PM Trudeau’s speech which have had significant coverage in news media over the last two years. They have stirred up questions around the fate of the ATS and its workforce, and have heightened the imperative for a Just Transition. The first was the withdrawal of the Teck Resources Limited Frontier ‘Oil’ Sands project application in February 2020 (Lindsay, 2020). The withdrawal was due to “low oil prices, legal challenges, regulatory uncertainty, Indigenous opposition...[and] climate change” (Tasker, 2020). The second was the combined impacts of the global oil price war between Saudi Arabia and Russia and the COVID-19 global pandemic since early 2020. The drop in oil prices from the price war (Khursid & Khan, 2020) combined with the lower

demand due to pandemic restrictions (Hanieh, 2020) led billion-dollar oil companies to lay off thousands of workers in order to 'survive' (Cruikshank, 2020). The third event was the cancellation of the Keystone XL (KXL) Pipeline upon the inauguration of United States (US) President Biden in January 2021. The pipeline would have transported over 800 000 barrels of bitumen/day from the ATS to the US (Keystonexl, 2021). Upon cancellation, thousands of workers lost their jobs (Nickel & Volcovici, 2021). These events showcase the hardships on fossil fuel-reliant workers and communities when an energy transition is not well-planned and managed.

In light of these events and the Just Transition permeating in political and environmental discourses, curiosity lies in how much -- if at all -- the novel concept has entered the public discourse through mainstream news media (MNM). As elaborated further in my thesis, the news media has power in influencing societal processes by disseminating knowledge on current social, environmental, economic, and political issues, to the public by acting as a mediator between decision-makers and citizens, or simply, connecting the public with private domains (Fairclough, 1995). Exploring MNM therefore becomes a key point of departure for understanding broader public discourses on how the public receives environmental decision-making information regarding the ATS (Asayama & Ishii, 2017).

With the ATS being a necessary carbon-intensive project to phase-out to ensure meaningful climate action in Canada, I question how the MNM discusses the future of the ATS and whether and to what extent the Just Transition is a part of this discussion. Overall, my aim is to investigate how climate action is communicated in the MNM, and discuss the wider implications in social practice and how they could be addressed in the future. Using Gramscian theory and Fairclough's framework on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), I examine how these research topics materialized in MNM. My research is guided by the following questions (RQs) (Figure 1):

- 1) How does Canadian national mainstream news media discursively portray future production and/or phase-out of the Tar Sands?
- 2) Has a Just Transition (of the Tar Sands) permeated through Canadian national mainstream news media over the last 2 years? To what extent and how?
- 3) What are the possible implications of these representations in the mainstream news media within the broader social context?

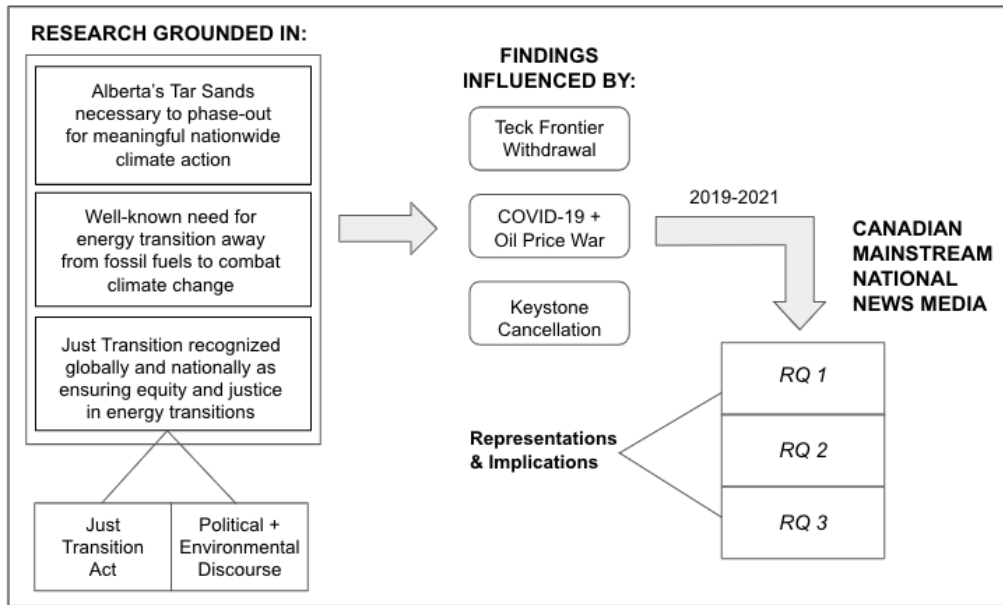


Figure 1. This figure highlights the process that guided the creation of my research questions. From left to right it shows what my research was grounded in with relation to the necessity to phase-out the ATS to ensure meaningful climate action in Canada and the presence of the ‘Just Transition’ in environmental and political discourse. Next, I highlight the three main events that influenced my findings, as well as the time period from 2019-2021. My research focused on Canadian mainstream national news media to determine the representations, as noted by my research questions (RQ), and their implications.

1.2 Situating this Research in Sustainability Science

Sustainability science is a field that emerged to “understand the fundamental character of *interactions* between *nature* and *society*” (Kates et al., 2001, p.641). This thesis is concerned with the relationship between humans and the ways in which humans perceive, understand, and interact with the natural world. How humans perceive and what they deem ‘worthy’ in the natural world will influence society’s decisions on whether to continue bitumen extraction or whether to acknowledge and accept that changes in future energy systems are needed in today’s carbon constrained world. It asks whether society has the “capacity to guide [human-nature] interactions along more sustainable trajectories” (Kates et al., 2001, p.641).

The *interdisciplinary* nature of sustainability science allows me to combine multiple perspectives across different disciplines (Spangenberg, 2011), including both natural and social sciences (Jerneck, et al., 2011). My thesis dives into a wide range of fields related to climate science, climate communication, energy transitions, justice, media studies, and critical social science.

Aligning with the *problem-focused* aspect of sustainability science (Rokaya, et al., 2017), my case study, energy transitions, and the overarching challenge of CC are “wicked problems” where

stakeholders have conflicting stances and their complexity makes solutions seem unattainable (von Wehrden, et al., 2017). They require the adoption of a *systems thinking approach* in order to be truly sustainable (Kirby & O'Mahony, 2017).

This research employs a “critical agenda...[to] question the framework of problem-solving efforts” (Olsson & Ness, 2019, p.1). I accomplish this by adopting CDA to question the dominant and contemporary framework presently put forth in media discourse for solving climate change impacts in the ATS. Since sustainability science is *solutions-oriented* (Jerneck, et al., 2011), I propose an alternative measure to combat climate change and safeguard justice: transforming the energy sector through the implementation of a Just Transition. The principles and practices that guide a Just Transition attempt to *solve complex problems* related to labour injustice, polarization, redressing inequalities, and climate (in)action.

2 Background

2.1 What is a Just [Energy] Transition?

This section explains ‘how’ the energy transition must occur to safeguard workers’ rights, well-being, and livelihoods, and to ensure that climate action is conducted in a just and equitable manner.

Inspired by North American labour movements in the 1980’s, the Just Transition initially emerged out of concern for the closure of industries and subsequent loss of jobs due to new environmental regulations (Jenkins, Sovacool, Blachowicz, & Lauer, 2020). Although it lacks a clear definition (Harrahill & Douglas, 2019; Stevis & Felli, 2015), today, a Just [Energy] Transition generally strives to alleviate possible negative consequences by proactively addressing the social and labour-based inequities that could emerge from environmental protection and climate action, while concomitantly providing socio-economic welfare for previously reliant fossil-based communities and workers (Harrahill & Douglas, 2019; Newell & Mulvaney, 2013). More generally, it is a sustainability concept, tool, and vision that advocates for the coordinated implementation of social (including labour) and environmental (including energy and climate) justice into environmental policy and decision-making (Healey, & Barry, 2017; Harrahill & Douglas, 2019).

Although my thesis primarily focuses on how public discourse representations in MNM are constructed, it is necessary to understand what characterizes a Just Transition within the ATS context. Table 1 shows the necessary principles and practices that I identify as crucial for a Just Transition to

occur (see Appendix 8.1 for more details). They fall under three ‘criteria’ themes: socio-economic practices and labour rights, governance, and justice and accountability.

Table 1. Condensed version of Appendix 8.1 highlighting the 20 criteria for a Just Transition from ATS

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PRACTICES & LABOUR RIGHTS		GOVERNANCE	
a)	Just Transition Fund	k)	Proactive and managed
b)	Financial support	l)	State involvement
c)	Wage subsidies	m)	Flexibility
d)	Guaranteed jobs	n)	Distinct time plan
e)	Employment programs	o)	Information dissemination
f)	(Re)training/skills transfer	p)	Coordinated efforts
g)	Public dialogue	JUSTICE & ACCOUNTABILITY	
h)	Compensated education	q)	Justice (e.g. climate)
i)	Early retirement/pension	r)	Redress existing inequalities
j)	Mental health support	s)	Remediation
		t)	Context specific

2.2 Alberta Tar Sands

Canada is the world’s fifth largest oil producer, fourth largest exporter of crude oil, and is home to the third largest crude oil reserve in the world; all on account of the ATS (NRCAN_b, 2020). This multi-owned mega-project which spans over 142 200 km² produces the majority (+75%) of Canada’s crude oil, coming from northern Alberta’s Athabasca, Cold Lake, and Peace River deposits (Figure 2) (CER, 2020; NRCAN_b, 2020; Parson & Ray, 2018). The ATS are influential in both Alberta and Canada’s political economies (NRCAN_b, 2020). In 2019, the region produced 2.95 million barrels per day (NRCAN_a, 2020). That same year, Canada’s oil and gas industry (CAPP, 2020), contributed to over 500 000 jobs (directly and indirectly) of which three-fifths were located in Alberta (CAPP, 2020).



Figure 2. Map showing size of Alberta Tar Sands compared to Canada. The land mass of the three deposits is 142 200 km². The mineable surface available for open-pit mining (yellow) is approximately 4800 km² (3.4%) (Government of Alberta, 2021), while the rest is available for in-situ mining (brown) (NRCAN, 2016). This Federal Government created map omits the environmental impact from in-situ mining - the majority of mining conducted - and only shows the impact from open-pit mining (black) (NRCAN, 2016).

The ATS are also Canada’s most polluting mega-project and biggest contributor to CC. In 2018, they were the largest GHG emitter within Canada’s oil and gas sector accounting for 11% of the nation’s total greenhouse gas emissions (CER, 2020). They have led to a host of environmental and social problems (Figure 3). For instance, the toxic tailing ponds -- a byproduct of the bitumen extraction process -- pollute the air and water in nearby communities and harm local wildlife (Parson & Ray, 2018). The ATS are also a site of continued settler colonialism. Operating according to a neoliberal logic of accumulation by dispossession (Das, 2017) through oil extraction, the ATS perpetuate the long-standing appropriation of Indigenous ancestral lands and the infringement of treaty rights (Parson & Ray, 2018; Preston, 2013; Dusyk, Axsen, & Dullemond, 2018). Due to these climatic, ecological, and social impacts they have been labelled by a Canadian Environmental NGO, Environmental Defence, and many others as the “most destructive project on Earth” (Environmental Defence, 2008).



Figure 3. Comparing the “before and after” of the landscape in the Alberta Tar Sands (Fossil Fuel Connections, 2015).

2.2.1 The Case for a Just Transition in Alberta’s Tar Sands

Oil in Alberta has a notable “cultural significance” in the “imaginary” (Mayer, 2018, p.3) of the Albertan people. As a result, oil-dependent regions often embrace a “community economic identity” (Bell & York, 2010, p.112) whereby the industry becomes a “cornerstone of their collective sense of self” (Mayer, 2018, p.3). To elucidate this, the most prevalent lobby group for the ‘Oil’ Sands, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, coined the phrase “Alberta is Energy” (Haluzá-DeLay & Carter, 2018, p.457). This coining “[positions] energy extraction and production as inextricable with Albertan self-identity” (Haluzá-Delay, 2012, p.2), suggesting one is ‘un-Albertan’ or ‘anti-Albertan’ if one does not support the oil industry.

Environmental activism in Alberta has traditionally targeted the ATS. This ‘targeting’ has often led to significant opposition towards climate action and regulation in Alberta by ‘Oil’ Sands proponents (Adkin, 2018). This is in part due to the (economic) value of the ‘Oil’ Sands to many Albertan (and Canadian) people as well as the strong sense of cultural identity towards oil (DeCillia & McCurdy, 2020). There is also the perceived assumption that environmental protection destroys jobs (Dusyk, Aksen, & Dullemond, 2018; Adkin, 2018), which in many cases has been proven as a myth (Heuting, 1996; Rätzl & Uzzell, 2011; Evans & Phelan, 2016, Hoffman & Paulsen, 2020).

This polarization between economic growth and jobs versus socio-ecological concerns arguably prevents meaningful climate action in Alberta. Upon reflecting on the dominant cultural landscape and ‘Albertan identity’, Haluzá-Delay (2012) suggests that in order to shift beyond this polarization,

the “reigning hegemony” must be opposed and alternatives presented which are “sufficient to evoke acceptance by the populace” (p.3). Therefore, although this ‘economy versus environment’ trope is difficult to reconcile, the Just Transition attempts to do just that by giving communities and workers a voice in the transition as the economy shifts away from carbon intensive industries (Harrahill & Douglas, 2019).

