

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the impact of settler colonialism on populist  
environmental policy

by

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# Table of Contents

<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Motivations.....	1
Definitions.....	5
Populism.....	5
Postcolonialism.....	6
Settler nation/settler.....	7
Colonial nation.....	7
Environmental policies.....	7
Background and Context.....	8
Summary of Literature and Knowledge Gaps.....	11
Introduction to Study.....	16
Summary of Approach.....	18
<b>Literature Review.....</b>	<b>20</b>
Environmental Policies.....	20
Pauline Hanson’s One Nation (One Nation).....	20

Wildrose Party.....	22
United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP).....	27
Front National.....	29
Theoretical Framework.....	30
What is postcolonial theory?.....	30
Review of postcolonial themes.....	32
Settler culture.....	35
Colonization of Canada and North America.....	37
Colonization of Australia.....	39
Methods.....	43
Critical discourse analysis.....	43
<b>Methods.....</b>	<b>46</b>
Overview.....	46
Study Area.....	47
Sample/Sampling Techniques.....	48
Procedures.....	49
Tools.....	51
Analysis.....	52
Limitations.....	52

<b>Results.....</b>	<b>54</b>
One Nation Results.....	56
Wildrose Results.....	57
UKIP Results.....	59
Front National Results.....	61
Comparative Results.....	62
<b>Analysis.....</b>	<b>68</b>
Limitations.....	74
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>80</b>

## List of Figures

**Figure 1.** Average number of postcolonial themes per speech/document. Bar chart showing the average number of postcolonial themes present in the political parties analyzed.....**66**

**Figure 2.** Postcolonial theme average per unit of data (documents and speeches). Bar chart showing the average number of postcolonial themes present in the combined data (documents and speeches) of the political parties analyzed.....**66**

**Figure 3.** Relative party position in terms of themes of postcolonialism present. Scatterplot showing the four political parties compared to each other in terms of themes confirming and denying postcolonialism present in their policies.....**67**

## Abstract

Right-wing western style populism has been increasing in popularity in certain parts of the world (Europe, North America, Australia) recently. However, there has been little research done on the environmental policies of right wing populist political parties, as these parties typically prioritize other issues such as immigration and security. Right-wing populism has a lot of similarities to ideals of postcolonialism, as they both resist foreign control of domestic matters. This research will attempt to answer to what degree are themes of postcolonialism present in right-wing populist party environmental policies and do the relative strengths of these themes between the parties reflect a difference between settler vs. colonial nations. A critical discourse analysis will be undertaken to try and answer this. This analysis will be done through a populist lens to allow a more accurate representation of the will of the people regarding environmental policy, either in the presence or absence of a settler colonial history and its associated structures. Four right-wing populist political parties were analyzed, and the amount of themes confirming and/or countering postcolonialism in their policies and speeches were recorded and compared relative to each other. The settler colonial history of the party's respective countries was also considered in this analysis. It was determined that the French Front National party showed the greatest presence of themes countering postcolonialism in their policies/speeches, followed by the British UKIP. The Australian One Nation party showed the greatest presence of themes confirming postcolonialism in their policies/speeches, followed by the Canadian Wildrose party. It was found that the parties from settler nations (Australia and Canada) showcased a greater presence of themes confirming postcolonialism than the parties from colonial nations (Britain and France).

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# Introduction

## Motivation

Populism is a theory/idea that has been incorporated into political discourse and national policy around the world today (Jansen, 2011), and the impacts that populism has on the environment needs to be explored further. Populism comes in many different forms, so the focus of this research will be on right-wing, western style populism. This type of populism impacts the environment through influencing environmental policy, which is a tool often used to solve national and international environmental challenges. Environmental policy is created within government by political parties influenced by various ideologies, including right wing western populism. It is important to further examine the link between right wing western populism and populist political parties and their influence on environmental policy. There has been little research done in this area, and as populist parties grow in popularity they will have increasing influence on the environment that needs to be understood.

Recently there has been an increase in the popularity of right-wing populist parties in Europe and North America that have influenced discourse on controversial issues (Curow, 2000). Populist candidates in recent elections include Marine Le Pen from the Front National in France (Clark & Holder, 2017) and Donald Trump in the United States (Gusterson, 2017, Singh, 2017). Populist politics is typically concerned with issues such as the state of the common people and protection of the home land from



external threats (Curow, 2000). Populist politics is anti-globalization and protective of its economy, industries, and jobs for citizens (Curow, 2000). Right-wing western style populism in particular advocates for stricter immigration policies and increased border security.

Throughout this research, populism and populist parties will be referring to right-wing western style populist movements and political parties such as those in North America and Western Europe. Populism in developing non-Western or Latin American countries will not be considered as this type of populism is much different than right-wing western style populism.

Environmental issues are not a penultimate concern for these parties (Elliott & Shaw, 2017) but they will still make important environmental decisions (ex. natural resource/fossil fuel use, water management, air quality regulations) if they come to power. If elected, right-wing populist parties will participate in global climate negotiations, or they will decide not to. For example, the Trump Administration in the United States recently announced the US would withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord to protect its economy and industries (Sevastopulo, Jopson & Clark, P., 2017).

Even if right-wing populist parties aren't elected, they could still influence governing parties because populist political discourse can often shape the tone of a domestic debate or election (Curow, 2000, Wilder & Wilder, 2001, Albertazzi & Mueller, 2013). This is especially true during election cycles, and we have seen examples of this

in France, Germany, Austria, the United States, and the Netherlands all within the last year. These countries all had right-wing populist politicians running for positions of power, which influenced political discourse (Ex. Marine Le Pen in France (Wilder & Wilder, 2001) Geert Wilders in the Netherlands (Albertazzi & Mueller, 2013) and Donald Trump in the USA (Seaton, 2012)). Issues important to the right-wing populist leaders were debated, and the concerns were addressed by whoever won the election, even if wasn't the populist leader.

A good example of populism influencing political discourse is in Germany, where the right-wing populist AfD party won 12.6% of the popular vote and has 92 members in the Bundestag (the German federal parliament), giving the AfD and the right-wing populist ideals they represent a real voice in German government (Vonberg, Schmidt & Borcak, 2017). The anti-Islam, anti-immigrant movement propagated by the AfD had a significant impact on the introduction of tougher asylum laws by Angela Merkel's government in 2016 (Hillje, 2017).

Recently there has been a lot of public fear of terrorist attacks, due to increased media coverage of such attacks (Douai, 2016). Right-wing populist parties have capitalized on these fears and pledged action on these issues. They have gained a lot of public support as a result and have become a significant political force (Hakhverdian, & Koop, 2007). Right-wing populism needs to be taken seriously, because populist political discourse has been shown to influence policies in important aspects of society, and populist parties have won seats in various national governments (Ucen, 2007). It is

not just a passing trend and shouldn't be dismissed as a radical ideology only followed by parties on the fringes of the economic spectrum (Curow, 2000). It is important to analyse how populist parties deal with environmental issues, because governing parties are forced to consider these issues and others raised by populist political discourse when they make policy decisions.

Postcolonial literature attempts to explain how a history of settler colonialism has impacted countries that have been colonized, and how these countries are still dealing with these impacts today (Ray, 2016). This research will attempt to describe why there may be possible linkages between postcolonialism/settler colonial impacts and populism. This will be done by analyzing, through the lens of right-wing western style populism, countries that are dealing with structures left behind by a settler or colonial past. Analysis through a populist lens will allow the examination of grassroots movements and/or the will of the common people living under these postcolonial structures and may illuminate any potential links between populism and postcolonialism.

Something that has not been considered is what post-colonial theories and literature can reveal about the underlying thinking right-wing western style populist parties employ in their approach to the environment. This research will explore the connections between right-wing populist political parties, postcolonial literature, and environmental policy. This thesis will determine if postcolonial themes are present in the environmental policies of right wing populist political parties. The parties will be compared to each other based on the amount of post colonial themes present in their

policies. The purpose of the analysis will be to illuminate any underlying themes of post colonialism present in right-wing populist environmental policy, and if the amount of underlying post colonial themes differs between populist parties.

## **Definitions**

### **Populism.**

In this research populism will be defined as right-wing western style populism. This is due to the immense popularity and appeal of right-wing populism to the electorate (Hakhverdian, & Koop, 2007), and the recent success of the right-wing populist movement (ex. the Trump administration, Nigel Farage and UKIP). Left-wing populists have lost public support in recent years and right-wing populists have had more political influence (Zabala, 2017).

Populism in its broadest sense is defined as policies that represent the will of the people, which is usually in conflict with some type of corrupt elitist system (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015). In populist thinking, the people are good, pure, and homogenous, and are contrasted with the evil elite (Akkerman, Mudde, & Zaslove, 2014). The right-wing western populist movement takes the idea of people being pure and homogenous and often frame this into a push for immigration controls that may have xenophobic tendencies. This idea is expanded on in the economic realm, by actively trying to limit foreign economic influences (ex. globalization) that could compete with or damage the people or

industries of the people in any way. Right-wing western populist parties have capitalized on the public fear of “the other”. Right-wing populists defined “the other” as foreigners, whereas left-wing populists defined “the other” as neo-liberal corporations (Zabala, 2017). Right-wing populists are very protective of their economy, homeland and culture, and dislike people from other cultures integrating into their society.

### **Postcolonialism.**

Postcolonialism is most simply defined as one culture or group of people exerting their dominance over another group of people they have deemed inferior for some reason (ex. ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, class, etc.). Another important part of postcolonialism is exactly how the dominating culture resists and establishes its own independent identity (Baker, 1997). The idea of dominance is also translated to dominance/control over the environment and the environmental impacts of this idea/mindset. The rejection of a colonial style relation to the environment of dominion over nature and the associated environmental impacts are addressed in postcolonialism (Mount & O’Brien, 2013). The ideals of postcolonialism are expressed through underlying themes that have various impacts on society. The impacts I will be looking for in my research are how these themes degrade the environment and how they are incorporated into colonial and settler relations with the environment.

## **Settler nation/settler.**

Settlers in the context of this research are defined as people who immigrated to Canada or Australia (settler nations) during the Age of Imperialism and established a life there. Settlers are mainly white people who immigrated from Europe and have historically accounted for most of the population of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2009). Australia also has a large settler population, and most Australians identify their ancestry as European (Statistics, 2017).

## **Colonial nation.**

A colonial nation in this research refers to the UK/France and the British/French population that has lived there for generations. This does not include immigrants or any other population without historical ties to the UK/France. This group contrasts with the settler population in Canada and Australia. A colonial nation is also known as a non-settler nation and/or non-settler population.

## **Environmental Policies.**

Environmental policies are any policies that deal with the regulation of natural resource use, pollution regulations, water and land use policies, energy production operations, species conservation measures, etc. I will be analyzing party policies that discuss any type of environmental interaction (ex. policy areas

mentioned above). I will also be looking for anything in text or speech that speaks about the environment and how the party and its leaders feel about the environment. This does not need to be official policy, but more so general emotions and perspectives about the environment.