It is inevitable that an ATS energy transition will decrease and even eliminate jobs, affecting people and communities across the nation (OECD, 2017; Pearse, 2020). One report from Statistics Canada claimed that for every job lost in the oil and gas sector, six (4 indirect, 2 induced) jobs are lost in another industry (Wang, 2020). Without the principles and practices of a Just Transition, there is the risk that an energy transition may lead to the promotion of pro-Oil Sands narratives (i.e. jobs over the environment) by those who assert that environmental protection comes at the expense of ‘Oil’ Sands workers (Harrahill & Douglas, 2019). This is why I argue a Just Transition is not only important for ensuring justice in an ATS phase-out, but is also crucial for promoting wide-spread acceptance of climate action measures.

3 Theoretical Underpinnings

The following section elaborates on the theoretical underpinnings -- critical realism, retroductive reasoning, discourse, ideology, hegemony, and power -- that ground my thesis and help me critically analyze MNM representations.

3.1 Research Paradigm

My research is situated in the *critical realism* philosophy of science which sees *ontology* as being socially conditioned but independent from human beliefs and knowledge (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). It sees *epistemology* as distinct from ontology in that it is context specific and not apparent through impetuous observation (Bryman, 2012). I chose critical realism because it supports both my theoretical (hegemony) and methodological (CDA) approaches (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Critical realism acknowledges the reality of the social world in terms of its “events and discourses” and maintains that “we will only be able to understand -- and so change -- the social world if we identify the structures at work that generate those events and discourses” (Bryman, 2012, p.29, quoting Bhaskar 1989, p.2). Therefore, critical realism asserts that discourses must be examined according to social structures and especially the power relationships that give rise to them (Bryman, 2012).

The form of reasoning that aligns with critical realism's subjective epistemology is *retroductive reasoning*, which involves making inferences "about the causal mechanism that lies behind and is responsible for regularities that are observed in the social world" (Bryman, 2012, p.29). This implies inferring the most probable reasoning or outcome for a certain phenomenon observed, which aligns with my CDA methodology (Section 4.1) as it is based on interpreting text and discourse.

3.2 A Social Theory of Discourse and Ideology

According to Fairclough (2003), discourses are understood as spoken or written communication that represent "aspects of the world -- the processes, relations and structures of the material world, the 'mental world' of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth, and the social world" (p.124). Discourses are commonly studied in social sciences because of the central credence that language *fundamentally shapes the world* materially, as well as *our understanding of it*. Therefore, language does not just portray a simple and impartial reflection of reality (Fairclough, 2013).

Ideologies are often understood as products of discourse. From a critical point of view, they can be considered as a system of power that shapes and reinforces unequal societal relations (Jaques, Islar, & Lord 2019). More specifically, "where discourse is mobilized to reinforce systems of social power it functions as ideology" (Stoddart, 2007, p.193). Therefore, according to Stoddart (2007), ideology, discourse, as well as hegemony -- the theoretical underpinning described in the following section -- are inherently interconnected with one another.

3.3 Hegemony

Hegemony is broadly understood as the manner in which a dominant societal group establishes and maintains its power (Jaques, Islar, & Lord, 2019). Gramscian hegemony is inspired by the ways in which power operates within society, especially in relation to how it functions ideologically within democratic institutions, day-to-day life, and belief systems (LeQuesne, 2019; Adkin, 2018). Hegemony is discursively entrenched in society by orchestrating a consolidated belief system whereby a common-sense worldview is established (Lewis, 1992; Greenhouse, 2005). The hegemony of fossil fuels -- the ascendancy of the fossil fuel industry over culture, values, and belief systems (Nyberg, Wright, & Kirk, 2018; Adkin, 2018) -- in Canada's political economy and the influence of news media over the public inspired this choice of theory.

Gramsci's linguistic work focused on the "metaphorical power of linguistic concepts as tools to help analyse political circumstances, specifically the role of culture in shaping people's beliefs, behaviour

and even their voting patterns” (Ives, 2004, p.5). Gramsci believed language cannot be separated from the history, culture, and society of those who employ it, as it is deeply intertwined to how we think about and understand the world, the way we live and how we make choices (Ives, 2004). This recognition of the ‘power of language’ is also conceded by Norman Fairclough, an influential sociolinguist who has also inspired my theory and methodology. Ives (2004) writes that “by focusing on language, Gramsci’s ideas [of hegemony] can be introduced in a manner underscoring [its] continued relevance and importance” (p.2); a process I do in this thesis by combining Fairclough and Gramsci’s work.

3.4 The Power of News Media

Despite the assumed normative role of news media as a neutral watchdog (Hassan, 2018; DeCillia & McCurdy, 2020), it is well-understood that news media has power in influencing “knowledge, beliefs, values, social relations, [and] social identities” (Fairclough, 1995, p.2). As mentioned in Section 1.1, analysing news media can also provide insight into public discourse on contemporary debates (Dusyk, Axsen, Dullemond, 2018).

According to Fairclough, the news media has a “signifying power” (Fairclough, 1995, p.2) which is established in how news stories are represented in particular ways and the way language is used; a process which can affect the reader’s cognition (Lakoff, 2010; Plec & Pettenger, 2012). The news media is therefore understood as a powerful actor in society with a hegemonic influence over the public. It is therefore essential to understand how the news media functions in today’s political economy, including how it operates within the market-system and how it corresponds with the state (Fairclough, 1995).

In today’s neo-liberal society, the media operates in a highly competitive, commercial, and profit-driven domain, which ultimately affects the outcome of dominant media practices and texts (Inglis, 1990). There is a growing tendency for journalists to write news in ‘entertaining’ ways to become more marketable (Fenton, 2011; Hassan, 2018). This is commonly achieved through exaggeration, emotive phrasing, metaphors, and the inclusion/exclusion of particular content (Conboy, 2013). These tactics compromise the news content and communication style which can skew or understate the reality of the issue at hand (Curran, Iyengar, Brink Lund & Salovaara-Moring, 2009). This undermines the intended democratic purpose of news media as being informative and educational by diverting “attention and energy from political and social issues which helps to insulate existing relations of power and domination from serious challenge” (Fairclough, 1995, p.12).

Fairclough (1995) asserts that this process turns readers from “participants [to] spectators” (p.44). The public becomes valued as mere consumers rather than engaged citizens to be drawn into the (political) public sphere to contemplate important “issues of the day” (Fairclough, 1995, p.11).

Governments may concern themselves with media production because of the media’s “mobilizing power” and “ideological potential” (Fairclough, 1995, p.45) to influence media output and persuade the public. Governments may use media coverage to strategically frame certain topics to their benefit and therefore influence policy agendas and public opinion (Dusyk, Axsen, & Dullemond, 2018). Not only does the mass media shape the system, but it can be shaped by the system as well (Fairclough, 1995; Dusyk, Axsen, & Dullemond, 2018). As a result, the state's interest in news often results in the news media rarely critiquing the status quo and rather “naturaliz[ing] establishment ideologies” (Fairclough, 1995, p.46). Consequently, the media often intentionally or unintentionally reproduces hegemonic views towards current and emerging issues.

4 Methodology

My methodology is a mixed-methods research strategy with a focus on CDA. The majority of this research is qualitative, including how I determine my discourses and themes during my coding process. This is to illustrate how the news media creates meaning through language use (Asayama & Ishii, 2017). Quantitatively, I determine the frequency of words within news articles to ascertain the prominence, and thus, relative importance of different themes. Using CDA, I follow a descriptive-interpretive-explanatory approach (Figure 4) to describe what I find in the text (news articles); to interpret its content and find commonalities; and to explain -- through retroductive reasoning -- what this content might mean in the broader socio-cultural practice. After describing my methodological process, I present my limitations.

4.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

I chose to undertake Fairclough’s multidimensional framework for CDA as it gives me the ability to analyze news texts to determine how socio-environmental issues are manifested in language (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). CDA investigates the ways in which language can “constitute or transmit knowledge” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p.7) within social establishments or when power is being exercised, and how dominant actors and their associated ideologies are reproduced through language. In other words, by applying CDA, I explore how discourses “are constituted; why they are constituted in the way they are; as well as what meanings are expressed in those forms of discourse and what are hidden” (Regmi, 2017, p.98). According to Fairclough, ‘critical’ (in CDA) means “to contribute to addressing the

social ‘wrongs’ of the day...by analysing their sources and causes, resistance to them and possibilities of overcoming them” (Fairclough, 2013, p.231).

In a given instance when language is used -- also known as a ‘communicative event’ (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p.68) -- it is concomitantly a *text*, a moment of *discursive practice*, and of *social practice* (Fairclough, 1992); these make the three components of Fairclough’s multidimensional framework² (Figure 4).

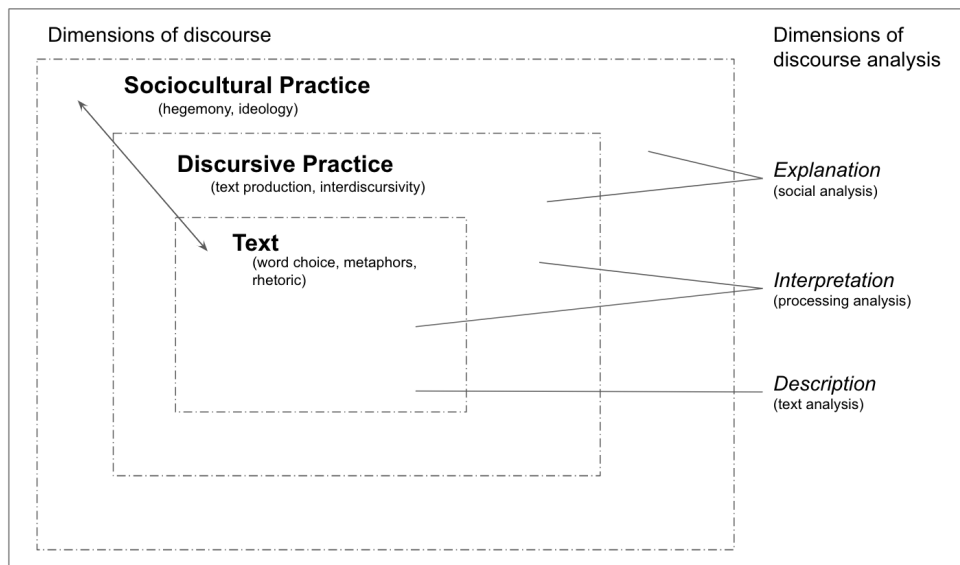


Figure 4. Fairclough’s 3-part analytical framework connecting ‘text’, ‘discursive practice’, and ‘socio-cultural practice’. On the right shows the dimensions of discourse analysis: description, interpretation, and explanation. I include dotted lines to highlight the CDA as an iterative and relational process. Image adapted from Fairclough (Fairclough, 1992).

‘Text’ is recognized as the “written or spoken ‘product’ of the process of text production” (Fairclough, 1992, p.3). Fairclough’s CDA employs various elements of linguistics when analyzing a given text. I examine syntax, vocabulary, and lexicalization (Shojaei & Lahegi, 2012). Lexicalization, or word choice, is particularly important to my analysis because it allows me to distinguish “among[st] subtle shades of meaning” (Shojaei & Lahegi, 2012, p.2537). ‘Meaning’ is central to the connection between the text and discourse dimensions as they relate to how the text is ‘interpreted’ (Figure 4) (Fairclough, 1992). As Jaques, Islar and Lord (2019) point out, analysing text is beneficial because it adds to the “study of hegemony by looking at how texts function to reproduce or challenge the dominance of social groups” (p.5). This is valuable because, upon interpretation, it reveals the type of dominant discourses journalists or news channels choose to reinforce.

² This framework is a guideline, rather than a set “blueprint” (Fairclough, 1992, p.225).

'Discursive practice' bridges text and socio-cultural analysis together (Fairclough, 1995). It examines the nature of how text is produced and construed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Analyzing discursive practices involves 'interdiscursivity', a process whereby authors (journalists) draw on different genres and discourses in the text and during the communicative event (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). It is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis to determine how news media texts have been "consumed" (Fairclough, 1992, p.78). In my analysis, I make inference to (retroductively reasoned) how the public *may* understand and interpret these texts. Therefore, a 'discursive practice' functions to both reproduce society -- including social and cultural identities, systems of knowledge, and social correspondence -- as well as transform society (Fairclough, 1992, p.65).

The third dimension, 'social practice', focuses on the 'social analysis' of the communicative event (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002), as well as "how that shapes the nature of the discursive practice" (Fairclough, 1992, p.4). In other words, a social practice is the articulation of various social characteristics that make up specific aspects of social life (Fairclough, 2003) which determine the kind of social structures and power relations that prevail in society, as well as those that do not (Fairclough, 1992). According to Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), people are often unaware that social structures and power relations influence social practices. In this thesis, social practice is examined by setting the analyzed discourses within their societal context, and determining their socio-cultural implications.