## **Background and Context**

The British referendum on European Union membership (Brexit) was influenced by discourse created by the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) (Ahluwalia & Miller, 2016). UKIP is a small, Eurosceptic, right-wing populist political party in the UK. Its policies and platform are based largely around the UK leaving the European Union (EU) (Hunt, 2014). UKIP advocates for more control of its borders and greater sovereignty on issues such as fisheries, energy, defence, and trade. These issues are all tied to the Brexit referendum (UKIP 2015 election manifesto..., 2015). The motivation for Brexit was mainly to take back control of Britain from the EU and operate it as a sovereign nation state once more (Sampson, 2017, Payne, 2017). Many people who voted for Brexit believe life is getting worse, not better for them, and blame this fact on increasing immigration and the EU (Sampson, 2017). They are usually older, poorly educated people and believe the modern way of life has left them behind. People wanted control over immigration issues and didn't like the foreign control the EU had over the UK. They wanted a return to the ways of the past (Sampson, 2017).

UKIP achieved its goal as a party with the result of the Brexit referendum in 2016 and the choice of the British people to leave the EU (Goodwin & Heath, 2016). UKIP is a relatively small party in British politics, but it can be seen to have a large influence in political discourse and seems to represent, at least in part, the will of the people, as the Brexit referendum demonstrates (Tournier-Sol, 2015).

In Canada there has also been a rise in populist thinking in the west of the country, with the former Wildrose party in Alberta being an example. The party is critical of the federal government in Ottawa, and advocates for more control of provincial issues by the provincial government (Wildrose Party Constitution, 2015). They want to be able to make decisions on issues that affect Albertans without being influenced by the federal government (Wildrose Party Constitution, 2015), similar to how the Front National doesn't want to be told what to do by the European Union (The Financial Times, 2017). The Wildrose party has recently merged with the Progressive Conservative party to create the United Conservative party. However, populist policies of the former Wildrose party will influence and may be incorporated into the platform of the United Conservative party, so the platform of the Wildrose party is still very relevant. A platform for the United Conservative party is not available yet. However, the existence of this merger proves how influential populism and populist parties are to mainstream political discourse and how they need to be considered alongside the larger political parties. This also reveals the need to research these populist parties and understand how they will impact policy formation.



The Front National is an established national political party created in the 1970's that has historically been known as xenophobic, racist, nationalist, and anti-immigrant (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017). They are also known for being anti-globalization and Eurosceptic (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017). In 1984, the Front National had a breakthrough year by electing 10 candidates to the European Parliament, and by the mid 1990's it was regularly winning 15% of the vote in national legislative and presidential elections (Wilder & Wilder, 2001). The Front National party has influenced mainstream French political debate towards a more anti-immigration stance (Wilder & Wilder, 2001). If elected the Front National promises to return France to its former glory. Its platform states that it would immediately hold a referendum on EU membership, scrap the Euro in favour of a national currency, and severely restrict immigration (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017). The Front National is hesitant to accept foreigners into France and prefers assimilation to integration of other cultures (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017, 144 Presidential commitments, 2017, Reynié, 2016). The Front National is a party incredibly proud of France and the French homeland, and its policies are designed to maintain the traditional French lifestyle.

There has also been a rise in right-wing populist ideals in Australia, which is shown with the popularity of Pauline Hanson's One Nation ("Asia: Australia's populist bites back", 2001). Like the Front National, it wants to bring back ideals from the past. In this case, it is the idyllic pastoral image of the white Australian: hardworking, small business owner, male breadwinner, etc. One Nation wants to revive traditional

Australian society, and generally rejects multiculturalism, globalization, and radical demographic changes (Tinning, 2001, McSwiney & Cottle, 2017). One Nation is nationalist, anti-immigration, and displays tendencies of racism and intolerance (Tinning, 2001). The party cultivates an image of a traditional home and family life and appeals to sections of the population that have been displaced from their positions of cultural, social, and political privilege, such as white Australian men (Tinning, 2001, McSwiney & Cottle, 2017). One Nation brings together many different grievances from different populations and places the blame of recent hardship on anything threatening the traditional Australian way of life or its people (Tinning, 2001, McSwiney & Cottle, 2017, Pauline Hanson's One Nation national constitution, 2017).

## **Summary of Literature and Knowledge Gaps**

After conducting a search of various databases and an initial start to my literature review, I found that there was a fair amount of literature on populism in relation to UKIP (Yáñez, & López, 2015, Tournier-Sol, 2015, Sutcliffe, 2012, Pickard & Stacey, 2014). I used the search queries *populis\** AND UKIP. Populism in Europe has also been well researched (Mondon, 2015, Zaslove, 2008, Curow, 2000, Taggart, 2004). I used the search queries *populism* AND Europe.

There was also a fair amount of research on populism in Alberta, but little specifically focusing on the Wildrose party. There was a lot written about the Social Credit party and William “Bible Bill” Aberhardt that governed Alberta from 1935 to

1971 (Coyle, 2017). The policies of the Social Credit party have a lot of parallels to the modern populist movement. Examples include fierce protection of regional industries from outside influence such as the federal government, the use of media (radio) to communicate directly with citizens, and demonization of the press (Coyle, 2017). This displays that Alberta has a history of populist politics. However, I could find no articles concerning the Wildrose party and populism. I used the search queries “populism AND Wildrose” I couldn’t find any literature comparing the Front National and Wildrose party on any parameters. The queries I used for this search was “Front National AND Wildrose”. This demonstrates that there is a knowledge gap both in the analysis of the Wildrose party and its comparison to the Front National party.

Populism in Canada is particularly popular in the west of the country. In the past, a breed of “prairie populism” was common, containing parties such as the Social Credit Party, United Farmers of Alberta, Progressive Party of Canada, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and the Reform Party of Canada. The Reform party was born in the 1980’s in response to increased and continued disregard for western Canadian interests and political exclusion by both the Liberals and Conservatives in the federal government (Nugent, 2002). The Reform Party was created as a result, and mainly represented people in western Canada that felt ignored or forgotten by the federal government in Ottawa. The party was fueled by individual donations and a desire for increased political representation of the west’s interests in parliament (Nugent, 2002). The Reform party was founded on the “common sense of the common people” (Nugent, 2002). The Wildrose, Progressive Conservatives, and the newly formed United

Conservative party all share this ideal, which has brought populist ideals into the mainstream political arena (Bellefontaine, 2017).

There is a lot of literature on populism in France, especially relating to the Front National, as it is an older established party (Stephens, 2017, Cohen, 1996, Buzzi, 1991). I used the queries populism AND France, as well as populism AND Front National. It was much easier to find information on issues that populist parties are typically vocal about, such as immigration, but more difficult to find literature on populism and environmental policy in France. I found that environmental issues were not a top priority for right-wing populist parties, so their environmental policies were not well advertised, and it was difficult to find articles linking populist parties to their environmental policies. Most of the literature I found on this was in the complete political platforms of the parties, which included some type of environmental component.

Literature on populism in Australia was also relatively easy to find (Wear, 2008, Snow & Moffit, 2012, Reynolds, 1986). There was a lot of information on populism in relation to Pauline Hanson's One Nation (Pannet & Cherney, 2017, McSwiney & Cottle, 2017), but very little specific literature on One Nation environmental policies. This was because One Nation policy documents and political platforms had extremely small environmental components. The queries I used in my searches were populism AND Australia, and populism AND Australia One Nation.

There were a few studies concerning populism in other places and comparing them to populism in Europe (Lindgren, 2015). The Lindgren study focuses on Japanese populism, which is still in the early stages of development. It studied right wing populist movements in Europe to better understand how populism will develop in Japan.

Studies comparing populism in North America and Western Europe have been conducted in the past. The study by Aylward compared the rise of the Tea Party movement in the United States with Western European right-wing populist parties. Aylward found a lot of similarities between factors driving Western European and Tea Party populism, including opposition to immigration, opposition to government involvement in the economy, and notions of nationalism (Aylward, 2011). However, differences between right-wing populism in North America and Western Europe were not mentioned in the Aylward study. This is an important knowledge gap to recognize, and further research could be undertaken to determine if there are differences between European and North American populism (potentially framed in the context of differing settler colonial histories).

The study by Mondon (2015) compared the Front National and UKIP parties to see the impact populism has had on liberal democracies. The scope of this study focuses on politics within Europe and is concerned with how the rise of populism will impact the democracy and how the reaction to populist ideologies may have prevented effective democratic discourse from taking place.

In my literature review I could find no studies comparing the environmental policies of populist political parties. This is an important knowledge gap to address because populist parties are dramatically different from each other, and the impact of their environmental policies will be dependent on a variety of context specific factors. The impact of populist party policy on the environment cannot be generalized for all parties, and individual parties need to be studied and compared to determine their specific impacts.

There have been studies exploring how populism can impact environmentalism. In Meyer's study, he explained the concept of environmental populism, which differs from traditional environmentalism that is grounded in a desire to protect the natural world and places trust in the recommendations of the world's scientists. Environmental populism frames the issue by stating that environmental problems are a direct danger to people's health and wellbeing, community, and livelihood (Meyer, 2008). This concept is also quite different from conventional right-wing western style populism, which is much less concerned with environmental problems. I could find no research studying the impact that right-wing populism has on environmental policy development. It is important to understand how the increased political influence of right-wing populist parties will impact environmental policy and the environment, because there will be some sort of impact.

## **Introduction to the Study**

The goals and objectives of my study are to explore the policies of populist parties in the UK, France, Canada and Australia to see if there is a contrasting approach to environmental policy stemming from the distinct historical differences between a settler and colonial population, and to what degree themes of postcolonialism are present in their policies. Through my literature review, I will examine sources that historically compare environmental policies from both settler and colonial nations. I will also review postcolonial theory and themes, how certain themes degrade the environment, and how these themes are incorporated into settler (as well as colonial) relations to the environment. This will contextualize the relationship the British and French have to the land, being from colonial nations, versus the settler nations of Canada and Australia. After which, I will conduct a general survey of the environmental policy platforms of UKIP, Wildrose, Front National and One Nation parties. Once finished, my methods will conduct a critical discourse analysis of the environmental policy platforms of the parties to help illustrate to what degree postcolonial themes are present in the environmental policies, and how these parties compare to each other. These results will be charted along with the history (or lack thereof) of settler colonialism in the respective countries. It will then be determined whether there is a correlation between parties from countries with a history of settler colonialism and parties that have themes of postcolonialism present in their environmental policies. The results of this critical discourse analysis will then be elaborated on in conjunction with the previous work done in the literature review.

My research question is as follows: To what degree are themes of postcolonialism present in the environmental policies of the right-wing populist parties analyzed, and does a ranking of the strength of those themes, within the respective party platforms, reflect a difference between settler vs. colonial nations?

The scope of this study will be confined to UKIP party in the UK, the former Wildrose party in Alberta/Canada, the Front National party in France and the One Nation party in Australia. Populist parties present elsewhere in Europe and North America may be briefly mentioned to provide a context for how these two parties fit into the broader political landscape of recent populist movements. Past and present policies of the four parties of interest will be explored, to see how historical connections to a nation (settler/colonial) influence the development of current environmental policy. I am trying to see what postcolonial themes present in the environmental policies will reveal about how parties see their relationship to the environment. This research could then be used to inform how populist parties can affect the discourse around environmental policy issues now and in the future. This is especially important during election cycles when such issues receive greater attention. Populist parties can impact policy objectives even if they aren't elected to power. Populist parties claim to represent the will of the people, so they have influence over policy formation because the governing party must respect the will of the people/demands of the public when they create policy. However, this will not be a focus of the research, and will only be mentioned as opportunities for further research.