Although I have described these three dimensions separately, they ultimately coincide in practice, by "contain[ing]" and "internaliz[ing]" (Fairclough, 2003, p.25) one another and undergoing an iterative and relational process (Fairclough, 1992). Ultimately, the purpose of my CDA is to investigate how language use and social practice are connected (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). In other words, how MNM language and public perception/practice are connected.

4.2 Text Selection

I selected *mainstream* news media compared to alternative media to gain an understanding of what the majority of average Canadians are viewing/reading, and therefore influenced by. This is supported by Fairclough's assertion that "audience size underscores the potential influence and power of the media" (Fairclough, 1995, p.40). This also highlights how focusing on MNM is appropriate when examining power relations, and thus, hegemony in society.

Text selection involves searching keywords on Canadian (online) MNM channel websites, including “Oil Sands”, “Tar Sands”, and “bitumen” individually, and alongside “phase-out”, “low-carbon”, “energy transition” and “Just Transition”. After a precursory examination of recent news articles, I narrowed my selection to three of Canada’s mainstream news broadcasters: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) News, Canadian Television Network (CTV) News, and Global News (Table 2). I collect those that have a focus on the future production and/or phase-out of the ATS to determine whether an energy transition, with justice at its core, is being materialized in MNM. I keep articles that generally discuss the oil sector in Alberta if they indirectly refer to the ATS. After collating relevant articles, I gathered 61 from CBC News, 24 from CTV News and 23 from Global News totalling 108 national MNM articles (Appendix 8.2). I exclude ‘opinion’ pieces because I want to focus only on the so-called ‘neutral’ news articles from the selected news outlets.

Table 2. Descriptions of the three MNM channels to provide context and highlight their popularity in Canada as national media channels.

News Outlet (online)	Description
Canadian Broadcasting Channel News (CBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal-crown corporation - the official publicly funded national news broadcaster in Canada • Covers national and provincial news media • Identifies as a “news and informative service” that aims to “inform, to reveal, [and] to contribute to the understanding of issues of public interest and to encourage citizens to participate in our free and democratic society” (CBC News, 2012)
Canadian Television Network News (CTV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privately owned by Bell Media • Covers both national and regional news media - several local newsrooms across Canada • One of highest-ranked national news broadcasters in Canada • Won “Canada’s #1 TV Network” designation 19 years in a row (Bell Media, 2021)
Global News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privately owned by Corus Entertainment Inc. - a multinational mass media and entertainment corporation • Covers national media from ‘coast to coast’ - several local newsrooms • Claims their online platform is “one of Canada’s most visited news websites” • Identifies as being “committed to providing Canadians with accurate, balanced, timely and comprehensive news coverage” (Corus Entertainment Inc., 2020)

I limit the time frame from *primo* January 2019 to *ultimo* February 2021. This is to gain an understanding of the contemporary discourse of future production/potential phase-out and a Just Transition in the ATS; especially due to Justin Trudeau’s announcement of a Just Transition Act just prior to his re-election. Additionally, it is due to the national and global events that took place over the course of this period which may have influenced discourse surrounding environmental decision-making in the ATS, and presumably a Just Transition.

4.3 Data Coding Process

A Just [Energy] Transition implies there *will be* an *eventual* phase-out of the energy sector and/or project (Mertins-Kirkwood, & Deshpande, 2019). Considering this, I approach my coding process by examining how the ATS are discussed in MNM in relation to their future production, and whether a phase-out with associated Just Transition is being discussed at all. I combine a “data-driven” (Gibbs, 2012, p.45) coding technique -- based on observation during analysis -- with a “concept-driven” (Gibbs, 2012, p.44) coding technique -- where previous knowledge, literature, theory, and intuition inspire the creation of codes *before* the analysis takes place (Appendix 8.3). I utilize the qualitative analysis software NVivo-12 to examine the selected MNM texts and answer the following questions:

- How are the ‘Oil’ Sands being represented in relation to their future production and/or phase-out? What themes/discourses emerge that are connected to the ‘Oil’ Sands?
- How is the Just Transition being represented? What themes emerge that are connected to an energy transition, and specifically a Just [Energy] Transition?

These coding questions are inspired by Fairclough’s analysis of language in media texts: “how is the world (events, relationships, etc.) represented?” (Fairclough, 1995, p.5). Coding for question 1 is data-driven. The linguistic features I previously discussed are utilized in the process of determining recurring themes, phrases, and words. They are recognized (rather than predetermined) based on contextual literature, knowledge from sustainability science, as well as what is observed in texts.

Coding for question 2, follows the same observational process as question 1, but differs in the addition of a preliminary step. After my initial collection of news articles, I notice the term ‘Just Transition’ is rarely mentioned. Therefore, I conclude it’s necessary to also focus on the *implicit* employment of ‘Just Transition’ in text. My inclusion criteria is based on the principles and practices that thereby define a Just Transition (Appendix 8.1).

I utilize the ‘query’ tool on NVivo 12 for my quantitative analysis to determine the frequency of words in order to reveal themes. This is useful for answering my second research question (RQ2) as I can investigate how many times ‘Just Transition’ is mentioned explicitly in the texts and search for keywords to determine how ‘Just Transition’ is implicitly mentioned. The implicit use of ‘Just Transition’ is examined using exact terminology *and* by considering context.

The final step of this process involves examining how the two coding questions are interrelated, or how their 'representations' intermingle, to influence the broader social context -- the third part of Fairclough's framework.

4.4 Methodological Limitations

My justification for MNM channels as 'mainstream' is limited because I could not find circulation numbers to show the extent of viewership/readership. The selection of these channels is based on my personal knowledge as a Canadian citizen who actively engages with this topic in well-known and less distinguished news channels. I try to overcome this barrier by providing the information on each channel in Table 2.

It is beyond my thesis' scope to determine how the public receives news; whether it is solely due to media discourse or whether it is a result of other factors as well (Molina, 2009). Additionally, it is impossible to know how many readers *critically* consume MNM texts (Molina, 2009), i.e. not consuming the written text 'as is'. I make the assumption that not all readers receive text with a critical point-of-view.

5 Analysis & Discussion

In my analysis and discussion, I show how this environmental debate -- the continued production and expansion of the ATS versus an ATS phase-out and associated Just Transition -- is represented in MNM, and provide hypotheses as to why certain constructions have become dominant while others have been misrepresented or entirely overlooked (Asayama & Ishii, 2017). Considering the third component of Fairclough's framework is to examine the wider meaning of text and discourse in relation to the broader social practice (i.e. by giving language meaning), I combined the analysis and discussion. Overall, this section explains how MNM contributes to the hegemony of fossil fuels through particular media representations (Section 5.1). Furthermore, I discuss the implications these constructions produce (Section 5.2).

5.1 Key Themes and Discourses

Through my coding process, I determine two main findings: (1) the dominant techno-corporate-managerial depiction of the ATS role in the energy 'transition' (5.1.1) and (2) the lack of explicit and implicit discussions on a Just [Energy] Transition as an alternative to continued production (5.1.2).

5.1.1 'Greening' the Tar Sands: The 'Solution' to Alberta's Climate Impact

Using Fairclough's concept of 'interdiscursivity', I recognize a tendency within MNM to construct three dominant contemporary environmental discourses: 'ecomodernism', 'green growth', and 'net-zero'. These techno-corporate-managerial discourses are grounded in the notion of 'decoupling' economic growth from environmental impact, implying that the economy and environment can thrive at the same time within the current political-economic regime (Dryzek, 2013; Foster, 2012). These three discourses prevail in all three news channels, with most examples coming from CBC News. The propensity for these discourses in MNM (reported and quoted) is likely because they "[possess] the political capital to reconcile continued use of fossil fuels with [GHG] emissions reduction" (Asayama & Ishii, 2017, p.50). Therefore, their techno-corporate-managerial nature allows hegemonic actors to appear as though they are taking CC seriously, while continuing to produce bitumen and reap economic benefits from the ATS.

5.1.1.1 Technology and innovation will pave the way for a low-carbon economy

"If there are reductions in emission intensity or improvements to technology like carbon capture and storage, there is no reason the oilsands could not expand at the same time" (Anderson, 2020_a).

This CBC News quote refers to the words of Canadian Environment and Climate Change (ECCC) Minister Wilkinson when discussing the future of the 'Oil' Sands (Anderson, 2020_a). This positive stance on technology for emissions reductions, especially coupled with the continuation of ATS production (and expansion), reappears time and again in MNM making it a good entry-point for critique. Although technology will play a role in low-carbon futures -- as described in the IPCC's fifth assessment report (IPCC, 2014) -- my analysis shows that its capacity for meaningful action and its ability to address environmental problems is often overstated in MNM and the hegemonic actors they quote. 'Overstated' meaning that technology is used as a 'blanket' solution, diverting attention from root societal and systemic changes needed for meaningful climate action. This tendency for techno-optimism parallels what I classify as an ecomodernism discourse.

Devout ecomodernists believe that "meaningful climate mitigation is fundamentally a technological challenge" and that "even dramatic limits to per capita global consumption would be insufficient to achieve significant climate mitigation" (Asafu-Adjaye et al., 2015, p.21). With this belief, "accelerating the pace of technological innovation" (Symons, 2019, p.54) is the 'most promising' way forward. Although this hubristic faith in technology is not the only environmental decision-making approach discussed in MNM, it is by far the most acclaimed by hegemonic actors.

Andrew Scheer -- the federal Conservative Party leader at the time and a well-known pro-oil supporter -- said in a speech:

“Conservatives fundamentally believe that you cannot tax your way to a cleaner environment. Instead the answer lies in technology” (Tasker, 2019_a).

“The fact is, we can actually create more jobs in Canada through technological growth while at the same time lowering global emissions” (Tasker, 2019_a).

His party also asserts:

“We want major emitters to invest in technology that will give them the best shot at reducing their own emissions” (Tasker, 2019_a).

“This should be technology with the greatest potential to reduce emissions and offer the best potential return on investment as dictated by the market” (Tasker, 2019_a).

As a federal party leader and authority figure, Scheer maintains a certain credibility. The use of high-ranking or ‘elite’ opinions is a common tendency in news media, which Albæk (2010) suggests is because of the “compensatory legitimization” (p. 337) it provides for news stories. This elite messaging in MNM turns the news media from “watch-dogs” for the public, to “guard-dogs” of the status quo and “lap-dogs” to elites and their interests (DeCillia & McCurdy, 2020, p.663).

Since Scheer is outspoken about his advocacy for the ATS, the inclusion of his ardent opinions about technology being *the* climate ‘solution’ legitimizes his stance and his choices for present and future decision-making. This aligns with Gramsci’s notion of the “organization of consent” (Ives, 2004, p.85) or the political, moral and intellectual leadership established within society (Callinicos, 2007). Consent, for hegemonic actors like Scheer, is generated in “cultural institutions” (Callinicos, 2007, p.21) like the news media. Scheer’s social power becomes produced and reproduced materially and discursively in the news (Jaques, Islar, & Lord 2019). This means that readers -- whether supporters of Scheer or not -- might interpret the following: as long as ATS emitters use emissions-reduction technology, then current production levels can remain the same, and potentially increase. This cements the fossil fuel hegemony and shifts attention away from alternative solutions.

News discourse frequently uses evidence-based comparisons to foreground the climate efforts by ATS companies, which indirectly validates their continued production. For example, one article wrote:

“[The federal government] will provide \$100 million from its strategic innovation fund over four years to accelerate the development and use of technologies to lower the oil and gas industry’s environmental impact” (The Canadian Press, 2020_c).

And,

“[The Clean Resource Innovation Network] will aim to use the investment to support research projects to reduce the sector’s GHG emissions by 100 megatons by 2033, the equivalent of taking 1 million cars off the road” (The Canadian Press, 2020_c).

The comparison of their measures to taking 1 million cars off of the road warrants their actions as sufficient, potentially distracting the reader from the very fact that the sector is still contributing to GHG emissions. This poses the risk that the public accepts the continued production of the ATS since measures taken are already ‘as impactful’ as 1 million fewer cars. This also gains legitimacy because it paints a visual picture of its ‘positive’ impact for the reader. The re-investment into research for mitigation further aligns with the ecomodernist tendency to “invest wealth generated by capitalism in low-carbon innovation” (Symon, 2019, p.61). Carton (2019) suggests this is a capitalistic tendency to try to “fix” CC (p.750).

Another solution discussed in MNM is to diversify the economy: “a blend of traditional and renewable energy” (DeCillia, 2020_a). Renewable energies are presently the most sustainable energy alternative to fossil fuels (Scholten, 2018). However, diversification does not directly translate to a lower reliance on oil, especially if energy consumption continues to grow; it merely maintains the current state-of-affairs (Ihlen, 2009). The focus on ‘diversification’ often appears to be focused on Alberta’s *economic* dependence on oil, suggesting that if Alberta diversifies, the province won’t have to *only* rely on oil for economic benefits (DeCillia, 2020_a; Santos, 2020_a).