## Summary of Approach

To explore and attempt to answer the research question, the policies of the four parties will go through an in depth critical discourse analysis. The analysis will be qualitative in nature and will be a combination of descriptive and analytical coding. A review of postcolonial literature will be conducted beforehand, and a list of themes of postcolonialism will be recorded. These themes, along with any other themes and language seen during the policy review, will be noted during the analysis of the party policies. The themes in the policies will be compared with each other and any similarities/differences in themes between the parties will be recorded. The parties will also be ranked according to what degree postcolonial themes are present in their environmental policy. Both *a priori* and *a posteriori* coding will be used.

A historicism approach will also be applied to the policy analysis, which considers historical, geographic, and sociocultural factors that influence policy development in these parties. No policy, document, or speech prior to 2008 will be analyzed, as this was when the Wildrose party was established. The historical factors will be confined to the presence or absence of settler colonialism in the countries being studied. The geographic factors will be confined to the UK, France, Australia, and Canada (specifically Alberta). The sociocultural factors will be the presence of populist ideas and influence of populist political parties in the countries being studied, and the impact this will have on the environment and environmental policy. The policy analysis will compare the four political parties in terms of the degree of post colonial themes

present in their environmental policies. This, along with the history of settler colonialism of the country, will help us to determine if environmental policies with underlying themes of postcolonialism correlate with parties of countries that have had a history of settler colonialism.

# Literature Review

## Environmental Policies

### **Pauline Hanson's One Nation (One Nation).**

Pauline Hanson's One Nation is an Australian right-wing populist party (Tinning, 2001). One Nation deploys a powerful rhetoric of home and family and cultivates a feeling of resentment that appeals to mainly white Australian men that have been displaced from their previous position of social, cultural and political privilege (Tinning, 2001). One Nation represented the white Australian community that felt left behind by the changes to the world after World War II. Many Australians feared that the white race was dying out, due to the loss of life in the war and increased immigration afterwards. The ideal of the global economy was embraced which put the state of the economy largely out of control of national governments, and Australia became one of the most multicultural nations in the world after the war due to increased immigration (Tinning, 2001). Racism and intolerance were used by the party to find someone to blame the financial and cultural struggles of mainstream Australian society on (Tinning, 2001). One Nation is a nationalist party and works to bring together a variety of political grievances. They yearn for a return to Australia's glorious past, of the farmer, small business, male breadwinner and white Australian (Tinning, 2001). It rejects multiculturalism, globalization, increasing immigration (Tinning, 2001, Goot, Watson, Rutherford, Scalmer & Goldsworthy, 2001, "Asia: Australia's

populist bites back, 2001). The following paragraphs provide a background to One Nation's environmental policy.

The One Nation party will address the issue of water security by enhancing technical solutions currently in use (Water security, n.d.). They plan to increase water storage capacity by raising the dam walls of existing dams (Queensland: It's in your hands, 2017). One nation will also consider building new water pipelines to increase water security in the region (Queensland: It's in your hands, 2017). One nation is concerned with water security because of the impact it will have on humans. The primary reason they are concerned with the issue seems to be that the utility of nature's resources to humans are threatened.

One Nation has a vegetation management program that is focused on management of farming lands to ensure high productivity and economic output (Vegetation Management, n.d.). One Nation will introduce policies ensuring lands are managed effectively along the borders with national parks (Queensland: It's in your hands, 2017). One Nation will introduce policies on productive management and grazing lease reforms, as well as the eradication of threats to livestock such as wild dogs (Queensland: It's in your hands, 2017). The vegetation management policy is primarily concerned with maintaining the productivity of the land by dealing with regulatory or physical threats to economic output. The emphasis is on effective management, not preservation.

The crocodile management program of One Nation is primarily concerned with clearing urban Queensland of all crocodiles and preventing any crocodile attacks (Crocodile Management, n.d.). One Nation will follow a policy stating that coastal Queensland should be considered exclusion areas (all crocodiles removed), no tolerance areas (all crocodiles found removed), and areas where problem crocodiles are removed. Crocodiles that are removed are either transferred to farms or euthanized (Queensland: It's in your hands, 2017). They will also establish crocodile egg harvesting and ranching operations where populations allow (Queensland: It's in your hands, 2017). Crocodile management is driven by the threat crocodiles are posing to humans, and complete management/control over the population is the goal of the program.

### **Wildrose Party.**

The former Wildrose Party was a provincial party in western Canada that has now merged with the Progressive Conservative Party to create the United Conservative Party of Alberta. The policies of the former Wildrose Party will influence and/or be incorporated into the policies of the United Conservative Party. The Wildrose party was a right-wing populist party that was formed in 2008 and was amalgamated into the United Conservative Party in 2017 (Harrison, n.d.). The Wildrose party policies generally favour free market economic practices, limited government involvement in the economy, low taxes, and the freedom of the individual and individual property rights (Wildrose alliance policy platform, 2009). It is a populist party and did have a lot of support among rural

populations, as it attempted to listen to and represent the rights of citizens from small, rural communities (Harrison, n.d.). The environmental policies of the former Wildrose party are introduced in the following paragraphs.

The Wildrose policy objectives concerning water resource management in Alberta are mainly to conserve water resources for human use. They believe the provincial government should conserve water taken from lakes and rivers for industrial, agricultural, and domestic purposes (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). They also believe that the use of dams should be employed for flood and erosion control, hydroelectric generation, and recreational purposes (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). Groundwater should also be conserved and protected for drinking purposes (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). The Wildrose party believes firmly in the conservation of natural resources such as clean water because they serve a useful purpose to humans.

The Wildrose Party priorities regarding general conservation mandates that the government should protect parks from intrusive activities (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). The government should also conserve the environment and monitor environmental impacts while also balancing economic development opportunities. The government must also ensure that Alberta is meeting its national and international greenhouse gas emission and air pollution standards (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). The stance the Wildrose party takes on conservation is that it supports it from a vague standpoint, but this stance is open

to interpretation and doesn't take precedence over potential economic development.

The Wildrose Party mandates, dealing with energy and the environment, are that natural resources are to be developed responsibly. They believe that the provincial government should focus on resource recovery methods (such as innovative drilling techniques), water management and cogeneration technologies (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). The party focus is to develop Alberta's energy resources in the most efficient way to maximize value to Albertans. They believe that the energy resources ought to be developed to benefit Albertans and responsibly developed to respect the natural resources and the Albertan people.

The Wildrose party believes that sustainability should be incorporated in all aspects of government. The party believes that the government should make environmental and fiscal sustainability integral to all government policy by working collaboratively with all stakeholders on important issues (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). They believe that greenhouse gases should be reduced by investing in technology (ex. carbon capture and storage), research, (energy) conservation, and developing renewable energy sources (Wildrose Party Alliance, 2016). Sustainability is an important concept to the Wildrose and how they believe the government should be run. This concept extends beyond environmental sustainability, and into other areas such as fiscal sustainability.

In terms of environmental protection, the Wildrose party believes in assessing the environmental risks associated with large scale development projects (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). They believe the government of Alberta should require an ecological impact report for all large projects, with projects using unproven technologies or creating significant public concern being a top priority (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). This means that the environmental protection ideals of the Wildrose party are mainly driven by what the public feels is important.

The Wildrose party believes in conserving healthy wildlife populations in Alberta. They believe the provincial government should protect the rights of hunters and anglers while ensuring Alberta's wildlife populations are sustainably managed (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2016). The motivation for sustainably managing wildlife populations and prioritizing healthy populations is so Alberta's hunters will have wildlife populations to hunt and fish

The Wildrose party believes in responsible, informed environmental decision making. They believe the government of Alberta should participate in fact based environmental stewardship using the best scientific data available, and only act after knowing the threats to the environment and how it's actions will reduce said threats (Wildrose Alliance Party, 2015). The Wildrose party wants to



make sure they are accountable to Albertans by ensuring their actions are driven by facts and scientific data.

The leader of the former Wildrose party Brian Jean has stated that the policies and ideals of the Wildrose and Progressive Conservative parties are identical, so a merger would preserve the central character of both parties (Brian Jean on unifying the right in Alberta..., 2017). He stressed it was important for the two parties to consolidate in order to defeat the NDP in the next provincial election (Brian Jean on unifying the right in Alberta..., 2017). The Wildrose is much more popular in rural Alberta and has brought the concerns of rural Albertans with them into the United Conservative party (Tucker, 2017). The Progressive Conservatives (PC's) were also more progressive on issues such as LGBTQ rights than the Wildrose. However, this opinion has started to shift within the Wildrose party (Tucker, 2017). The Wildrose was more fiscally conservative than the PC's, which were more liberal in their government spending (Tucker, 2017). The Wildrose was also a populist party, whereas the PC's are a more traditional political party (Tucker, 2017). However, now that the Wildrose has formally merged with the Progressive Conservatives, the two parties will mutually inform the creation of a holistic platform under the United Conservatives.

## **United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP).**

UKIP is a right-wing populist party based in the UK that is anti-globalization, anti-immigration, and works to defend the family and cultural values of the traditional British way of life (Montgomerie, 2014). UKIP garners a lot of support from rural and small-town Britain, with significantly less support from urban areas in metropolitan London (Montgomerie, 2014). UKIP is most famous for being a Eurosceptic party and has long since campaigned for separation from the European Union (EU) (Montgomerie, 2014). It was a driving factor in the UK voting to leave the EU in 2016. UKIP is a party that rallies against foreign intervention, political corruption, supranational control, large scale intervention, and global recessions caused by the increasing trend of globalism (Montgomerie, 2014). It is also against gay marriage, foreign aid, and welfare payments (Montgomerie, 2014). UKIP values the traditional British way of life that has been threatened by the leadership and policies of the EU and elites in metropolitan London. The following paragraphs provide a background on UKIP environmental policy.

UKIP strongly believes that natural forests and ancient woodlands should be more protected than they are now. UKIP is planning to amend the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to give Ancient Woodlands ‘wholly exceptional status’. This would offer them the same level of protection as World Heritage Sites, and registered parks and gardens (UKIP 2017 Manifesto..., 2017). Major infrastructure projects that may damage the environment will be required to

respect irreplaceable natural habitats much more (ex. H2S) (UKIP 2017 Manifesto..., 2017). UKIP is very passionate about protecting the UK's forests, and development cannot happen at the expense of the forests. It is simply not an option.

UKIP will prioritize the creation of small green spaces within cities. They will amend legislation to promote the inclusion of trees and green spaces in new developments. This means more people will also mean more green spaces (UKIP 2017 Manifesto..., 2017). The use of permeable surfacing materials for parking lots will also be required to help control surface flooding (UKIP 2017 Manifesto..., 2017). The mandate for more green spaces is driven by the need for people to be able to breathe clean air and live near green spaces.

UKIP is concerned with the state of the waters around the UK. To improve the state of the oceans, they will investigate the possibility of introducing a deposit scheme on plastic bottles to encourage recycling and help to keep plastic bottles out of landfills and off UK beaches (UKIP 2017 Manifesto..., 2017). This doesn't have a direct (economic) benefit to humans, but it will improve the state of the environment. UKIP cares a great deal about the oceans and marine life, and not just in terms of the usefulness of the life in the oceans to humans.