One Global News article outlines the immense emissions per capita in Alberta: “more than three times the national average of 19.4 tonnes per capita” (Bensadoun, 2019_a). If the province separates from Canada, they would become the highest per capita emitter in the world due to their “reliance on oilsands, heavy production and coal-fired electricity generation” (Bensadoun, 2019_a). Despite

pointing out the extent of Alberta's pollution, the article ends with a forthright quote from an Albertan pro-separatist advocate:

Alberta is not the problem...We would definitely pump more money into research and development to improve [carbon capture and storage] technology further, to make it the most competitive technology in the world and allow that to be exported to markets like China and India to solve real problems, real pollution problems. (Bensadoun, 2019_a)

Fairclough emphasizes that the sequencing of information is critical for the reader's interpretation, including "what precedes or follows, what, and why" (Fairclough, 1995, p.105). Therefore, I deduce that ending this article with a vehement statement without further discussion creates an impression that this point is the *most* relevant. Furthermore, whether this quote is for a 'newsworthy' story or not, ending with it after having explained the extent of Alberta's pollution due to the ATS downplays what was just told about the province's significant GHG emissions contribution. This legitimates pro-oil hegemonic actors' views that Alberta's pollution is unproblematic, advocates the idea that emissions/capita are not a concern, and implies pollution from the ATS is not pollution at all. Ultimately, this ecomodernist strategy undermines the legitimacy of advocating for transformative change and rather becomes a 'quick-fix' strategy to ensure ATS production continues.

Carbon capture and storage (CCS), as noted in the aforementioned quote, is often deemed unreliable for climate mitigation since its deployment has not occurred on a large scale (Bui. et al., 2018; Gaede & Meadowcroft, 2016; Carton, 2019). This promotes a 'politics of delay' by elevating expectations of 'effective' actions in the future, while justifying gradualist approaches to climate action in the present (McLaren & Markusson, 2020). Despite this, hegemonic actors impart high hopes for CCS as a climate solution. Huesemann & Huesemann (2011) note that the exclusion or downplay of the uncertainties surrounding technological innovations is a common occurrence in mass media: the prevailing paradigm dominates whereby "any technological innovation is 'good' and its value is not open to question" (p.369).

5.1.1.2 Climate Change? No problem. Alberta's oil industry is 'environmentally responsible'.

News discourse frequently highlights that oil companies are taking 'responsibility' over their environmental impacts. This responsibility aligns with the tendency towards 'green growth' strategies which involve the reorientation of present-day economic activities in order to rectify environmental and social problems (Stegemann & Ossewaarde, 2018). The MNM makes it clear that this

responsibility is likely due to oil companies recognizing the increasing demand from investors for environmental-social-governance (ESG) criteria (Bakx, 2020_a; Healing, 2020_b) within oil projects.

One article acknowledges Suncor Energy's (ATS company) statement after the KXL pipeline cancellation which claims the pipeline "would provide responsibly sourced oil to U.S. refineries for the benefit of U.S. consumers" (CBC News, 2021_a). The use of the word 'responsibly' is contentious. Typically speaking, 'responsible' is understood as having a duty to *take care* of something or someone. Yet, Tar Sands' crude oil is coupled with *harm* to the land (e.g. habitat destruction and deforestation), water (e.g. tailing ponds), atmosphere (e.g. GHG contribution to CC), and to people (e.g. consumption of toxins through various pathways) (Adkin, 2018). The risk of using the term 'responsible' is that the audience might interpret companies actions as being climate conscious because of the positive connotation associated with such a word. In reality, a 'reorientation' of economic activities may not actually be occurring at all (Cherry & Sneirson, 2012). Additionally, green growth tendencies can be criticized for their 'reorientation' not being transformative enough since they maintain the present political-economic structure that promotes the continued pumping of 'oil', and thus, the associated environmental, social and climate impacts (Ihlen, 2009; Cherry & Sneirson, 2012).

According to my analysis, the propensity for the ATS and the entire industry appearing environmentally 'responsible' can be considered 'greenwashing'. Greenwashing is generally understood as "insincere, dubious, inflated, or misleading environmental claims" (Cherry, & Sneirson, 2012, p.141). Greenwashing, in this context, is based on the fact that 'greening' of ATS companies may not be due to concern over the environment, but rather external pressure from politicians, civil society, NGO's, etc., as well as to strategically remain profitable and reputable (Ihlen, 2009; Cherry & Sneirson, 2012). Admittedly, some ATS companies may be implementing the climate measures they claim to introduce. Nevertheless, the ATS remains environmentally and socially damaging, which is misleading when companies claim they are 'responsible' (Saha & Darnton, 2005). Furthermore, the manner in which environmental decisions made by hegemonic actors are framed in MNM masks the destructive nature of the ATS while creating an "image of environmentalism" (Plec & Pettenger, 2012, p.460).

Criticism of this paradoxical responsibility goes unmentioned in the news media, thereby promoting greenwashing and furthering the "social license" (Dusy, Axsen & Dullemond, 2018, p.13) of ATS production. This further aligns with Gramsci's notion of 'consent' that I previously discussed. By failing to question this paradox, the MNM reinforces the hegemony's dominance in the sense that it

convinces society to champion its values and norms (Stoddart, 2007). Consequently, a 'common sense' understanding and an uncritical acceptance of these dominant customs is generated, which thereby strengthen hegemonic actors' power over society (Berberoglu, 2017; Stoddart, 2007). This hegemonic discourse (green growth) in MNM becomes normalized making it challenging to question (Berberoglu, 2017). More simply, news readers might absorb this information uncritically, and therefore gain an understanding that ATS companies are indeed as environmentally responsible as the news media portrays.

News discourse positively highlights the industry's responsibility when discussing the recent improvements on emissions intensity. This can be seen in the following example when Canada's ambassador to the U.S. justifies the KXL Pipeline. The reporter stated:

"She said the emissions intensity of the Alberta oil sector has improved dramatically over the last two decades, with per-barrel oil sands emissions falling 31 percent since 2000 after the province implemented new environmental policies" (Tasker, 2021).

This rhetoric on emissions intensity distracts from the amount of absolute emissions, or total emissions, that the ATS still contributes ("Not Zero", 2020). Instead, it portrays the fossil fuel hegemony as one that *has* and *is* constantly working towards climate action, including what a lay person may interpret as a dramatic reduction in emissions. Without further context, the reader could be misinformed by this explanation as the focus on emissions intensity only reduces emissions at the upstream (production) source. This further highlights the need for a shift away from such highly polluting mega-projects like the ATS, as absolute emissions can only be meaningfully reduced with a reduction in downstream emissions as well (consumption: e.g. pollution from petroleum-fuelled cars) ("Not Zero", 2020); a process also unmentioned in news discourse.

Canada's ECCC Minister, Wilkinson, responded to the retaliation of the budget cuts for environmental monitoring in the ATS due to COVID-19:

"It's important for all Canadians to know that we're managing resources in a responsible way and ensuring that pollution is not happening" (Desmarais, 2020_a).

This quote is contradictory, especially coming from the ECCC Minister, because pollution will *always* occur if the ATS remains in production; in other words, as long as there is upstream and downstream pollution. Many researchers argue that sustainable oil production is an oxymoron rationalized by the

oil industry and its proponents through processes like green growth (Ihlen, 2009; Cherry & Sneirson, 2012). By quoting Minister Wilkinson, a political ‘elite’ and spokesperson of the hegemony, COVID-19 is used as an excuse to push CC as a future problem, which in some ways favours the economy *over* the environment. Yet, it is the very nature of the ATS and what it produces that is polluting. This ‘politics of delay’ behaviour aligns with what Fairclough claims frequents in the news media: the tendency to leave out historical context because news is principally “constructed in terms of events which are treated as more or less isolated from prior or subsequent events” (Fairclough, 1995, p.106). Here, it means pushing CC aside because COVID-19 appears more pressing.

Interestingly, the aforementioned article is one of the few times in MNM when non-elite voices were included when discussing the ATS’ future. At the same time, it is one of the few times social impacts of continued production are acknowledged. The Indigenous chief of Smith’s Landing First Nation discusses his frustrations and concerns over the ATS pollution, especially due to the budget cut:

“We rely on [wildlife] for food, for medicines, for spiritual sustenance...Slowly but surely, the oilsands pollution is killing our people” (Desmarais, 2020_a).

5.1.1.3 Goal!: Achieving Net-zero Emissions in the Tar Sands

Claims by hegemonic actors of technological innovations and ‘environmentally responsible’ practices are often coupled with achieving net-zero emissions in the ATS. This positively portrays the efforts made by companies because they align efforts with government goals (Government of Canada, 2021_a). It also positively portrays governments (provincial and federal) as climate leaders. Net-zero emissions means to produce no GHG emissions and/or to offset emissions produced through removal mechanisms like carbon offsets, removal technologies, or diversifying the energy sector (Government of Canada, 2021_a; van Soest, den Elzen, & van Vuuren, 2021).

One article discusses the “environmental policy the oilpatch wants from Ottawa ASAP” (Bakx, 2020_b). CBC News reports that:

Shell is one of the companies pushing the federal government to create a national [GHG] offset program...Carbon offsets allow companies and individuals to invest in environmental projects in order to balance out their own GHG emissions. Increasingly, energy companies are setting climate goals to achieve net zero emissions by 2050...purchasing offsets are a way to make sure there is at least a pathway to reaching ambitious environmental targets. (Bakx, 2020_b)

This text portrays Shell, an ATS company, as ‘ambitious’ by stating that they are ‘pushing’ the government for programs related to climate mitigation. It also positions carbon offsets as a beneficial mechanism to achieve net-zero emissions, and therefore to mitigate CC. Yet, in reality, carbon offsets do not change the amount of emissions produced in the ATS, and rather commodify nature (Castree, 2003). Positioning carbon offsets as a means to achieve net-zero emissions distracts from the reality that net-zero does not translate directly to *real* (absolute) emissions reductions.

There has been a growing climate movement arguing that net-zero obscures climate inaction and “evade[s] responsibility” (“Not Zero”, 2020, p.2), rather than making genuine emissions reductions (Figure 5). This *real zero* movement asserts that vague, goal-oriented, and managerial approaches like these lead to far-away targets that don’t demand any particular action for decades (McLaren, et al., 2019; “Not Zero”, 2020). Considering this, net-zero, is regarded by some as another form of greenwashing that promotes business-as-usual (“Not Zero”, 2020).

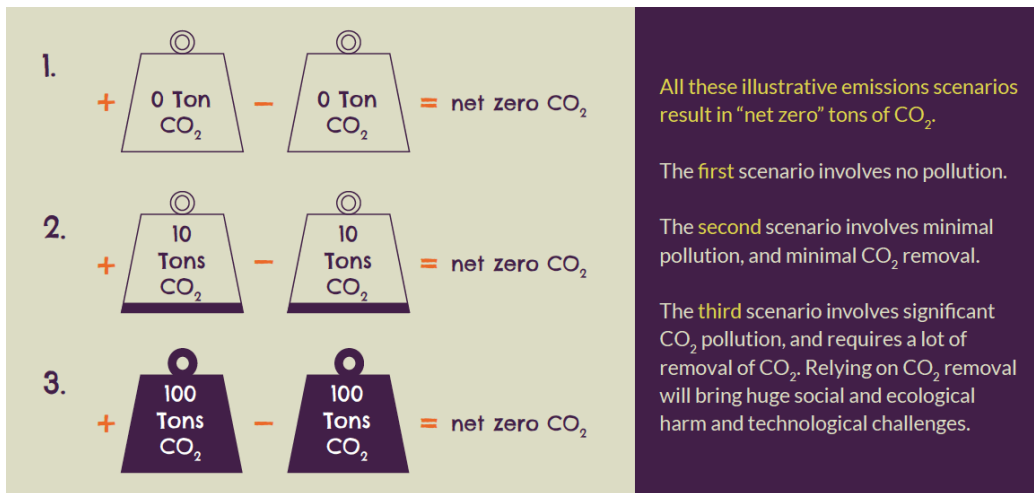


Figure 5. “How ‘net zero’ disguises the amount of actual emissions” (“Not Zero”, 2020).

Prior to the KXL cancellation, the MNM explained that when the pipeline is put into service, “the company will achieve net-zero emissions across the project operations” by 2023 (Seskus, 2021₃). Once again, this portrayal of climate leadership through net-zero goal setting distracts from the reality that crude oil is *still* being produced. Pipelines are an archetype of how the present day political economy can become trapped in a ‘carbon lock-in’. As a “carbon-emissions supporting infrastructure” (Seto et al., 2016, p.431), upon implementation, pipelines become “naturalized and developed within society” (Kraushaar-Friesen & Busch, 2020, p.2) making them challenging to replace; this process perpetuates fossil fuel production and “contribute[s] to the inertia of carbon emissions” (Seto et al., 2016, p.425).

5.1.1.4 Framing the Tar Sands' Future as part of the Energy Transition

By promoting these three discourses -- ecomodernism, green-growth, and net-zero -- the MNM ultimately frames the ATS as being *a part of Canada's future energy landscape*, and that their role in the energy 'transition' merely involves deploying technological innovations as well as implementing 'environmentally responsible' practices so that the ATS can achieve net-zero emissions³. These discourses enable continued production while portraying the ATS as climate conscious, depicting a "win-win" (Robbins, 2011, p.15) scenario. This is a contradictory depiction since continued production leads to environmental, social, and climatic 'losses'. The phase-out of the ATS was *not* a dominant discourse in MNM. This raises the question of whether anything is being 'transitioned' at all, despite the fact that MNM and the hegemonic actors they quote portray these changes in the energy sector as such. Therefore, the MNM reproduces hegemonic values, beliefs, and practices and promotes continued fossil fuel production. Figure 6 is a summary of the aforementioned discourses to highlight *how the Canadian national mainstream news media discursively portray[s] future production (and expansion) of the Tar Sands (RQ1)*.