## **Front National.**

The Front National is a far-right populist political party in France that is extremely nationalist and patriotic (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017). The party is anti-immigrant, Eurosceptic, and critical of globalization (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017, Wilder & Wilder, 2001, Farrell, 1990). The party advocates a greater police presence, severely reduced immigration, assimilation over integration of other cultures, and an enforcement of secularism in public places (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017). The French economy would be protected from exterior threats (globalization, foreign workers and foreign investment), and military defence spending would increase. The Euro would be scrapped in favour of a national currency and a referendum would be held on EU membership if the Front National were to come to power (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017). Income taxes for French citizens would be slashed and the retirement age would be lowered to 60 (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017). The Front National was born out of the 1970's, and has a historical image of being xenophobic, nationalist and authoritarian (Wilder & Wilder, 2001, Farrell, 1990). Many of these images remain relatively intact today (Le Pen's siren call to the French people, 2017). The following are some of the environmental policies of the Front National.

One of the six pillars of the Front National Platform are a France that is sustainable. The Front National promotes French food security and encouraging young people to enter the agricultural industry (144 presidential commitments,

2017). The Front National also aims to responsibly develop its energy industry, and make a massive shift towards renewable, hydro and nuclear energy, and move away from sources of energy such as natural gas from fracking (144 presidential commitments, 2017). The Front National aims to break the economic model based on globalization and preserve the environment in the process (144 presidential commitments, 2017). The Front National creates its policy based on a deep respect for the French environment, and any activities that damage the environment are unpatriotic.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **What is postcolonial theory?**

Postcolonialism is a theory often used in the social sciences to aid in policy analysis and can be interpreted in different ways for different purposes. Baker defines post-colonialism as one culture exerting dominance over another, and the way the dominating culture resists and establishes its own independent identity (Baker, 1997). This often played out during the Age of Imperialism, where colonial countries desired to recreate mini colonies of their homeland wherever they were in the world. Resistance to this goal by those being colonized (anti-colonialism) was one of the motivating factors behind the creation of postcolonial discourse (Ray, 2016). Postcolonialism is seen as an attempt to rewrite and/or recognize historical events from the perspective of the marginalized, colonized, and oppressed (Ray, 2016).

Postcolonialism is a way of looking at the world that is critical of the control and influence that powerful actors have over others. This includes the traditional example of powerful European nations that exploited their colonies for their own benefit. Postcolonial theory is a reaction to the atrocities committed during this time and explains that many of the issues and societal structures of the former colonies are a direct result of the actions of colonial countries (Mount & O'Brien, 2013).

This is also applicable in modern times, with powerful actors being countries such as the United States, multinational corporations and financial actors (Mount & O'Brien, 2013, Ray, 2016). These actors exploit poorer countries and vulnerable populations for their own benefit. The impacts of these actions are incredibly diverse and are felt in all aspects of society of the former colonies. Post colonialists highlight these impacts, as well as the accompanying themes of colonial thinking that caused these impacts. In my research, ideas of postcolonialism will be applied to see if these ideas influence the decisions of populist governments, specifically on environmental issues.

Certain themes of postcolonialism have been applied to the way humans interact with the environment. A return to the ways of the past (which are often glorified) and monetizing the environment/viewing it in terms of the economic revenue that can be generated from it are a few of the prominent themes. Postcolonialism is used in the context of the environment to describe how actors

in positions of power have approached and treated the environment, usually framing the environment in terms of the resources that can be extracted from it (especially in developing countries) (Sachs, 2003). Postcolonial thinking considers a colony is only useful to its parent state when it can produce a large amount of raw materials. This was a common mindset during the colonization of the Americas by European nations (Sachs, 2003). Many of these themes are present in today's conversation surrounding the environment. These themes will be explored further in the following paragraphs.

### **Review of postcolonial themes.**

The central idea of postcolonialism is that people from colonial nations view the people and the land they are colonizing as inferior to them, due to a variety of factors (ethnicity, class, religion, gender, etc.). The western cartography industry and its abstract rendering of faraway places reinforced the idea that these places were inferior and helped to legitimize colonial practices (Mount & O'Brien, 2013). This mindset of superiority continues into the modern age through themes of social, cultural, economic, and environmental issues dealing with feminism and indigenous issues, among others (Mount & O'Brien, 2013).

Ecofeminists work to illuminate the lines of privilege created by colonization that separate humans (and the environment) and how this can impact society (Mount & O'Brien, 2013). Post colonialists argue that colonial style

practices of careless resource extraction for economic profit must be broken (Sachs, 2003). In my research I will be analyzing environmental policies to see if either postcolonial or colonial style thought/practices are found in present day political platforms.

Postcolonial responses to colonialism and imperialism often incorporate themes of glorification of the past through myth, salvation through suffering, and the hopes of postcolonial/colonized peoples (Baker, 1997). This strategy is often used by populist parties to attract people to their vision of a return to an idyllic past. They do this by taking advantage of a society that has “forgotten” a certain group and promising a return to a more attractive former way of life. My research will focus on these themes during the data analysis.

Colonial activities and ideas of settler colonialism impact both the people and the environment of the area. Some of the themes present in postcolonialism that degrade the environment are domination, control, race/gender inequalities, collective action, and the European/Western influence over the rest of the world (Mount & O’Brien, 2013). My research is focused on identifying whether or not these themes are present in the policies of populist parties today.

Postcolonialism also rejects global treaties/agreements as a method by colonial powers to exert their ideals onto the rest of the world (Mount & O’Brien, 2013). Postcolonialism shares a lot of parallels with eco-feminism: less powerful



developing countries are being dominated and controlled by powerful colonial and western powers, similar to how women and the environment have been controlled by men and the patriarchal power structure in society (Mount & O'Brien, 2013).

Globalization is sometimes seen as modern colonialism, and is closely linked with environmental racism and degradation, in that exploitative practices of colonial powers (and multinational corporations) damage the environment, which is often where vulnerable populations (African-American, native, low-income people) live. This is a neo-colonial mindset and is rejected by post colonialists because the goal is to extract the wealth and resources from the colonized countries without regard for the people or environment of the area (Mount & O'Brien, 2013).

These ideas of postcolonialism draw a lot of parallels with the primary goals of right-wing populism, albeit for different reasons. Right-wing populism includes a strong resistance to foreign control and the dominant forces of globalization and multiculturalism in favour of grassroots movement and nationalist control/pride that more accurately embodies the will of the people. Postcolonial theorists reject globalization because it is seen as a form of neocolonialism with the goal of extracting wealth and resources from other countries (usually former colonies) to benefit foreign entities such as multinational corporations. This nuance may help to explain why some populist

parties may have themes in their policies countering postcolonial structures. The reasons for these counter themes may not be an attempt to break out of old colonial structures, but actually a method to resist foreign influences such as multiculturalism and/or globalization. Resisting foreign influences of domestic issues is one common thread linking right-wing populism with postcolonial theory.

Another critique of globalization and the power of multinational corporations is that the technology they utilize is being used to influence and control traditional indigenous knowledge and practices. An example of this is genetically modified seed technology used in India and the regulations prohibiting farmers from saving and exchanging these seeds (Mount & O'Brien, 2013).

My research will focus on these general themes (destructive nature of globalization, environmental damage due to foreign influence/actions, etc.) to see if the themes appear in current policy documents. The location of the political parties and the history of the area (Colonial country/colonized/settler country) will also be noted.

### **Settler Culture.**

A lot of the themes discussed in postcolonialism are present in settler mentalities, and particularly the relationship that colonial countries have towards the environment in their colonies. Settler culture is predicated on the fact that

land is there to be utilized by humans, and that its perceived abundance creates little motivation or need to develop sustainable land use practices. Pichón argues that settlers are encouraged to clear large tracts of new land in the agriculture frontier due to the abundance and access to cheap land (which makes individual tracts of land inherently less valuable). Sustainable management of existing land is not a priority as establishing settler populations is more important (Pichón, 1996). Settlers are free to develop the land however they wish.

Most of the time, property rights are not freely given to settlers/farmers on the land they farm, which provides little incentive for them to sustainably manage their lands (Pichón,1996). There are also not many support services and infrastructure available to settlers. This is one thing that can be done to improve quality of life for settlers and encourage them to invest in their land, instead of continually clearing new land for development (Pichón,1996).

Examples of these postcolonial themes are shown during the European colonization of Australia and Canada, which will be explored in the following paragraphs.

## **Colonization of Canada and North America.**

Settlers colonizing Canada and the rest of North America sought to exert control over the land and rework it in their own image. Bunting states that settlers wanted to recreate a new society they could profit from that was a recreation of their former society in Europe. This was not done in harmony with the new environment (Bunting, 1995). McDonald expands on this by pointing out that settlers brought their traditions from Europe to North America and implemented them there to “civilize” the prairies and realize this idyllic vision of their former home (McDonald, 2015). Bunting provides the example of western Oregon, where the cultural overlay of settler society with the diverse environment of the region led to a repatterning of the environment and massive simplification of the natural environment (Bunting, 1995). McDonald adds to this by saying that settlers also converted and replaced the natural prairie flora with foreign grains, flowers, grasses, vegetables, and gardens more like the European environment (McDonald, 2015). This shows the postcolonial theme or yearning for an idyllic past and attempting to implement their vision of this past within their current surroundings/society. This same mindset is common within populist political parties.

Altering and domesticating land was encouraged and constituted by the Dominion Lands Act, which granted settlers title to their land after they had lived on it for three years and “proved up” their homestead claim (building a house and barn, fencing, breaking and cropping land, etc.). This encouraged settlers to

transform their homestead into productive land and produce commodities that could be traded in the international market. As a result, the land became valued for the commodities it produced and not the ecosystems that it supported (Bunting, 1995).

This perspective of land was shared by settlers in western Canada. Some cattle barons that colonized Alberta viewed the prairies as a resource that could be used to make a profit. McDonald states that cattle barons such as A.E. Cross and Pat Burns saw the prairies in Alberta as a cheap available resource to exploit and an efficient way to invest capital (McDonald, 2015). These cattle barons came to Alberta to establish an industry that showcased the effective domination of nature by man, and the end goal was the efficient utilization of nature's resources to fulfill man's desires (McDonald, 2015). Their primary concern was ensuring the land would continue to provide value to them.

Settler society believed in the domination and commodification of the natural world, and that environmental damage was necessary for progress. Due to this belief, the prairie biome has been one of the most extensively altered biomes on the planet (McDonald, 2015). Part of my research is to see if this mindset of domination/control is still present in environmental policy documents of settler countries.

A good example of human alteration of the prairie biome is the development of irrigation infrastructure. During the colonization of Western Canada, there were major initiatives undertaken designed to transform semi-arid land in the prairies into productive agricultural land through irrigation. The Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) developed irrigation projects along the lower Bow River in southern Alberta, and contracted engineers to transform this semi-arid landscape (Evenden, 2006). The CPR's combined eastern and western irrigation sections in the Canadian Prairies included over 2 million acres and was capable of servicing 840 000 acres with irrigation (Evenden, 2006). This was a massive alteration of the environment and transformed the prairies into a productive agricultural region. The CPR's decision to bring irrigation to the semi-arid regions of the Canadian Prairies was designed to transform a natural environment into one that humans could utilize and was better suited to human desires. Irrigation and intensive water resource management is still practiced today in both Canadian and Australian society.