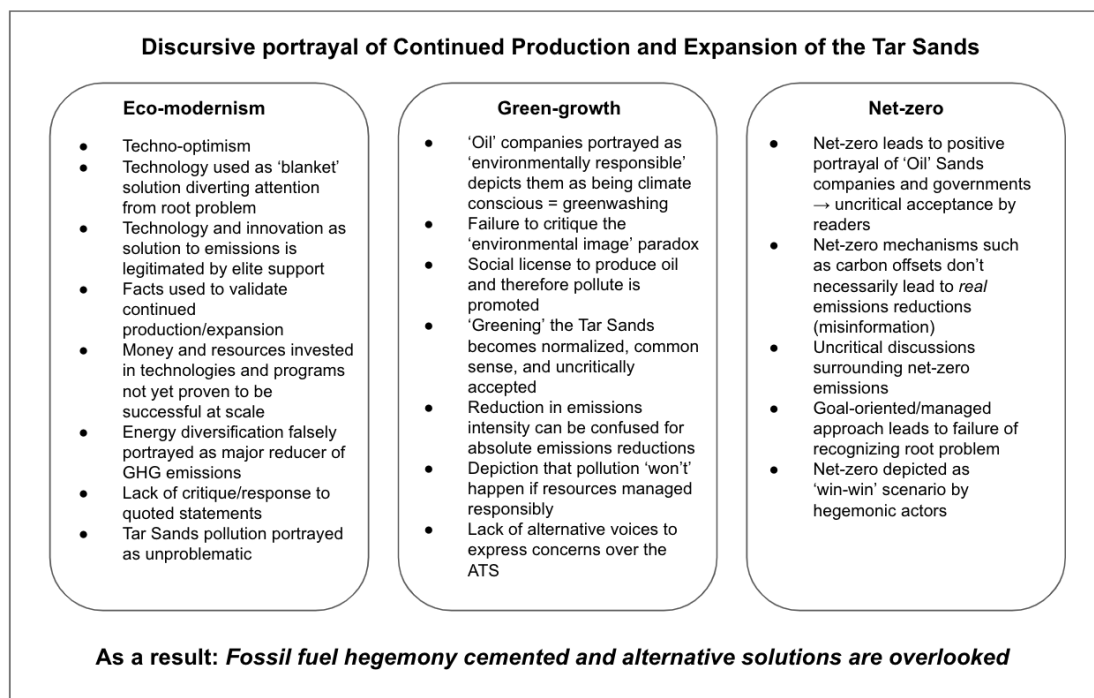


Figure 6. Summary of Sections 5.1.1.1-5.1.1.3 to highlight the tendencies that emerged within mainstream news media, which lead to the distinction of the three techno-corporate-managerial discourses: ecomodernism, green-growth, and net-zero.

³ More examples that promote these three discourses in MNM can be found in Appendix 8.4.

5.1.2 Silence is not Golden: Where is the 'Just Transition'?

Media discourse has clearly discussed changes in the energy sector in Alberta and Canada. However, based on my analysis, I identify that the ATS are framed as having a techno-corporate-managerial role in this 'transition', shifting attention away from the need for an ATS phase-out. Not surprisingly, as a phase-out is an implied requirement for a Just Transition, the Just Transition *did not permeate in the mainstream news media in any prominent way over the last two years in light of recent events (RQ2)*.

Figure 7 illustrates a quantitative comparison between the term 'Just Transition' (14 mentions, 14%) and other coined terms including 'low-carbon', 'green', 'renewable', and 'energy' transition (87 mentions, 86%). I chose to compare the 'Just Transition' against these terms and their context because although they are all visions of what an energy transition might look like, they don't imply the same social dimensions that the Just Transition considers, especially in relation to ensuring 'no one gets left behind' (Smith, 2017). Interestingly, of the 14 explicit 'Just Transition' mentions, 4 (29%) come from just one article: "Why a 'just transition' doesn't have to pit jobs against the environment" (Mayer, 2019_a). Additionally, only 8 of the 108 articles (7%) mentioned 'Just Transition' at least once. Furthermore, Global News never mentioned 'Just Transition', whereas CBC News and CTV News each had 4 articles. A potential reasoning for this lack of inclusion may be because of the news media's tendency to embody status quo interests (Fairclough, 1995). Since this alternative -- the Just Transition -- goes against the preferences of hegemonic actors, it is not surprising it remains largely excluded.

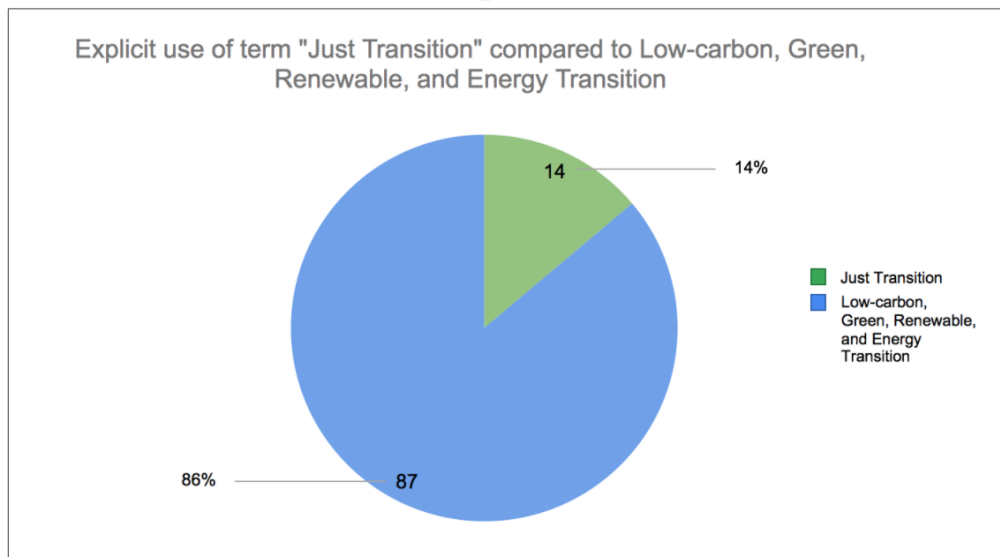


Figure 7. This figure shows the quantitative comparison between the number of times the exact term "Just Transition" was mentioned in relation to discussions on "green", "renewable", "low-carbon" and "energy transitions".

Qualitatively, I found MNM describes the Just Transition as a responsibility of the federal government. For example, in reference to the Frontier project:

“Outright rejection of Teck Frontier would accelerate the need for answers — particularly regarding the "just transition" the federal government has promised to people whose livelihoods depend on the fossil fuel industries” (Wherry, 2020_a).

And, discussing ECCC Minister Wilkinson’s responsibilities when he was newly elected:

Among Wilkinson's first orders of business will be setting five-year targets for cutting emissions and introducing legislation to hold Canada accountable for meeting them. He has to develop a "just transition" law to ensure Canada limits the harm that will be felt by workers in communities largely dependent on oil and gas for jobs and economic growth. (Rabson, 2019_a)

According to my analysis, the discussions of the Just Transition Act is welcomed news as the MNM acknowledges the federal government’s responsibility (as well as its failure) to act on its promises and take meaningful steps to ensure workers do not face preventable hardships as the world transitions away from fossil fuels. This finding supports the Just Transition, as ‘state intervention’ is considered an important practice according to my analysis (Appendix 8.1).

Like those above, most examples did not provide a comprehensive explanation of the Just Transition other than mentioning the term. Others were hypothetical situations, such as the following example discussing *if* the leader of the New Democratic Party (NDP) were to become PM, that he would introduce a Just Transition:

“A [PM] Singh likely would have even more trouble in the Prairies. It's one thing to insist on a speedy move away from fossil fuels, quite another to actually push through that change with the support of those who will be most directly affected. Though New Democrats are keen to talk about a "green new deal" and a "just transition" for energy workers, the NDP leader spent just one day in Saskatchewan during the last election campaign and skipped Alberta entirely” (Wherry, 2020_b).

Generally speaking, even when the ‘Just Transition’ was explicitly mentioned in MNM, it did not elaborate on its benefits and explain it in a comprehensive way for the public to understand its value for climate action and low-carbon societies.

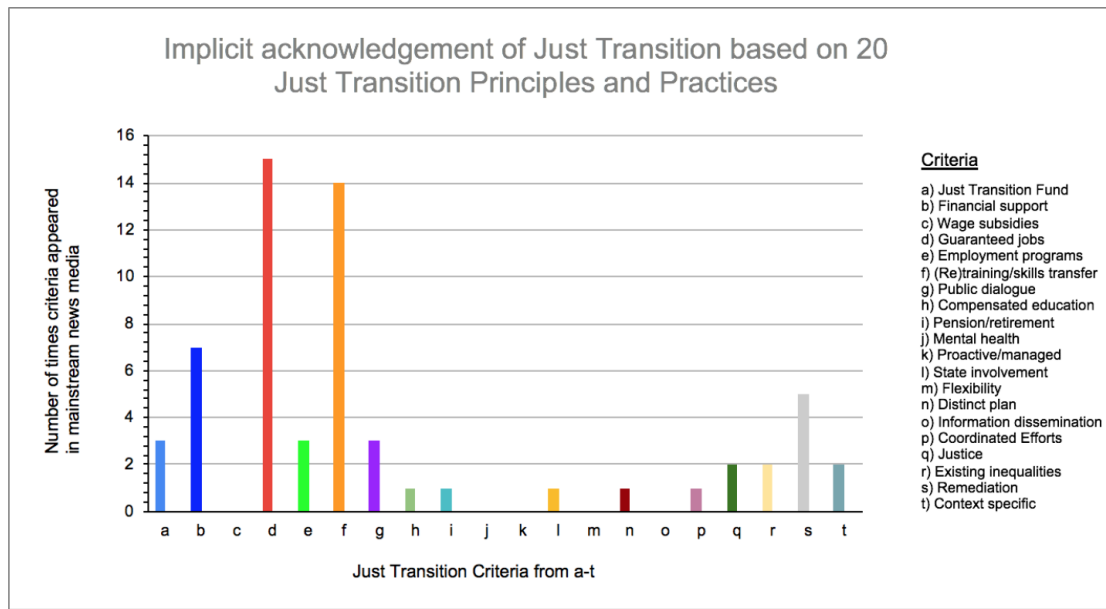


Figure 8. A quantitative comparison of the number of times various criteria that define a Just Transition were implicitly discussed in the mainstream news media. There were 20 criteria that I determined from a strategic literature (grey and academic) review, which can be found in Appendix 8.1 for more details.

The ‘implicit meanings’ or what was “left unsaid” (Fairclough, 1995, p.106) in news media was also limited in its reach (Figure 8). The two Just Transition criteria that stood out were guaranteed jobs (d) and retraining/skills transfer (f). This is unsurprising since I found these were both prominently cited in my strategic literature review (Appendix 8.1). Some examples regarding guaranteed job opportunities discussed prospective opportunities with “Iron and Earth” and “Edge Up”, organizations purposefully created to transition workers out of oil and gas and into solar and technology jobs, respectively (Dryden, 2020; von Scheel, 2020).

These two criteria focus directly on the ability to obtain a job through the availability of job opportunities and the ability to be hired based on skills and experience. Their prevalence compared to other criteria may be due to the heavy emphasis on the ‘economy versus environment’ narrative in the ATS and broader fossil fuel debate.

Labour rights and economic concerns such as retraining/skills transfer, guaranteed jobs, and financing the transition were more prominent in comparison to justice, governance, and social criteria, such as public dialogue (g), mental health support (j), proactive and managed implementation (k), consideration of (climate, environmental and energy) justice elements (q), and redressing existing inequalities (r). These findings present that even criteria relating implicitly to a Just Transition tend to focus heavily on the economy and the availability and access to jobs rather than justice, governance and social criteria that are equally important -- as claimed in this thesis -- for an energy transition.

Mental health (j) and a proactive and managed implementation (k) went unnoticed in MNM, and a distinct time plan (n) was only discussed once. This may be due to the fact that these were my own contributions to the 20 criteria, as I found they were missing in academic and grey literature.

Overall, the MNM has had limited discussion on a Just Transition in Alberta's oil sector, and specifically the ATS. Fairclough asserts that representations of events, situations, and people within text are deliberate. Understanding these representations "comes down to an account of what choices are made - what is included and what is excluded, what is made explicit or left implicit, [and] what is foregrounded and what is backgrounded" (Fairclough, 1995, p.104). In essence, Fairclough acknowledges that what is absent from texts is equally as important, if not more telling, as what is present. It is challenging to know exactly what has motivated MNM reporters to make certain choices over others in relation to what gets included or excluded in an article. What *is* certain is that the Just Transition is largely absent in news discourse. Fairclough questions why a topic may be presented in some texts "pertaining to a given area of social practice" (Fairclough, 1995, p.106), but is not found in others. Considering this, one may wonder why the Just Transition was only discussed in CBC News and CTV News, but not Global News. Additionally, where energy transitions (low-carbon, green, renewable, and/or energy) were evidently discussed in the MNM, one may question why a Just Transition did not permeate to the same extent.