### **Colonization of Australia.**

During the European colonization of Australia, forests were cleared to create land for agricultural use almost immediately after the first European settlement was established (Bradshaw, 2012). In 1861, the government passed the Crown Lands Alienation Act, which was designed to 'open up' the colony to settlement. This act essentially guaranteed the rapid clearing of vegetation for

agriculture and development, because it penalized landowners who didn't develop their lands (Bradshaw, 2012). Similar legislation was introduced during the colonization of Canada and North America, as mentioned earlier. Today, agricultural areas cover around 43% of the continent and 38% of the country's forests have been lost since European settlement (Bradshaw, 2012). This displays the fact that during colonization of Australia, the development of the agriculture industry/economy and controlling/settling the continent was prioritized over environmental protection.

Cattle producers that colonized Australia had the same mindset. They were concerned with increasing production and making a profit off their cattle herds, and not so much with the state of the environment. This is evident in the article by Tonts, Yarwood & Jones, in which they state that successful farming in Australia represented a triumph of settler society over nature (Tonts, Yarwood & Jones, 2010).

One of the priorities of early settlement schemes in Australia was to increase the level of migration to Australia among British settlers, which would increase the agricultural capacity and grow the cattle industry of the colony (Australia) (Tonts, Yarwood & Jones, 2010). The final report on the Royal Commission of Agriculture held between 1887 and 1891 advocated for the continued promotion of small scale farms in an advanced state of production, and that no farms should be without cattle (Tonts, Yarwood & Jones, 2010).

During the 1920's and 1930's, Australian farmers were faced with smaller profit margins, and needed to increase profit while reducing cost. To do this they focused on increasing agricultural activity (including cattle) and increasing the size and intensity of operations (shift towards 'factory farming') (Tonts, Yarwood & Jones, 2010). The cattle industry in Australia has always been focused on increasing production while the continent was being settled by Europeans. Later the focus shifted to increasing profits while reducing costs. The goal was always to achieve the most utility out of the environment as possible, and the environmental impacts of the cattle industry was never really a concern in colonial Australia.

The colonization of Australia and North America show how postcolonial themes of domination/control over nature and the prioritization of settling the colony over environmental protection (ex. through legislation) have impacted the development of these areas.

These examples are not just relics of the past, however. Elements of settler colonialism are still prevalent in society today. For example, the Canadian government established an anti-terrorism unit designed to protect key oil and gas infrastructure from attacks before they happen, presumably by first nations communities opposed to the developments (Preston, 2013). This draws an



invisible line between first nations communities, who are viewed as dangerous and inferior, and the rest of the country. This language is typical of settler colonialism.

Preston argues that Canada's treaty system and the deals corporations make with aboriginal communities have been designed to secure control over traditional aboriginal land and resources (Preston, 2013). Also, the push by the Harper government towards private property ownership of aboriginal land instead of treaty ownership operates within the structure of settler colonialism to erode first nation's collective rights and self-determination (Preston, 2013). Settler colonialism is a structure, not an event, and it is designed to eliminate indigenous societies (Preston, 2013).

The actions of the Canadian government and influences of settler culture in these actions display a focus on control and dominance over land and resources. This is especially true in the attempts by the Canadian government to take control of first nations' land away from first nations' communities.

## Methods

### **Critical discourse analysis.**

Critical discourse analysis provides a method to reveal the underlying assumptions embedded in policy documents/speeches. The aim is to gain a deeper insight into how textual devices are used to manufacture public perception and construct the conventions society operates under (Sylvestre, McNeil & Wright, 2013). Sylvestre, McNeil & Wright argue that sustainability declarations utilize specific literary elements and mechanisms that are used to produce a specific ideological stance. The goal of critical discourse analysis is to determine what this ideological stance is, based on the literary elements and their accompanying themes.

The inferred meanings of communication/policy documents can be determined through critical discourse analysis (Janoušková & Hák, 2013). Janoušková & Hák, and Sylvestre, McNeil & Wright are a few authors that use critical discourse analysis in their research to analyze policy documents and uncover the underlying messages and themes present. Often used alongside critical discourse analysis is policy coding. The combination of the two methods helps to bolster the policy analysis.

An example of previous literature utilizing policy coding is when Carter performed a qualitative approach to analyze political discourse in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador. Budget and Throne speeches, and the discourse

of political leaders were analyzed and compared between the two provinces (Carter, 2015). Word frequency was used to determine the main themes of discussion in government, and how discussion themes changed over time (Carter, 2015). The aim was to see if discourse from political leaders could be used to inform an understanding of political culture (Carter, 2015). This was done by comparing political discourse to literature on political culture. Different data types were uploaded and analyzed by a variety of different tools in a research software called Nvivo (Carter, 2015).

A critical discourse analysis was used with post-colonial themes as a framework in the study by Jacobsen of the “colonialism of language” of Bambara texts during the pre and early colonial periods of the former French Sudan. In this study, Jacobsen analysed texts created in Bambara, a west African language variety, created during the early colonization period in the former French Sudan. The texts were analysed to see how language was both a means to control and facilitate colonialism, and an object (language of the other/native population) during colonial periods (Jacobsen, 2001). The texts were analysed to determine links between language and power and were considered in the context of society at the time the texts were created, as well as who was writing them and the conditions they were operating under (Jacobsen, 2001). The texts were interpreted considering word count and choice, the values conveyed, and context of the text. The main purpose of the analysis was to unveil the colonialism of Bambara (Jacobsen, 2001). This analysis used a particular medium (Bambara

texts) during a period of colonization to try and determine any underlying meanings/themes/pressures conveyed by these texts, and if these were due to the colonization of the area happening at the time. Critical discourse analysis is a common method used when dealing with Post colonial thematic analysis. This method will be very useful in my research to uncover any underlying themes of postcolonialism present in the environmental policies of the political parties I am analysing.

# Methods

## Overview

My research will include a critical discourse analysis of four right wing populist political parties, focusing particularly on their environmental platforms. I will undertake a combination of *a priori* and *a posteriori* policy coding approach, where the criteria for the coding and the themes/language I am looking for is determined following a review of post colonial literature. Themes will also be added during analysis.

I started my analysis with six themes of postcolonialism that convey a certain relation to the environment, which are domination/control/utilization of the environment and its resources, return to the ways of the past, exploitation of nature to fulfill human desires, inherent respect of the natural environment, monetization of natural resources, and nature as something that should be tamed and utilized. During my analysis I added the following themes: downplaying the importance of protecting the environment, citizens as custodians of the land, protecting the environment to preserve its utility to humans, preserving the environment to protect human health, preserving the environment for future generations to enjoy, emphasizing how expensive action on climate change will be and denying the existence of (anthropogenic) climate change.

Word choice and frequency will be a very important part of this analysis. The words chosen to form the environmental platform of the respective parties will be used to

determine general perspectives on the environment and the human relationship to the environment, as well as the key terms. These perspectives will be compared to traditional settler relationships to the environment. The idea is to see if the environmental policies of the political parties, viewed through themes of postcolonialism, differ between the nations that were colonized (Canada/Australia) and the nations that were never colonized (UK/France).

## **Study area**

My study area will be the regions in which the political parties I am analyzing are situated. This includes Alberta/Canada (Wildrose), the United Kingdom (United Kingdom Independence Party), Australia (Pauline Hanson's One Nation), and France (Front National). The two parties in Europe were chosen because I wanted to analyse the environmental policies of right wing populist parties from "colonial" countries (countries with no (modern) history of being colonized, as France and Britain colonized other countries during the Age of Imperialism). These will be compared to the two right-wing populist parties from "settler" countries (Alberta/Canada and Australia). I will use this distinction of colonial (Europe), and settler (The New World-Canada/Australia) countries throughout my research.

UKIP was chosen because it is seen as a fringe party in UK politics, holding very few seats in parliament but still having a substantial impact on political discourse. This is especially true given the events of the past year with the Brexit referendum. The Front National was chosen because it is an established populist party in France, another major colonial nation, alongside the UK. There is lots of literature on the Front National, which will make the analysis easier.

The Wildrose party, a party born in Alberta politics, will showcase right-wing populist politics in Canada. While originally a provincial party, it recently merged with the Progressive Conservatives to create the United Conservative party. Therefore, the ideals of the Wildrose will now have a direct impact on the platform and policies of an established mainstream party. Finally, Pauline Hanson's One Nation party in Australia will be examined, to provide another example of a right-wing populist party in a settler nation, alongside Canada.

## **Sample/sampling techniques**

The sampling method will be non-probabilistic and purposive. Purposive sampling of qualitative data is when specific sources of information (in this case, environmental platforms and policy speeches on the environment) are used to gather information that could not be gathered or known by the public (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Purposive sampling is commonly used in qualitative analysis, with subjects being chosen by the study purpose, and all subjects provide meaningful data to the study (Barrat, Ferris

& Lenton, 2014). Sample size is therefore determined by data available (Barrat, Ferris & Lenton, 2014). As a result, the sampling will also be non-probabilistic, because only environmental platforms and the accompanying policy speeches by party leaders of a few right wing political parties will be analyzed. The purposive non-probabilistic sampling method works for this type of research because I am only analyzing a few specific platforms and speeches, and I know exactly where to find this data. All other information is irrelevant (public opinion on the platform, environmental platforms of other parties, etc.). The only relevant information is the environmental platforms and the policy speeches of the right-wing parties of interest, and the wording in these platforms and speeches.

## **Procedures**

I will undergo a critical discourse analysis of the environmental platforms and the policy speeches of the political parties and extract any themes found during the analysis. This is a useful method because it examines specific language and wording used to extract the underlying perspectives of a policy or speech. This is exactly what I am looking for in my research, to see if the environmental policies of these parties are influenced by themes of postcolonialism, and to determine if these themes are present in party documents/speeches.

The method of analysis, which is a combination of *a priori* and *a posteriori* coding, will be the same for all parties being analyzed. First, I will conduct a review of



postcolonial literature and compile an initial list of postcolonial themes relating to the environment that will be used during analysis. I will gather party platforms and speeches from the political party websites. Additional speeches will be found on the party YouTube channels, and through internet searches.

Then I will read through the environmental platforms and listen to the policy speeches of the respective parties and note whether the postcolonial themes from the initial list were present, and the specific wording that conveyed the theme. Any recurring themes of postcolonialism not on the initial list that come up during analysis will be added to the list for analysis.

I will also document any language that I feel shows a deeper respect for the land and the fact the environment is worth protecting and respecting. Language showcasing the past treatment of the environment and homeland of the people will be noted.

The themes, language chosen to express these themes, and the specific documents and speeches analyzed will be compiled into a spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel. It will be noted whenever a certain theme comes up during the analysis. The language used to express the theme and which document/speech it was found in will also be recorded.

After the initial analysis key terms will be chosen based on the wording that showcases postcolonial themes present in the documents/speeches. The theme will be recorded as well as the words in the policy chosen to express that theme. If the same words are chosen throughout the policies, these words will become key terms.

Once the analysis is complete the parties will be ranked according to the amount of postcolonial themes present in their policies, and this will be considered alongside the nation's history (settler or colonial). I will be looking to extract the general theme behind the respective environmental platforms to garner the true perspective the party has toward the natural environment, and whether there is a correlation between amount of postcolonial theory present in environmental policies, and historical context of a country (settler vs. colonial history).

## **Tools**

Microsoft Excel will be the main tool used during this analysis, as well as the list of themes/language/wording developed before and during the analysis. The environmental policies will be read and themes towards the environment will be extracted manually. Speeches will also be listened to (and transcripts read if they can be located), and any themes/language/wording used will be manually recorded. A critical discourse analysis will be the procedural method used to carry out this research. *A posteriori* and *a priori* coding are the analysis methods that will be followed.

## **Analysis**

Critical discourse analyses of environmental policy documents have been carried out in a similar manner in previous studies (Maczka et al., 2016, Janoušková & Hák, 2013, Huang, Zhao, Brown, Wu, & Waldron, 2010). The environmental platforms of the parties will be read along with any relevant speeches by party members. Any postcolonial themes from the initial list (created during the literature review) or added during analysis that are present in the platforms will be recorded (as well as the language used to express the theme). This analysis will be done by hand in Microsoft Excel.

Once the platform and speech analyses are finished and the postcolonial themes relating to the environment have been extracted the parties are ranked both absolutely and relatively in terms of the amount of postcolonial themes present in the environmental platforms of the parties. This will then be applied to see if there is any correlation between the rankings and whether the nations of the party are settler (Canada/Australia) or colonial countries (UK, France).

## **Limitations**

One limitation I may encounter with these methods is conducting content analysis on environmental platforms that are not originally written in English. Specific word choice is an important part of the analysis, and this may be lost in translation of the documents. I have tried to avoid this problem by choosing parties mostly from native

English-speaking countries. For the Front National, I will consult the French department at Dalhousie for assistance in translating the party platforms. The Front National also has an English version of their platform that I can use in my analysis as well. This will be useful because the translated version will be tailored for an international audience, so this will show how the Front National wants to present itself to the world.

Another problem I may encounter is inconsistent themes emerging from the same political parties. This may be due to different priorities on different aspects of the environment. For example, some parties may have stronger policies surrounding water security than national parks or wildlife preservation, due to the concerns and demographics of the electorate. This will largely be context specific. However, theming this will still offer insight into the affect that post-colonial thinking had on these priorities.

I will also need to keep in mind that the Wildrose party was a provincial party, whereas the rest are national parties. Although, the Wildrose platform is now integrated into the United Conservative Party, a major national party in Canada, this still may affect the amount of documentation, and the concerns therein, of the policies and speeches that are analyzed.

## Results

Initial analysis started with the platforms of the four political parties gathered from the party websites. I separated my analysis into themes that prove post-colonial dispositions exist and themes in opposition to these dispositions. Themes that prove post-colonial dispositions exist are as follows:

- Domination/control/utilization of the environment and its resources
- Return to the ways of the past
- Exploitation of nature to fulfill human desires
- Monetization of natural resources
- Nature as something that should be tamed and utilized
- Downplaying the importance of protecting the environment<sup>1</sup>
- Protect the environment to preserve its utility to humans
- Preserve the environment to protect human health
- Emphasizing how expensive action on environment/Climate Change will be<sup>2</sup>
- Denying the existence of (anthropogenic) Climate Change

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<sup>1</sup> This theme and the two following themes were added during the document analysis

<sup>2</sup> This theme and the following theme was added during the speech analysis

The following themes are in opposition to post-colonial dispositions:

- Inherent respect of the natural environment
- Citizens as custodians of the land<sup>3</sup>
- Preserving the environment for future generations to enjoy

This list was used to analyze all documents and speeches for the presence of postcolonial themes. I set up the spreadsheet with the postcolonial themes in a column on the left, and the documents/speeches to be analyzed in a row at the top. If any of the themes were present in the document/speech, it was recorded along with a short quote from the document/speech exemplifying the theme. Later in the analysis documents and speeches were colour coded to distinguish between the two and grouped according to political party. After this bar charts and scatterplots were created to show how many themes confirming and denying postcolonialism were present in each party's policies, and how the parties compared to each other. The themes per speech/document were averaged to account for the different number of speeches and documents that were analyzed for each party.

After the documents were analysed, it was determined that the Front National and UKIP had more policies with themes in opposition to postcolonialism than the Wildrose and One Nation. The Wildrose and One Nation policies had more themes confirming postcolonialism than the Front National did. However, UKIP had the most balance

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<sup>3</sup> This theme and the following theme was added during the document analysis as well

between themes both confirming and contradicting postcolonialism in their policies. Often, UKIP created this balance by expressing motivations to protect the environment in order to preserve its utility for humans. The Wildrose themes confirming postcolonialism were displayed by downplaying the importance of protecting the environment, shown through their policies in opposition to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions and carbon taxes. However, the Wildrose occasionally had themes in opposition to postcolonialism, as a few of their documents portrayed Canadians as custodians of the land. One Nation most consistently displayed themes confirming postcolonialism in their policies, emphasizing domination/control/utilization of environmental resources and protecting the environment to preserve its utility to humans.

## **One Nation Results**

The speeches from Pauline Hanson's One Nation party showed many themes that confirm postcolonialism. One Nation doesn't seem to recognize the importance of protecting the environment or the threats the environment is under, except when these threats impact humans (ex. drought). One Nation is skeptical of anthropogenic Climate Change and climate science. They don't believe that humans are warming the planet, and as a result are not concerned with the impact human actions have on the planet (Hanson, 2017). One Nation is mainly concerned about the environment if damage to the environment negatively impacts Australians. One Nation also believes in optimum control and utilization of Australia's natural resources. These policies all show how One

Nation believes the environment is there to serve humans, and how humans can and should extract all the value they can from the environment.

There are also no themes in opposition to postcolonialism in the One Nation party leader speeches. Indeed, themes such as inherent respect for the natural environment and citizens as custodians of the land are completely absent in One Nation speeches, further showing a post-colonial approach in how One Nation views its role and interactions with the environment.

One Nation is completely focused on utilizing the environment for the maximum benefit of humans, and wants to eliminate anything (foreign control, environmental regulations) that prevent this from happening. Thus, after the speeches were analyzed, One Nation offers the purest expression of postcolonial views in their interactions.

## **Wildrose Results**

The Wildrose party showed many themes confirming postcolonialism in speeches by the party leaders. The leaders often viewed the environment in terms of how it interacts with and impacts the economy and fossil fuel production. The speeches analyzed usually highlight the Wildrose opposition to policies put in place by the ruling government, such as the implementation of a carbon tax or shutting down coal fired generating plants. The Wildrose highlights how these actions will impact the economy,



without mentioning how they will benefit the environment. This shows how the Wildrose usually prioritizes the economy over the environment. This mindset that the environment is only there for us to utilize and take full advantage is typical of postcolonial thinking.

However, there are a few themes in opposition to postcolonialism present in Wildrose policy. For example, Wildrose leader Brian Jean called the environment beautiful and that there is nothing more important than the environment and making sure it remains a proper place for our children and future generations (Jean, 2015, and Jean, 2015). This statement and the language used shows, at least some consideration for the environment and its preservation for future generations.

However, themes confirming postcolonialism far outweigh themes in opposition to postcolonialism in Wildrose speeches. Great emphasis is put on how important the environment and its resources are to Alberta's economic prosperity, and little emphasis is placed on the inherent value of the environment. The Wildrose speeches also display predominant themes of how actions to protect the environment infringe on economic output and jobs, and how these actions should not be pursued. This points to the Wildrose party leaning heavily in the direction of confirming postcolonial themes and creating correlations with a mindset typical of post-colonial approaches.

## **UKIP Results**

UKIP party leader speeches display many themes confirming postcolonialism. They are very concerned about Britain having complete control over its environment and natural resources. UKIP wants control over its energy production and fishery industries, which the EU currently controls. They state that leaving the EU will allow the UK to restore sovereignty and control of its waters and exclusive economic zone. This will enable the UK to fully exploit its fisheries industry, which is worth a massive 6.3 billion pounds to the UK economy (Wookem, 2017). UKIP is concerned about UK fisheries because of the great benefit to the UK citizens and economy. This shows how UKIP monetizes the UK's natural resources and wants to conserve them because they have value to humans. In terms of environmental protection, UKIP wants to protect the environment to protect human health. For example, Julia Reid, UKIP Environment Spokesman said that an increase in diesel vehicles (because of EU policy) increases fine particulate matter and adversely affects human health (Reid, 2017). UKIP is also very skeptical of Climate Change. UKIP Member of European Parliament (MEP) Paul Nutall believes that the globe has not warmed in the last 10 years (Nutall, 2009). UKIP believes that Climate Change is a scam, and nobody really cares about or believes in Climate Change (UKIP Climate Change Wisdom, 2014). UKIP tends to somewhat demonize environmentalists and the green lobby by saying that they hate industry, growth and prosperity (Oakden, 2015). Examples like these, demonstrate that UKIP isn't really concerned at all with the threat of Climate Change and considers other issues (ex. economy) to be much more important. These actions all downplay the importance of protecting the environment.

However, UKIP also displays many themes in direct opposition to postcolonialism. UKIP speeches were full of language showing inherent respect for the natural environment and acting as custodians of the land in certain situations. UKIP is incredibly concerned with protecting and conserving its fisheries and territorial waters. They see Britain's fisheries as a priceless treasure, crown jewel, and a resource to be nurtured (Finch, 2015). They emphasize how British fishermen have been sustainably fishing in their waters for thousands of years, and it was foreign fleets that have destroyed the UK's precious waters and marine ecosystems (Finch, 2015). The British countryside is also romanticized and idealized in UKIP speeches. Threats to the countryside such as urbanization, habitat loss and resource extraction are highlighted in the speeches (Reid, 2017). UKIP seems to want to preserve the countryside for its own sake. UKIP is very concerned about its natural environment (marine waters and countryside) that are now under threats by various factors. This shows genuine concern and respect for the inherent value of the environment, which is not present in postcolonial themes regarding the environment.

UKIP has a high number of themes present in their policies both confirming and rejecting postcolonialism. Overall UKIP seems to be leaning slightly towards environmental policies in line with postcolonial themes. However, most of UKIP policies are based on demonstrating how valuable Britain's natural resources are, so that they can gain support for UK independence from the EU and regain control over the UK's natural resources. UKIP's environmental policies are in the context of achieving UK independence from the EU, and exploitation of the environment is not the

penultimate goal. The language used both in UKIP speeches and documents also explicitly show how much value UKIP places on the British environment, and how they want to preserve it for its own sake. UKIP has themes both confirming and denying postcolonialism, but the explicit language used to show inherent respect and value for the environment causes UKIP to lean towards the direction of denying themes of postcolonialism as they relate to the environment.

## **Front National Results**

There are hardly any themes supporting postcolonialism in Front National speeches. In one speech a party leader was speaking from a practical point of view, expressing the very real expensive cost to transitioning to renewable energy, and how it is currently not economically or technologically feasible, especially without nuclear energy (Rachline, 2015). This was the only theme found in the Front National policy that supported postcolonialism.

The Front National speeches displayed multiple themes in direct opposition to postcolonialism. These themes included inherent respect for the environment, citizens as custodians of the land and preserving the environment for future generations to enjoy. The Front National has vowed to protect the environment. They recognize that the environment is very important to the French people and incorporate environmental consideration into their policies. They tackle issues such as energy production by respecting ecological and climatic issues, as well as economic and technological ones.