Although the Just Transition was brought forth and occasionally cited directly, the MNM did not highlight its importance as a potential and necessary process for shifting Alberta/Canada away from fossil fuels in a just way. Consequently, it can be assumed that because it rarely entered news discourse, a Just Transition remains primarily in political and environmental discourse realms. One can contemplate whether this is because the Federal Government has presently failed to bring forth the Just Transition Act that they promised in 2019 (350.org, 2020), and therefore, it is not seen as a relevant issue to the MNM. Furthermore, another reason may be due to the powerful supporters of the ATS and whether they have prevented such discussions from occurring, intentionally or unintentionally. Either way, because the MNM is a major source of disseminating information on environmental decision-making to the public, few discussions in the news likely translate to few public discussions. Overall, my findings show that the MNM does not present a Just Transition in the ATS as a priority topic when discussing the Tar Sands' future.

5.2 The Implications: Climate Misconceptions and Just Transition Illiteracy

As previously mentioned, the MNM has power over shaping public discourse and framing the public debate over environmental decision-making and therefore plays a significant role in shaping the “socio-political acceptance of energy projects” (Dusyk, Aksen, Dullemond, 2018, p.12). My findings show that MNM reproduces the fossil fuel hegemony in a manner that functions to maintain continued bitumen extraction in the ATS. The MNM fails to provide enough information on how a Just Transition is a possible and necessary step for *just* climate action in Canada; ultimately, foreclosing the possibility and *need* for phasing out the ATS. These findings could lead to the following implications in socio-cultural practice (Part 3 of Fairclough’s framework) that I assert are detrimental for the public acceptance of meaningful climate action: (1) climate misconceptions and (2) Just Transition illiteracy (RQ3).

5.2.1 Climate Misconceptions

Although clear discussions surfaced in MNM regarding change in the energy sector, the three dominant discourses *create -- and ultimately spread -- misconceptions about what meaningful climate action entails* (Cook, Bedford, & Mandia, 2014). These discourses focused on greening production at the upstream source while disregarding downstream emissions and *real zero* targets; they relied heavily on technological innovations as a blanket solution to climate mitigation; and they framed the oil sector in a positive light despite the fact that production, and therefore pollution, still prevails. These processes favour the interests of those who *already* benefit from the existing fossil fuel system, i.e. hegemonic actors (Seto et al., 2016). The MNM fails to produce news reporting that would help its audience to critically question and assess the solutions posed by hegemonic actors. MNM discussions of production in the ATS are framed in a manner that only asks how production should continue amidst a climate crisis; questioning whether extraction should occur at all goes unmentioned. By doing so, climate inaction is obscured, responsibility is evaded, greenwashing prevails, and the fossil fuel hegemony is cemented. This ultimately forecloses the space for discussions on transformative solutions like a phase-out and associated Just Transition.

5.2.2 Just Transition Illiteracy

As I’ve emphasized throughout this thesis, the Just Transition is a mechanism by which barriers that delay climate action, such as the ‘economy versus environment’ narrative, can be reconciled. However, without *the knowledge* of measures that will support workers and communities affected by climate policy, it is unlikely that Canadians -- within and external to the sector -- will willingly accept a phase-out. Many studies suggest that public knowledge is significantly related to public acceptance

(Wang, et al., 2019; Pellizzone, et al., 2015). Therefore, without knowledge of measures that could safeguard workers' economic and social well-being, “augment[ed] perceptions of disparity whereby environmental regulation disproportionately impacts blue-collar workers in a negative manner” (Harrahill & Douglas, 2019, p.2) could emerge. This could lead to a “cognitive lock-in” (Haggerty et al., 2018, p. 74) of resistance towards a transition and climate action, especially in regions like Alberta where ‘oil’ is inextricably linked to identity; presumably because climate mitigation appears *more* threatening than the global climate crisis. Improving Just Transition “literacy” is therefore critical to prevent cognitive lock-ins and ideological resistance so that public acceptance towards Just Transitions is strengthened, not only for those directly connected to the ATS, but for all Canadians. Otherwise, greater polarization can lead to rejection of climate policy and any plans that support a *just* phase-out of the ATS; thereby increasing the chance of injustice and a carbon lock-in in the future (Seto et al., 2016).

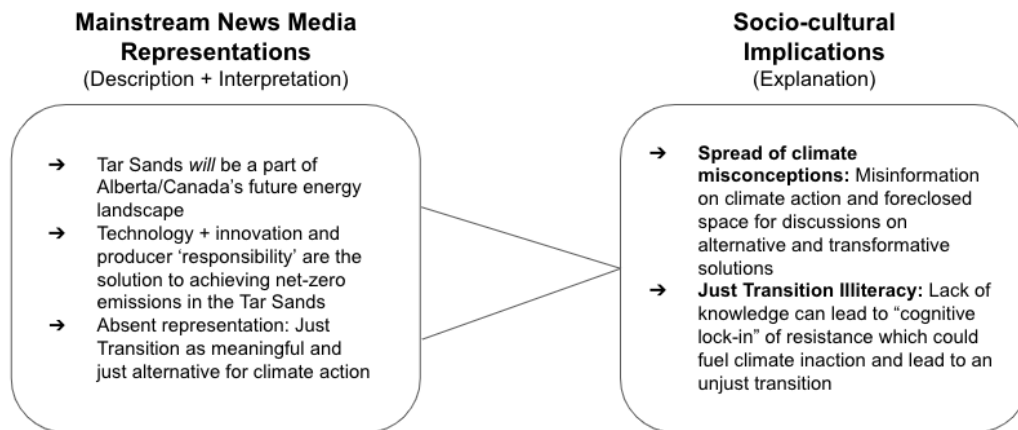


Figure 9. Inspired by Fairclough’s description-interpretation-explanation approach (Fairclough, 1992), this figure summarizes my major findings and shows the two implications they can lead to.

5.2.3 Summary

Ultimately, if the public understands the solutions that have been posed in MNM as *the best or only* approach to environmental decision-making in the ATS, and have little-to-no understanding of transformative solutions, conceptions of what constitutes ‘meaningful climate action’ is skewed (Figure 9). Attention becomes “directed away from the core societal problems that have caused and continue to propel the climate crisis and diverted instead onto menial responses that serve merely to patch the symptoms of the issue” (Kraushaar-Friesen & Busch, 2020, p.3). Since news media influences the public’s understanding and acceptance of such decisions, this can directly translate into how the public *chooses to vote*, including whether citizens choose to support the types of political leaders who propose a phase-out and Just Transition as a top priority, and those that do not,

or rather, ardently support future production and expansion (Wang, et al., 2019). It also influences how the public *reacts to future environmental decision-making* measures related to the ATS and whether the public actively rejects further production and expansion (Bolsen & Shapiro, 2018).

6 Reflections and Conclusions

6.1 Going Forward: The Role of the News Media in Climate Communication

Communicating CC and low-carbon transitions is undoubtedly contentious, no matter the spokesperson. However, as pointed out time and again in this thesis, “media texts do not merely ‘mirror realities’” (Fairclough, 1995, p.103). The news media is a discursive and cultural agent who has the power to challenge the status quo and have “real, material impacts on power relations” (Haluzá-Delay & Carter, 2018, p. 456). The MNM has an important role to play in informing the public on *multiple* positions, interests, and objectives on this debate *beyond* the status quo, so that the public can make informed decisions when they reach the ballot or protest in the streets.

Going forward, there must be a ‘re-framing’ of this environmental debate in MNM so that complex and sensitive topics, such as low-carbon transitions and *absolute* oil reductions (Dusyk, Axsen & Dullemond, 2018) *are* being discussed and that the news is informing rather than misinforming the public. A reorientation of energy transition discussions towards ‘just’ ones could improve Just Transition literacy amongst the public and raise awareness on the associated individual and collective benefits. Additionally, news media must be careful in how they propose such solutions to prevent further polarization of ‘economy versus environment’ as this can lead to rejection of climate action and (just) transitioning. Ultimately, the MNM’s failure to challenge the status quo and provide diverging alternatives/voices should make the public wonder *who* controls the media, raising “serious questions regarding the role of the news media in Canadian democracy” (DeCillia & McCurdy, 2020, p.676).

There is significant research highlighting how critical the ‘messenger’ or ‘spokesperson’ is for successful climate communication, and that this success is often dependent on how much the audience *trusts* this messenger (Climate Outreach, 2018; Bolsen & Shapiro, 2018; Bolin & Hamilton, 2018; Schäfer, & Painter, 2021). Much of this evidence emphasizes the difficulties of knowledge generation and dissemination, especially when it comes to dealing with strong identities and belief systems, creating accessible language, and communicating with audiences who are resistant to the suggested change (Climate Outreach, 2018; Shuckburgh, Robison, Pigeon, 2012; Cook, Bedford,

Mandia, 2014 Fessmann, 2019). Failure to overcome these challenges may lead to dissonance between climate science discourses of demanding immediate action now versus techno-corporate-managerial optimization, which I've argued in this thesis, delays action. My findings are consistent with what the Alberta Narratives Project (a project conducted in Alberta on climate change communication) suggests: to create constructive dialogues using language that promotes a "shared conversation and does not feed polarization" (Climate Outreach, 2018, p.13). This wider challenge of climate communication was clearly embodied in my research in the way that the MNM constructed how the ATS environmental decision-making should be approached and how the ATS are portrayed as remaining a part of Alberta's future energy landscape.

6.2 Future Work

Future research could dive into how collective power can be built, through social movements for example, in order to push the Just Transition agenda into media discourse (Ferree et al., 2002). Approaching this from a sustainability science perspective could help bring the knowledge-base into action so that these discussions are not limited to academia (Spangenberg, 2011).

It could be fruitful to examine a longer temporal scale to see how discourses have changed over time, for instance since the Paris Agreement in 2015. Diving into the differences of mainstream versus unconventional news media or provincial versus federal news media could provide for interesting comparative analyses.

It would be meaningful to interview the public to understand how news media is actually 'consumed' (Fairclough, 1992) by the public, beyond my retroductive speculations. Examining the readers' consumption of news would strengthen this analysis, and would contribute to a research step commonly omitted in CDA studies (Jørgenson & Phillips, 2002).

Since the Just Transition is a growing field but in its infancy, further academic research is critical to ensure its future success as both a movement and a policy process. I've contributed to the growing literature on Just Transitions and addressed the need not only for more academic literature, but more public discussions on Just Transitions, especially involving the ATS context.

6.3 Contributions to Sustainability Science

My thesis contributes to the growing approach in sustainability science to shift from problem identification (i.e. the ATS climate impact and societal challenges in energy transitions) to problem

solving (i.e. through the Just Transition and improved climate communication) (Rokaya, et al., 2017). I adopted a ‘transitions approach’ (Frantzeskaki, Loorbach, & Meadowcroft, 2012) in this thesis which aligns with sustainability science’s efforts of “support[ing] transitions towards...sustainable and resilient societ[ies]” (Rokaya, et al., 2017, p.855). I’ve revealed the ‘wickedness’ of communicating environmental decision-making to the public (von Wehrden, et al., 2017). By doing so, I showed that depending on how this information is relayed to the public, it can lead to broader “implications [for] sustainability challenges” (Rokaya, et al., 2017, p.856), including how and whether people see CC as an urgency and whether a Just Transition becomes a widely accepted climate action measure in Canada. As Olsson and Ness (2019) suggest, in order to avoid sustainability discussions falling on “deaf ears”, there must be “more constructive dialogues between [the] scientific community and society” (p.1). By exposing the implications of climate (mis)communication, I’ve illuminated the need for constructive sustainability dialogue so that citizens are well-informed to have fruitful discussions on the climate debate and make democratic choices.