The Front National also realizes that sustainable growth is essential for a successful future and a healthy planet and is prepared to act to make this a reality. These themes are all generally in direct opposition to themes of postcolonialism.

After speech analysis, the Front National displayed many more themes rejecting postcolonialism than supporting it. The Front National environmental policies are built around inherent respect for the natural environment. As a result, there were hardly any themes supporting postcolonialism. The Front National is leaning heavily towards countering ideas of postcolonialism in their environmental policies.

## **Comparative Results**

The speeches from the four parties all had a common theme of resisting external control and the desire to have complete control over decisions, so the party can best serve the people. One Nation rallies against United Nations (UN) control, the Front National and UKIP rally against EU control, and the Wildrose rally against federal control of provincial matters. The parties also are highly critical of the ruling government and feel like they can better reflect the will of the people. This is generally in line with populist thinking, which often manifests as a resistance to external influences over national sovereignty (Zaslove, 2008).

Speeches, among the various parties, differed from the document/policy analysis in that Climate Change was often directly addressed in the speeches, but not in the policy documents. The recurring themes of emphasizing how expensive climate action will be and denying the existence of Climate Change were present in the speeches, but not in the policy documents. Monetization of natural resources and protecting the environment to preserve its utility to humans were topics that came up a lot in the policy documents, but not in speeches by party leaders. This may be because these topics don't have widespread appeal or tarnish the public image of the party.

After the full data analysis was complete, it was determined that UKIP and Front National have more themes denying postcolonialism than the Wildrose and One Nation. UKIP had the most themes confirming as well denying postcolonialism in their policies, indicating a stronger emphasis on environmental policy in their party platform. The Front National showed many themes denying postcolonialism in their policies, always incorporating environmental protecting, consideration, and respect into their policies. The Wildrose had double and One Nation had over ten times as many themes confirming postcolonialism than they had denying postcolonialism.

Most of the parties wanted to protect the environment to preserve its utility to humans, except the Front National, which did not display this theme in their policy documents or speeches. Most of the parties also displayed varying levels of Climate Change scepticism, except for the Front National. However, One Nation and UKIP both

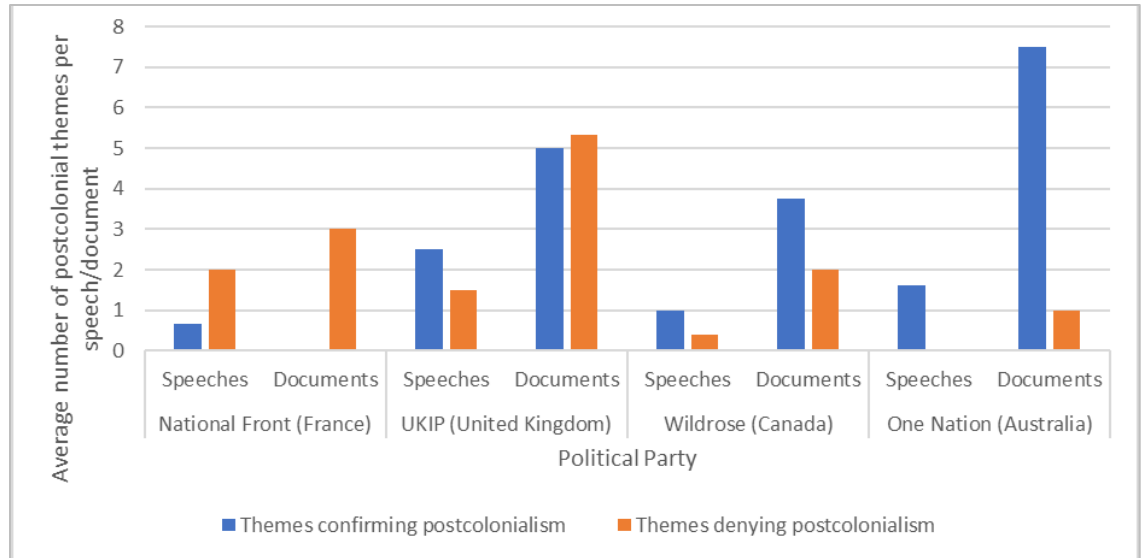
took this further by portraying Climate Change as a scam that isn't attributable to human actions. That said, all the parties had themes that both confirmed and denied themes of postcolonialism, but overall UKIP and Front National policies supported themes of postcolonialism much less, indicating a more respectful relationship to the environment than the Wildrose or One Nation.

The policies and platforms of the political parties analyzed are focused on the wellbeing of the citizen. Their environmental policies follow the same way of thinking, in how the environment can serve the needs of the people and how their actions in government will reflect the will of the people. The environmental policies differ between the four parties analyzed and display varying degrees of confirmation and opposition to postcolonial themes. This difference is due to a variety of factors, including differing cultures, societies and geographic locations. The Front National and UKIP (colonial countries with no history of settler colonialism) both displayed more opposition to postcolonial themes than the Wildrose and One Nation (settler countries with a history of settler colonialism). However, the presence or absence of settler colonialism cannot completely explain this difference in theme presence, because the Wildrose showed themes of protecting the environment for future generations to enjoy, which oppose typical themes of postcolonialism.

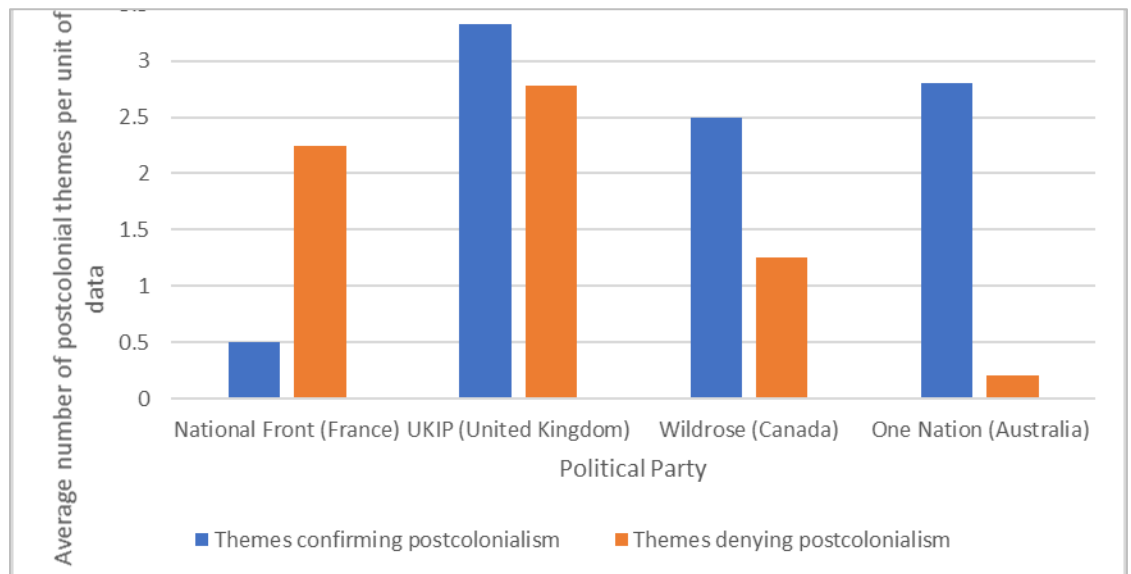
This research comes at an important time as populist parties increase in popularity all around the world. There is currently not much research on the environmental policies of right-wing populist political parties, and this research will help to fill that knowledge gap. Understanding how postcolonial and settler structures might affect the policies and discourse of populist parties on environmental issues could help government looking to work with populist parties on these policy issues.

Once the themes were averaged to account for the different number of speeches and documents analysed between the parties, the order of parties most supporting post colonial ideas to least supporting them are as follows: One Nation, Wildrose, UKIP, Front National. The two parties in the countries with histories of settler colonialism (Australia and Canada) showed more themes of postcolonialism than the parties in countries without settler colonial histories (the UK and France). The differences between the parties are shown in the charts below.

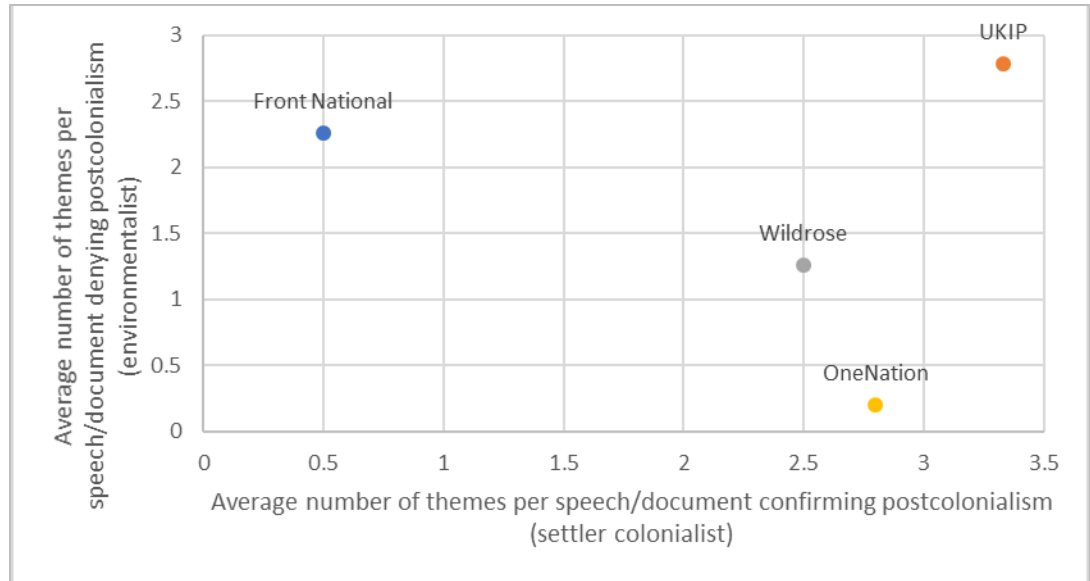




*Figure 1. Average number of postcolonial themes per speech/document. Bar chart showing the average number of postcolonial themes present in the political parties analyzed*



*Figure 2. Postcolonial theme average per unit of data (documents and speeches). Bar chart showing the average number of postcolonial themes present in the combined data (documents and speeches) of the political parties analyzed*



*Figure 3. Relative party position in terms of themes of postcolonialism present. Scatterplot showing the four political parties compared to each other in terms of themes confirming and denying postcolonialism present in their policies*

## Analysis

The findings from this research showed that there was a correlation between countries with histories of settler colonialism and political parties with themes confirming postcolonialism in their environmental policies. These political parties (One Nation and Wildrose) were in countries with a settler colonial past (Australia and Canada). The political parties that either lacked themes or displayed a balance between themes that confirmed and countered postcolonialism, the Front National and UKIP, were in countries without a settler colonial past (France and UK). My research into the parties' environmental policies shows this relationship, but it doesn't explain why the relationship exists. Many possible explanations exist, and these will be explored further in this section.

Mount & O'Brien state that postcolonial theory is a reaction to the activities of colonial nations and their imperial exploits, and that the social structures and issues of the former colonies/settler societies are a direct result of the actions of colonial countries (Mount & O'Brien, 2013). The social structures and society of the (former) colonies were set up in a way that served the colonial country. The goal was to extract as much wealth as possible from the colony and export that wealth back to the colonial country. This made colonial powers incredibly wealthy during this time and sapped wealth and prosperity from their colonies. Settler societies were created to ensure maximum utilization of the colony's resources. The environment was viewed as a resource to be exploited, and society was built around this mindset.