6.4 Final Conclusions

My thesis has shown the importance of public perception in environmental decision-making, and how news media plays a critical role in relaying this information to the public. My analysis of Canadian mainstream news media identified discourses and themes that largely perpetuate the fossil fuel hegemony. I have shown how these representations can affect knowledge of climate action in the public domain, and fundamentally how their implications can constrain the actions needed for transitioning towards a low-carbon society with justice at its core. I’ve shown that a Just Transition from the Alberta Tar Sands is fundamental for strengthening social acceptance of not only a *just* phase-out in the Tar Sands, but for climate action as a whole. If Canada intends to live up to its promise as a global climate leader, it mustn’t get ‘stuck in the tar’ of present-day state-of-affairs, but shift away from the energy system that has caused and continues to fuel the global climate crisis.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Just Transition Criteria

Table 1. 20 Criteria for a Just Transition from Alberta's Tar Sands. Based on a strategic collection of best principles and practices from Just Transition academic and grey literature, in Canadian, fossil fuel, and general contexts, or a combination of these⁴.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PRACTICES & LABOUR RIGHTS		
	Criteria	Referenced in:
i)	<p><i>Creation of a designated “Just Transition Fund”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the financial support, programs, retraining, education, and other aspects of the transition 	(ECCC, 2018; Smith, 2017; Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019)
ii)	<p><i>General financial support, re-location, compensations, social protection, and when necessary, unemployment benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To safeguard workers and community well-being, especially during transition period 	(Goddard & Farrelly, 2018; Healy & Barry, 2017; (Jenkins, Sovacool, Blachowicz, & Lauer, 2020; ECCC, 2018; Smith, 2017; ILO, 2015; UNFCCC; 2020)
iii)	<p><i>Wage subsidies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If previous jobs had had higher wages to provide comparable incomes in new positions 	(Stevis & Felli, 2014)
iv)	<p><i>New (guaranteed) job opportunities through government creation and support of sustainable industries, infrastructure and initiatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living wages, healthy and safe working conditions, “clear career progression opportunities”, and jobs that are accessible to “people with a range of skills” (Healy & Barry, 2017, p.455) Preference towards new job opportunities within “sustainable”, “green”, “low carbon”, and/or “renewable” fields for redeployment⁵ 	(Goddard & Farrelly, 2018; Healy & Barry, 2017; Bird & Lawton, 2009; Newell & Mulvaney, 2013; Haggerty et al., 2018; Smith, 2017; ILO, 2015; UNFCCC, 2020; Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019)
v)	<p><i>Employment transition programs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For smooth change of career path through all stages of securing new job opportunities, including personalized career planning, counselling, and other outplacement services 	(Mayer, 2018; ECCC, 2018; Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019)
vi)	<p><i>Skills transfer and (re)training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To transfer previous skills to new jobs and/or to learn skills for new opportunities 	(Jenkins, Sovacool, Blachowicz, & Lauer, 2020; Smith, 2017; ILO, 2015; UNFCCC, 2020)
vii)	<p><i>Public dialogue and participatory decision-making</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unions, labour force, local communities (i.e. Fort McMurray), 	(Goddard & Farrelly, 2018; Smith, 2017; ILO; 2015;

⁴ The following criteria inevitably overlap, however, I grouped them in three main categories I felt that most suitably applied: socio-economic practices, governance, and justice and accountability.

⁵ It is outside the scope of my thesis to state specifically the types of jobs and industries that should be propped up - this is a contentious issue in itself, and must be decided based on socio-economic and geographic considerations, as well as preferences of the local communities and relevant stakeholders.

	and Indigenous peoples (i.e. Chipewyan Prairie and Fort McKay First Nations) must be at the heart of decision-making	UNFCCC, 2020;
viii)	Compensated education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain new skills and knowledge without financial setback 	(Harrahill & Douglas, 2019; Stevia & Felli, 2014)
ix)	Assistance for early retirement and pension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily for those close to retirement age: the ability to retire early with financial backing instead of starting a new profession 	(Mayer, 2018; Stevis & Felli, 2014; ECCC, 2018; Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019)
x)	Psychiatric, social and mental health support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To aid for loss of identity, culture, co-workers, work environment, change in location, challenges in new field and general hardships within the transition 	Author's personal contribution.
GOVERNANCE		
	Criteria	Referenced in:
xi)	Proactive and managed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being proactive is fundamental to a Just Transition, as the movement's core goal is to address hardships and act, rather than react, <i>before</i> they materialize. Otherwise, the energy transition could become very unjust and forced. 	(Jenkins, Sovacool, Blachowicz, & Lauer, 2020)
xii)	Active state intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Must be significant role</i> played by municipal, provincial, and federal <i>governments</i>: "nationally coherent, regionally driven, locally delivered actions" (ECCC, 2018, p.viii) 	(Harrahill & Douglas, 2019; Healy & Barry, 2017; Newell & Mulvaney, 2013; ECCC, 2018; Smith, 2017)
xiii)	Flexibility in decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies must <i>acknowledge</i> and <i>adapt</i> to an <i>evolving transition process</i> that can accommodate an extensive variety of responses - both in space and time 	Author's personal contribution.
xiv)	Clear set of policies and distinct time plan for transition process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure transparency and overall success of transition 	Author's personal contribution.
xv)	Effective dissemination of information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those impacted directly by decision-making must be well-informed; this includes "accurate" and "timely information" (ECCC, 2018, p. viii) 	(ECCC, 2018)
xvi)	Coordinated efforts from governments, employers and unions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To safe-guard workers rights and well-being throughout all stages of transition 	(ECCC, 2018; Smith, 2017)
JUSTICE & ACCOUNTABILITY		
	Criteria	Referenced in:

xvii)	Grounded in <i>environmental</i>⁶, <i>climate</i>⁷, and <i>energy justice</i>⁸	(Goddard & Farrelly, 2018; Mayer, 2018; Healy & Barry, 2017; Heffron & McCauley, 2018; ILO, 2015)
xviii)	<i>Redress existing inequalities and account for marginalized groups</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including increasing access to (sustainable) job opportunities for women, indigenous peoples, minority groups, and other under-represented people 	(Healy & Barry, 2017; ECCC, 2018; ILO, 2015; Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019)
xix)	<i>Clean-up and remediation of previous contaminated mine sites, tailing ponds, and inactive or orphaned oil wells</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice is not realized if previous injustices are not rectified 	(Healy & Barry, 2017)
xx)	<i>Context specific</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different workers and communities within Alberta (and throughout Canada) will face their own unique challenges. It is therefore important to ensure programs and plans are not “one size fits all” (ILO, 2015, p.6). 	(ILO, 2015; UNFCCC, 2020; Snyder, 2018)

⁶ *Environmental justice* relates to the social distribution of the benefits and hardships of the transition (Mayer, 2018)

⁷ *Climate justice* relates to rights of present and future generations to a healthy and safe environment (Pearson, Tasi & Clayton, 2021)

⁸ *Energy justice* relates to ensuring energy access for all, when new sustainable energy industries are being created (Ciplet, 2021)

8.2 News Articles

'Crisis' in energy sector not reflected in throne speech, says Jason Kenney | CBC News

'That's not how you treat a friend'/ Alberta calls on Ottawa to impose U.S. trade sanctions in wake of 2020 the worst year on record for drilling in Canadian oilpatch | CBC News

A low-carbon investment boom may be underway in Alberta and Saskatchewan | CBC News

After a turbulent year, Canada's energy industry braces for more upheaval in 2021 | CBC News

Alberta and Ottawa claw back funding for oilsands environmental monitoring | CTV News

Alberta braces for Biden's Keystone XL decision | CBC News

Alberta community's concerns about wind farm echo familiar challenges of Canada's energy transition

Alberta could lead Canada in wind and solar power by 2025, expert says | CBC News

Alberta empties TIER fund to invest in emission-reducing innovation | CBC News

Alberta government commits \$70M to help energy-intensive industries slash emissions | CBC News

Alberta inquiry on oil sector under fire for commissioned reports skeptical of climate change | Glob

Alberta NDP leader calls for resumption of environmental monitoring at oil and gas sites | CBC News

Alberta oilsands struggling as Western Canadian Select plunges to \$5 per barrel | Globalnews.ca

Alberta premier calls Biden's XL cancellation a 'gut punch' for U.S.-Canada trade relationship | CBC

Alberta suspends environmental monitoring rules for oilsands over COVID concerns | CTV News

Alberta suspends some environmental monitoring at 16 oilsands projects due to COVID-19 | Globalnews

Alberta, Ottawa sign deal that cuts major environmental monitoring of oilsands | Globalnews.ca

Alice Munro among Nobel prize winners urging Trudeau to deny oilsands project | CTV News

Already battered, Alberta braces for the energy transition — can it also embrace it? | CBC News

Andrew Scheer unveils climate plan promising 'green technology, not taxes' | CBC News

Athabasca Oil spends to maintain oilsands production after trimming 2021 budget | CBC News

B.C. cities join global movement asking oil companies for climate change costs | CTV News

Biden calls for 'transition' from oil, GOP sees opening | CTV News

Biden presidency will improve battered Canada-U.S. relationship but won't be without obstacles, expe

Biden revokes Keystone XL permit in blow to Canada's oil sector | CTV News

Biden's pick for energy secretary could mean trouble for Alberta's oilpatch, experts say | CBC News

Biden's planned Keystone XL cancellation welcomed by NDP, Green leaders | CBC News

Big Oil's interest in renewable energy investments expected to waver/ report | CTV News

Bill Morneau tells Calgary crowd he understands anxiety over shift to low-carbon future | CBC News

Calgary energy companies to share \$72M in federal funds for clean tech projects | CBC News

Calgary-based oilsands producer Cenovus aims for 'net zero' GHG emissions by 2050 | Globalnews.ca

Calgary's economic transition will require adaptable workers, new skills | CBC News

Can a massive new oilsands mine be reconciled with Trudeau's 'net-zero' promise? | CBC News

Canada's battered oil industry cheering for Alberta's opposition party in upcoming election | Global

Canada's support for Keystone XL 'unwavering' regardless of U.S. election/ O'Regan - National | Glob

Canadian companies may double down on oilsands after Total writes off \$9.3B in assets/ analysts | CB

Canadian environmental groups, unions, churches ask that potential oil bailout be for families, not

Canadian oil giants emphasize climate change and diversity as they compete for investment | CBC News
CBC News poll/ Why the economic crisis could speed up transition to renewable energy | CBC News
CBC- Clean fuel standard, future of the oils...e relationship with Alberta _ CBC News
CBC- Indigenous leaders _losing faith_ in en...ands monitoring budget cuts _ CBC News
Chevron may not be an oil-first company in 2040, CEO says | CTV News
Coronavirus, threat of oil price war, fragile economy the 'perfect storm'/ Kenney | CTV News
COVID response offers chance to shift direction of Canadian economy/ experts | CTV News
COVID-19 wipes out demand for fossil fuels — will they bounce back? | CBC News
CPP still willing to invest in Alberta's oil sands following price drops | CTV News
Deal reached between Alberta and First Nations for oilsands mine | CTV News
Dene National Chief calls on gov't to act on Alberta's leaking tailings ponds | CBC News
Dozens of Alberta oilsands projects won't be built in the near future, analysts say | Globalnews.ca
Environmental report says federal parties must do more to fight climate change | CTV News
Even with oil and gas decline, fossils fuels could make up two-thirds of Canada's energy use by 2050
Financier predicts new respect for oilpatch as Canada recovers from COVID-19 pandemic | Globalnews
First Nations youth protest proposed massive oilsands mine at UN climate conference | CBC News
For Albertans, the future of oil and gas is not just another policy debate, it goes much deeper | CB
From Alberta's oilsands to tariffs, how Biden's presidency could change Canada | CTV News
Funding dries up for oil worker transition program | CBC News
How a Biden victory could shake up Alberta's oil and gas sector | CBC News
How climate action can benefit from Indigenous tradition of '7th-generation decision-making' | CBC N
How Teck Frontier became a symbol of the future Canada refuses to confront | CBC News
How the Keystone XL pipeline could — just maybe — find a path forward under Joe Biden | CBC News
If Wexit were to happen, Alberta would top in greenhouse gas emissions per capita | Globalnews.ca
Imperial Oil to lay off 200 workers following cost-cutting analysis | CBC News
Kenney urges Biden to 'show respect for Canada' and sit down to talk before cancelling Keystone XL |
Keystone XL cancelling will stifle Canada's oil industry for years/ experts | Globalnews.ca
Keystone XL denial will hurt communities/ Indigenous business coalition leader | Globalnews.ca
Major new pipelines and mines must show path to net zero to get approved | CTV News
No government can bring back Alberta oilsands boom, experts say | Globalnews.ca
Northern activists react to Biden's plans to cancel Keystone XL pipeline permit | CBC News
Notley says Kenney should reverse AER decision to suspend environmental monitoring of oil industry |
Now that Teck Frontier is dead, is there a future for Canada's oilsands? | CBC News
Observers see rays of hope for 2021 in Canada's gloomy oil and gas sector | CBC News
Oil and gas industry forecasts small spending rise after slashed budgets in 2020 | CBC News
Oil and gas industry must do more to address climate change, report says | CBC News
Oil prices surge on vaccine hopes — and then ebb on pandemic realities | CBC News
Oil worker re-skilling program pushing for expansion, provincial partnership | CBC News

Oilsands must diversify before electric vehicles bring new drop in oil demand, says Suncor CEO | CBC
Oilsands producer Cenovus aims for 'net zero' GHG emissions by 2050 | CTV News
Ontario, Alberta face a growing split as economic interests diverge over fossil fuels | CBC News
Ottawa provides \$100M to research ways to cut GHG emissions in oil and gas | CBC News
Pandemic or not, Canada still faces a climate crisis — and the clock is ticking | CBC News
Plummeting oil prices mean short-term gain at gas pumps, long-term pain for producers, analysts say
Regardless of COVID, the outlook for the oilsands gets dimmer year after year | CBC News
Shares down after Teck Resources withdraws application for Frontier oilsands project | Globalnews.ca
Singh vows to help oilsands workers find new jobs with programs, funding | Globalnews.ca
Students in Calgary to join global movement with rally for climate justice | CTV News
Suncor Energy restarts carbon emission cutting projects despite vow of austerity | CTV News
Suncor to assume operation of Syncrude by end of next year | CBC News
Support for climate change action could wane if no help for coal workers/ report | CTV News
TC Energy exec says Keystone XL fits Biden agenda with union jobs, Indigenous support | CTV News
TC Energy plans net zero emissions for Keystone XL even as project's future in doubt | CTV News
Teck Resources withdraws application for \$20B Frontier oilsands mine | Globalnews.ca
The climate crisis is still a massive threat — even in the middle of a pandemic | CBC News
The environmental policy the oilpatch wants from Ottawa ASAP | CBC News
Total writes off \$9.3B in oilsands assets, cancels CAPP membership | Globalnews.ca
Trudeau stresses green tech in Governor General's speech from the throne | CTV News
Trudeau turns to B.C. MP with Saskatchewan roots to helm tricky climate ministry | CTV News
U.S. oil giant Exxon Mobil cutting up to 300 jobs in Canada | CBC News
Unifor urges industry to put workers first in green transition | CBC News
Victoria mayor accepts invitation to tour Alberta oil sands | CTV News
What Joe Biden's win can tell us about Alberta politics — and where it might be going | CBC News
What the oil plunge means for Canada and Alberta | Globalnews.ca
Why a 'just transition' doesn't have to...obs against the environment | CBC News
Why experts argue governments must take risks — besides pipelines — to restart economic growth | CBC
Why GM's switch to electric vehicles may be more important for the oilpatch than Keystone XL's cancel
Wilkinson 'wrestling' with how Frontier oilsands mine would fit into climate commitments | Globalnew
With Keystone XL back on the shelf, oilpatch pressure mounts on Trudeau and Trans Mountain | CBC New

8.3 Codes Collected / NVivo Coding Process

Table 2. List of codes collected during the coding process. I used these codes to determine discourses and themes for my analysis/discussion. The referenced numbers do not directly translate to the number of times these occurred in the news articles.

Code Name	Referenced
Acknowledgement of energy transition	120
Acknowledgement of job loss in fossil fuel sector	29
Alternatives from fossil fuels	29
Continued production/expansion	134
Demise of oil sector	126
Ecological Modernization	169
Economy (Jobs) vs Environment	124
Emotional language	82
Environmental activist push against industry	35
Federal Government promises	15
Impact from COVID	48
Impact from Keystone	13
Just Transition (Implicit)	105
Metaphor	34
Net-zero	67

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface. The top menu includes Home, Create, Data, Analyze, Query, Explore, Layout, and View. The 'Query' menu is active, showing options like Text Search, Word Frequency, Coding, Matrix Coding, Crosstab, Coding Comparison, Last Run Query, Add to Stop Words List, Run Query, Store Query Results, and Other Actions. The main window displays a list of codes under the 'CODES' section, with columns for Name, Files, Referen..., and Created On. The selected code is 'Acknowledgement of energy transition', which has 120 references. A summary window is open for this code, showing a reference from a CBC News article: 'Files\After a turbulent year, Canada's energy industry braces for more upheaval in 2021 - CBC News'. The summary indicates '1 reference coded, 0.56% coverage' and 'Reference 1: 0.56% coverage'. The reference text reads: 'All of this to say, the discussion about the future of energy, in all forms, is getting more attention.'

8.4 Additional Examples of the Three Discourses from Sections 5.1.1.1-5.1.1.3

Table 3. Some additional examples where the mainstream news media reinforces the fossil fuel hegemony by promoting technology and innovation as the solution, shifting away from the need to reduce production or phase-out the Tar Sands. Quotes may be from a title, article content, or quoted from an interviewed actor.

News Channel	Quote
CBC News	<p>Regarding the emissions reductions projects funded by the Alberta Energy Regulator:</p> <p>“The province says the 11 projects are anticipated to eliminate more than 5.3 million tonnes of CO2 by 2030 - the equivalent of bringing more than 1300 wind turbines online” (CBC News, 2019_a).</p> <p>Canadian Minister of Natural Resources in a release:</p> <p>“Accelerating clean technology development is a key component of our government’s approach to promoting sustainable economic growth as Canada moves toward a low-carbon economy” (CBC News, 2019_b)</p> <p>Further legitimating the use of technology for GHG emissions reductions when referring to the president of the largest heavy crude oil companies in Canada, “Canadian Natural” (Canadian Natural, 2021):</p> <p>“...Tim McKay says the company is committed to using new technology to reduce [GHG] emissions.” (CBC News, 2019_b)</p> <p>Quoting Tim McKay: “In fact, Canadian Natural’s Horizon Oil Sands operations has reduced our GHG intensity by 31 percent from 2012 to 2017. At today’s production levels, that’s equivalent to taking 665 000 cars off the road” (CBC News, 2019_b).</p> <p>Reporter explaining Federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau statement on Keystone:</p> <p>“Morneau has estimated the federal government will receive up to \$500 million per year over the first 10 years of the pipeline being in operation. The money would be invested into developing green technologies” (Anderson, 2019_a).</p> <p>Reporter quoting Premier Scheer:</p> <p>“The Alberta government is spending \$750 million from its Technology Innovation and Emissions Reduction (TIER) fund to support projects that help industries reduce their carbon emissions. TIER is Alberta’s answer to the carbon tax. It’s funded by large industrial facilities, which account for about 65 percent of Alberta’s carbon emissions, according to the province” (CBC News, 2020_a).</p>
Global News	<p>Quoting Calgary Chamber of Commerce CEO Sandip Lalli, in response to the impacts of COVID-19 causing decline of oil price in Tar Sands:</p> <p>“This is really an opportunity for us with our base industries like ...oil and gas.... to really embrace innovation as a form of revenue for the government” (MacVicar, 2020).</p> <p>“Innovation is the way we make markets globally” (MacVicar, 2020).</p> <p>News reporter positively portraying Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. efforts:</p> <p>“Fellow oilsands producer Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. has also pledged to work toward a zero-emissions target without giving a specific date, using technology to improve efficiency and through its carbon capture and storage operations” (Healing, 2020_a).</p>

	<p>Portraying positive climate impact through carbon offsets/credits and net zero goals:</p> <p>“TC Energy Corp has announced a plan for its Keystone XL project to achieve net zero emissions when it is placed into service, even as the future of the pipeline expansion appeared in doubt” (The Canadian Press, 2021_a).</p> <p>“However TC Energy said late Sunday that it has a plan to eliminate the impact of [GHG] emissions from Keystone XL’s operations” (The Canadian Press, 2021_a).</p> <p>“The company said net zero emissions will be achieved when the pipeline is placed into service in 2023 by buying renewable energy from electricity providers, and if it is not available it will purchase renewable energy credits or carbon offsets” (The Canadian Press, 2021_a).</p>
<p><i>CTV News</i></p>	<p>Reporter referring to the Frontier project debate prior to its withdrawal:</p> <p>“[Alberta Premier Jason Kenney] also touted ‘cutting-edge technology’ that would allow the Vancouver-based mine to produce oil with half the carbon emissions of an average barrel produced in North America” (The Canadian Press, 2020_a)</p> <hr/> <p>Reporter referring to a Cenovus Energy Inc. (oil company) spokesperson on their emissions reductions technology:</p> <p>“Fellow oilsands producer Cenovus Energy Inc. has cut its capital spending plan for 2020 by 32 percent and, although the details haven’t all been worked out...[Cenovus Energy Inc.] remains committed to its target of net zero GHG emissions by 2050 and a 30 percent reduction in carbon intensity per barrel by 2030.” (The Canadian Press, 2020_b)</p> <hr/> <p>“The Chevron [Tar Sands company] boss pointed specifically to expansions into cleaner alternatives such as green hydrogen, renewable natural gas and carbon capture and storage” (Egan, 2020_a)</p> <p>The article finished with:</p> <p>“The question is which, if any, of these bets turns into a major moneymaker for Chevron. And whether the company finds an answer to that question before it’s too late” (Egan, 2020_a).</p>

Table 4. Some additional examples where the mainstream news media reinforces the fossil fuel hegemony by positively representing the oil industry and its supporters as being environmentally ‘responsible’. Quotes may be from a title, article content, or quoted from an interviewed actor.

News Channel	Quote
CBC News	“Big international oil players are also developing strategies for the energy transition. Royal Dutch Shell, for example, has plans to move into the electrical power sector and renewable energy” (Seskus, 2020 _a).
	<p>A Husky (Tar Sands company) senior staff on climate change:</p> <p>“It’s important that we move and that we show leadership, but it’s also important that the entire Canadian industry shows leadership because we’re out in a world where we are fighting for capital, and we need to show the world that we know how to manage these risks - not just as Husky, but as an industry” (Bakx, 2020_a)</p> <p>Quoting an ‘expert’, Federal Natural Resources Minister Seamus O’Regan, in reference to the Keystone XL pipeline:</p> <p>“Canadian oil is produced under strong environmental and climate policy frameworks...” (CBC News, 2021_b)</p>
Global News	<p>“Oilsands producer Cenovus Energy Inc. said Thursday it will aim to achieve ‘net zero’ [GHG] emissions by 2050, joining a recent cavalcade of oil companies trumpeting their environmental aspirations. The calgary-based firm also announced it intends to reduce its emissions per barrel by 30 percent by 2030, while keeping flat its total emissions” (Healing, 2020_a).</p> <p>Legitimizing production of the oil company Cenovus:</p> <p>“Financial analysts welcomed the plan, which they said add to Cenovus’ reputation as one of the lowest GHG intensity producers in the oilsands” (Healing, 2020_a).</p> <p>Reporter quoting a statement by Alberta Energy Minister Sonya Savage:</p> <p>“Nowhere in the world is an industry more focused on reducing emissions - through improved environmental performance and technological innovation - than here in the Canadian oil sands, where we are confident post-pandemic energy demand will be met for decades to come” (Healing, 2020_b).</p> <p>“According to the Bank of Montreal, last year Canada ranked second among the world’s major oil producing countries on our combined ESG standards. The Dominion Bond Rating Service noted this spring that we rank first globally on environmental standards, and that our oil and gas sector accounts for about three-quarters of the \$1.4 billion Canadian companies spend annually on clean technology investments” (Healing, 2020_b).</p> <p>Another article discussing the Frontier project cancellation, attempting to legitimize production as sustainable. Reporter quoting a ‘call readout’:</p> <p>“Both the Prime Minister and the Premier agreed on the importance of Canada’s natural resource sector to our economy. They discussed their commitment to developing our natural resources sustainably and creating jobs” (Stephenson, Shah, Bartko, & Bench, 2020_c)</p>
CTV News	<p>Alberta Premier Jason Kenney discussing Teck Resources Ltd as:</p> <p>“One of the most progressive mining companies in the world” (The Canadian Press, 2020_a), when</p>

	<p>referring to Teck’s net-zero carbon proposal by 2050.</p> <p>Later, a spokesperson said:</p> <p>“Lower carbon oil from Frontier would replace higher carbon sources and contribute to reducing global emissions” (The Canadian Press, 2020_a).</p>
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Table 5. Some additional examples where the mainstream news media reinforces the fossil fuel hegemony by promoting net-zero targets as the solution, shifting away from the need to reduce production or phase-out the Tar Sands. Quotes may be from a title, article content, or quoted from an interviewed actor.

News Channel	Quote
<i>CBC News</i>	<p>Questioning whether Teck Frontier contradicts climate action is not discussed: “Could Teck Frontier be pushed further to achieve something closer to net-zero emissions by 2050?” (Wherry, 2020_a)</p> <p>“Amarjeet Sohi, the former federal minister of natural resources, recently suggested that Teck Frontier’s approval should be linked to a legislated limit on oilsands emissions and a plan from Alberta to help Canada get to net-zero by 2050” (Wherry, 2020_a).</p>
	<p>The MNM uses ‘pledge’, a rather philanthropic term to show the oil companies’ ‘commitments’:</p> <p>“Companies such as Cenovus, Canadian Natural Resources and Enbridge have pledged to get to net-zero emissions by 2050” (Sesukus, 2020_a).</p>
<i>Global News</i>	<p>The news discusses how the ECCC Minister needs to figure out how to ‘fit’ the proposed oil project by Teck Resources into ‘achieving’ net-zero emissions:</p> <p>“Wilkinson says Ottawa must assess how Frontier fits into the government’s promise to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. ‘That is something that we will have to be discussing and wrestling with as we make a decision on way or the other’ Wilkinson said Tuesday after announcing up to \$8.5 million in energy efficiency funding for the University of Calgary. ‘That is a target that is not informed by politics. It’s informed by science’” (The Canadian Press, 2019_b)</p>
<i>CTV News</i>	<p>The mainstream news media positively portrays the oil company’s ‘commitment’ to climate change:</p> <p>“Cenovus remains committed...Fellow oilsands producer Cenovus Energy Inc. has cut its capacity by 32 percent and, although the details haven’t all been worked out, spokesperson Sonja Franklin said it remains committed to its target of net-zero GHG emissions by 2050 and a 30 percent reduction in carbon intensity per barrel by 2030” (The Canadian Press, 2020_b)</p>
	<p>From the throne speech:</p> <p>“The government said it will ‘support (the) manufacturing, natural resource and energy sectors as they work to transform to meet a net zero future, creating good paying and long-lasting jobs” (The Canadian Press, 2020_d)</p>