Mount & O'Brien state how societal structures in former colonies are a result of the actions of colonial countries (Mount & O'Brien, 2013). These existing structures seems to be reflected in the results of this research, given how the Wildrose and One Nation exhibit the most consistent display of postcolonial themes. The Wildrose and One Nation are still incredibly concerned with extracting the most (economic) value from the country's resources. The only change is that instead of benefiting a colonial power, this value now benefits the country's own citizens. These parties focus on maximizing economic output, and always point out the economic impacts of any suggested environmental regulation. The postcolonial themes present in the Wildrose and One Nation could be remnants of a settler colonial past, where these countries were viewed as revenue generators for their home country and little else. Resource reliance has continued after the colonies gained independence, and the themes of postcolonialism brought to the colony by colonial powers are still present in the environmental policies of its right-wing populist political parties (One Nation and Wildrose). These exploitative policies are creating many environmental issues in these countries (Australia and Canada).

To contrast the experience in Australia and Canada, the political parties in France and the UK do not have (as many) postcolonial themes present in their environmental policies. This may be because the UK and France did not have the history of settler colonialism that Australia and Canada had. The UK and France were never colonized, and the British/French were not purposefully brought there to exploit the environment on behalf of an external empire. They have lived there for generations and the

environmental policies of the parties analyzed show a great inherent respect for the environment. This was not the case in the Australia/Canada examples, where settlers were brought there to operate under structures specifically designed to exploit resources. Pichón demonstrates this by showing that environmentally exploitative practices were encouraged due to the abundance of cheap land. This was seen as one way to settle and exert control over the new colony (Pichón, 1996). This practice played out in Canada and Australia, as the settlers of both countries transformed their massive prairie biomes into productive agricultural areas. The government at the time supported this environmental transformation and those structures and approaches may have become imbedded in the relationship that developed between these settler nations and their environment. Settlers populating colonies in North America and Oceania were usually Europeans with a more dominant than harmonious relationship to the land in the colony. This led them to justify their exploitative practices, and this became a socially acceptable practice within settler culture. Pichón explains how settlers are often required to deforest or develop their land in order to obtain rights to the land, and that settlers could risk losing their land if they chose to preserve the forest instead of developing their land. The goal was to maximize the utility of the land (Pichón, 1996). This shows how settlers and settler culture had a very different relationship to the land than what was present in colonial nations. The deep connection settlers built with the land was based on settler colonial practices, which entailed strong themes of dominance and control over the environment. In contrast, the deep connection colonial nations developed with the land was much more harmonious and less focused on dominance and control of resources. The type of connections settlers developed with the land has resulted in a problematic

societal structure being put into place which made it easier and more acceptable for settlers to exploit (and subsequently damage) the environment. Current political parties appear to agree with this mindset, as the environmental policies of One Nation and the Wildrose allow for and seem to encourage maximum utilization of the environment for economic purposes (ex. agriculture). This research appears to confirm this, with themes confirming postcolonial approaches more common in the environmental policies of One Nation and the Wildrose than in UKIP and the Front National.

UKIP and the Front National still support the agriculture industry and British/French farmers, but they also acknowledge environmental needs/requirements and know that any development must be sustainable. Sustainable development is a central tenet to UKIP/Front National environmental policy (UKIP 2015 election manifesto..., 2015) (144 presidential commitments, 2017) whereas economic prosperity seems to be much more important in One Nation/Wildrose environmental policy. This difference in policy priorities may be due to a different perspective on environmental value between the two cases.

UKIP and the Front National also display greater acknowledgment of the inherent value of the environment, separate from economic gain. As a result, their policies have countering themes to postcolonialism which create more environmentally respectful practices. By framing their policies under themes of postcolonialism, this research shows that they are more absent in countries without a settler colonial history (UK/France)

while inherent respect for the environment is more absent and postcolonial themes are more present in countries with a settler colonial history (Australia/Canada). These results support Pichón's argument that settler culture continues to be concerned with the same approaches of utilizing and exploiting the cheap land and resources that helped shape the original purpose of those colonies.

If populist parties are attempting to voice the will of the common people (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015) then this research helps show that societal structures and environmental relationships established in settler countries during settler colonialism may be deeply ingrained in their national narrative. The settlers do not have any 'native' land to consider, so it may be more natural for those nations to continue the environmentally exploitative practices established during colonization. In contrast, environmental policy in the United Kingdom and France may be more environmentally friendly because these countries no longer have their colonies, so structures related to postcolonialism may have been easier to leave behind. The only thing left for Britain and France to interact with and create policies for is their native land, which they have developed an intimate respectful relationship with over many generations. In a sense, by decolonizing their empires, Britain and France may have freed themselves from the postcolonial structures that they left behind for their former colonies, regarding the environment. This may be why environmental policy, even among right wing populists, is more environmentally friendly in colonial countries (UK/France) than in settler countries (Australia/Canada). Indeed, for populists in Britain and France, protecting their "native land" actually plays toward populist sentiments of sovereignty and resisting foreign control of national

matters (UKIP 2015 election manifesto..., 2015) (144 presidential commitments, 2017). These sentiments of resisting foreign control and influence can be one attribute linking right-wing populist thinking and postcolonial theory (particularly themes in opposition to postcolonialism). Populism in settler countries seems to view the environment mostly as a resource to be utilized, so policy is typically less environmentally friendly. Right-wing populism is interesting to study in this context, because it is a grassroots movement and often conveys a strong sense of nationalist pride. The stance populist parties take on environmental issues may be indicative of how the whole society about these same issues. Studying populist environmental policy may also be a good general indicator of the overall position societies and countries take regarding environmental issues. Using populist parties in this research made it possible to explore if society is still influenced by a history settler colonialism, using the presence of postcolonial themes in populist environmental policy as an indicator.

These are important factors for predicting the effects that populist parties might have on environmental policymaking, going forward. This research also shows how the effects may be regionally specific. For instance, a populist party coming into power in Canada or Australia might have a far different effect environmentally than one coming into power in Britain or France.



## **Limitations**

Some of the limitations of this research were the amount of specific environmental policies that I was able to find for the parties I analyzed (specifically the Front National). This led to more policy by certain parties being analyzed (such as UKIP) and subsequently more postcolonial themes being found. The increased number of themes may not be because of a greater influence of a settler colonial history on the party/country, but because the individual party is more/less focused on environmental issues. Many other unknown issues could also be causing this discrepancy in theme amount. The amount of documents/speeches analyzed for each individual party may have influenced my results somewhat. However, I was able to reduce this limitation by taking the average number of themes present per document/speech for each party. This made the data more reliable and comparisons between the parties more accurate.

Another limitation is the use of the former Wildrose party, a provincial party, compared to three other national political parties. However, I believe this was addressed by explaining how the policies of the Wildrose party may influence a mainstream political party, the Progressive Conservatives, as the two parties merged to create the United Conservative party last year.

## Conclusion

One Nation environmental policy showcased the strongest affinity for themes confirming postcolonialism, followed by the Wildrose. Both of these parties are from settler nations. A possible explanation, as discussed in the analysis of the results, for this apparent link between postcolonial themes and settler nations is that settlers had no deep connection to the land they were colonizing and could therefore justify their environmentally exploitative behaviour typical of postcolonialism. After these nations gained independence, the settler colonial social structure may have remained and continued to influence modern environmental policy. This may be why One Nation and Wildrose environmental policy has so many themes confirming postcolonialism.

The Front National displayed the strongest presence of themes countering postcolonialism in their environmental policy. UKIP policy showed a relatively equal balance between themes confirming and countering postcolonialism. However, UKIP also leaned towards countering postcolonialism in their environmental policy because their themes confirming postcolonialism were framed in the context of independence from the EU (control of the environment to protect it from damage by the EU). The language used in UKIP policy also showed deep inherent respect for the environment and a harmonious relationship with nature. One possible explanation for the Front National and UKIP (whom are both from colonial, but non-settler nations) having more themes countering postcolonialism is that once France and Britain decolonized their empires, it may have been easier to leave behind the environmentally exploitative postcolonial

structures that they had built up in their colonies. This would have allowed them to create more environmentally friendly policies than policy created under the structures established in settler nations (Australia/Canada).

One of the important findings from this research is that it highlights how populist parties will create different environmental policies with different priorities depending on what country they are located in. Many factors (such as a history of settler colonialism) need to be addressed when analyzing populist environmental policy, and this analysis must happen on a case by case basis.

This research cannot explain why right-wing populist parties create the environmental policies they do, or how they will create their environmental policies based on their country's history. However, it does add to the conversation about if a country's history (of settler colonialism) has any lasting impact on current environmental policy, when viewed through the lens of right-wing populist political parties. Themes of postcolonialism as they relate to the environment are present in populist political policy, and the potential link between these themes in populist environmental policy and a history of settler colonialism in the country needs to be further explored and researched. Determining if a correlation exists between settler colonialism and themes of postcolonialism in populist environmental policy could help us to better understand populist parties and perhaps predict what their environmental policies may look like should they come to power.

Potential future research topics include determining if there is a possible causation between a history of settler colonialism and the presence of themes confirming postcolonialism in populist environmental policies. Further research could include determining if predictions can be made about a populist party's environmental policy based on the country's history of settler colonialism. The research could be continued by determining what impact the policy will have on political discourse in the country.

This is a relatively understudied area of research, and the method of analysis couldn't really be based on any previous studies. Therefore, most of the coding methodology had to be developed before and during the data analysis. This adds new material to this area of study and can be used in future research. Future studies could use the framework developed in this research to carry out similar studies and determine what impact a settler colonial history may have on different/mainstream political parties. The impact settler colonialism may have on different policy areas (ex. economic/social policy) could also be studied using this framework.

These findings could be used to help the public, other political parties and the government to better understand underlying themes and possible imbedded structures of environmental policies belonging to populist parties, and perhaps even mainstream parties. This is significant work because the priorities of populist parties are often focused on other issues (immigration, security, etc.). While their environmental policies are not well advertised, they do influence political discourse. Should populist parties

come to power, their environmental policies will also translate into tangible political actions.

One real world example of this is the changes the populist Trump Administration has made to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and US climate policy since it came to power in the United States. The Trump Administration appointed Scott Pruitt, a known climate skeptic who has been openly critical of the EPA, to head the department. There have also been cuts to the EPA budget proposed (rumoured to be as high as 25%) and many people (such as those in the National Resources Defense Council) believe the budget cuts are an attack by the Trump Administration on the EPA's very existence (Environmental advocacy group monitors Trump's EPA for changes, 2017). The Trump Administration also decided to pull out of the Paris Climate Accord, citing economic reasons (Sevastopulo, Jopson & Clark, P., 2017). This shows firsthand how much influence populist parties can have over environmental matters, and how urgent it is for populist environmental policy to be better understood.

With the rise of populist parties around the world, understanding the underlying themes and structures of their policies will help others better engage in productive dialogue with the populist parties on environmental issues. These findings could help to foster more efficient communication and insight, leading to more meaningful policy solutions on environmental issues.

## **Appendix**

The only tool that will be used in the research will be Microsoft Excel, which was described in Chapter 3: Methods

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