Natural News, State Discourses and The Canadian Arctic

Heather N. Nicol

This article seeks to show how state-centred geopolitical rationales develop, shift and change, using a case study of media depictions of the Canadian Arctic. The author first examines popular conceptions and issues of Arctic issues as conveyed to southern Canadians through news articles in 1970-79, 1989, 1999 and 2009, and then highlights and deconstructs recurring and popular 'tropes', or literary devices, throughout the years, from security/sovereignty, to environment to economic development.

Introduction

The process of climate change has been given geopolitical agency, and a rich discourse on climate change has created a series of compelling and urgent Arctic 'threat assessments'. These threat assessments have gained traction with actors with broad regional and territorial interests. Dittmer et al (2011), argue that this represents a trend and is part of an upsurge in space-making practices in the region which access a great variety of representations, discourses and interventions by any number of actors--including foreign ministries, militaries, corporations, scientific bodies, academic researchers, and others. Because of this, they argue, we should look beyond those voices which speak to the unusual, heroic and spectacular, to find a geopolitical analysis which is better tuned to translocal and everyday practices'. These everyday practices, they suggest, lead us to a much richer understanding of why, the Arctic today has become such an important topic in national and international politics.

Heather N. Nicol is a Professor in the Department of Geography at Trent University, Canada.

While Dittmer' et al.'s point is taken, in exploring the everyday world of Canadian media texts, I suggest that the Arctic continues to be represented, on a daily basis, by a foundational geopolitical context promoting nation-building through state-centred discourses. Moreover, if Stuhl (2013), is correct in his assessment that a series of continuous stories position Arctic spaces in relation to science, sovereignty and technology – and I believe that he is – one reason why the state remains so clearly in focus is the constant interplay between these media discourses, more general perceptions of the Arctic and the understanding of 'state' as a singular actor. Indeed, as Penrose (2011) reminds us more generally, the 'idea' of state is constantly recycled by non-governmental agency and private actors outside of the purview of state itself. It results from non-state agency's conscious selection of familiar and readily identifiable national icons for the purposes of territorial representation, for an imagined national audience. These iconic representations, in turn, brand the outcome through the lens of the nation-building discourses they reference. This is not to diminish the importance of other ways of understanding the North, outside of a state-centred perspective, nor is it mean to diminish the power of other points of reference such as indigenous texts and documents. Instead, it is a point made to assist us in understanding why non-state perspectives, like indigenous versions of Arctic sovereignty, are not well-served through normative channels like forms of media which serve a national audience.

Over the history of North American exploration and state-making, a series of geopolitical perspectives on the North have contributed to the positioning of the Canadian Arctic within a national narrative. These have been well described by a series of authors and in a series of Canadian cultural and historical studies (Berland, 2009; Grant, 2010; Coates et al., 2008; Stuhl, 2013). They also show how the Canadian Arctic was captured in different eras, through a series of colonial, naturalized and ideological geopolitical discourses, from the Victorians through the extended organic metaphors of organic state and evolutionary 'science', to the ideological stand-off between superpowers, during the Cold War. Such discourses lead to the privileging of 'science' and the mastery of nature, as well as the continuation of colonial representations of empire and then Cold War 'super-empire' (Stuhl, 2013; Grant 2010). By the mid-20th century, they had positioned the Canadian Arctic in ways which reinforced its role as an economic and military frontier for both the Canadian state and as well as for the international community more broadly (Coates et al., 2008; Stuhl, 2013; Farish 2010). Today, in the early 21st century, however, neoliberal and globalizing discourses which inform the world economy are resonating in the North, and are being met by both neo-realist assessments of state sovereignty and security on one hand (see Borgerson, 2008 and Dittmer et al., 2011 for discussion), and a resurgence of indigenous rights discourses on the other (see Nicol, 2010). On the whole, however, such discourses are being presented in the media as threats: threats to sovereignty, threats to security, threats to economic viability.

Indeed, while there are many different ways of positioning the Arctic (Dittmer et al., 2011), according to most contemporary media accounts, as we shall see in this article, a 'naturalized popularized geopolitics' fixated on changing climate and environment and the impact of this change upon state interests, has prevailed in the media texts which report upon the Canadian Arctic. In doing so, however, these naturalized and popularized texts recycle enduring ideas about natural agency in support of state-centred agendas: such as the exercise of sovereignty and the promotion

of economic development through corporate megaprojects. In this sense, although the media does not invent the neo-realist context in which it tends to define all things Arctic, it is nonetheless quite culpable in supporting and reinforcing these types of geopolitical assemblages. Again, here Penrose's (2011) assessment of the critical interplay between state and non-state agency in reproducing foundational state-centred imagery is enlightening.

Querying the Texts: Some Methods and Results

This article discusses the role of media in orienting geopolitical assessments concerning the Canadian North. It speaks, theoretically, to questions of how audiences are constructed which enable security 'threats' to move from an isolated performative act of elites and decision-makers, to a more general arena of interest (see Balzacq, 2011; Buzan, Waever and de Wilde, 1997; or c.a.s.e. collective, 2006, for example), and the representation of threats in neo-realist ways (see Dittmer et al., 2011; Borgerson, 2008). The print media does not create the security threat, but rather contextualizes it and embeds it within normative day-to-day understandings of news and world events. But in doing so, it uses a very specific discourse, involving key phrases and ideas, which it is hoped will resonate with a broad audience.

In order to understand how discourses concerning Arctic issues and threats are constructed, particularly with reference to potentially neo-realist state-centred understandings of the North in Canada, in this article I undertake the collective compilation of key words and coded messages obtained from all major Canadian daily newspapers over a thirty year study period. While not wishing to suggest that such questions should be reduced simply to quantitative evidentiary frameworks, it is nonetheless important to understand the relationship between what are arguably popular neo-realist geopolitics reflected in media accounts, and broader geopolitical assessments and securitization discourses. To these ends, I incorporate the perspective of southern Canada's daily newspapers and their reportage on the Arctic since 1970 using a modified content analysis approach.

The rationale is to identify and trace the changing foundations of what I consider to be a publically articulated or popular geopolitics of southern Canada, as reflected through media assessments of the North. I have created samples which include the entirety of the 1970s, one year samplings of articles at the end of each decade from 1989 to 2009, as well as all stories published in Canadian major daily newspapers in 2013, up to time of writing (Table 1). Key words and themes in each story are identified, counted and compared, and the results triangulated with a body of secondary literature and political texts to deepen the understanding of the content of the assemblage of discourses so identified.

The overall results from this type of content analysis (Table 1) suggest that that current 'Arctic geopolitics' in the Canadian context reflect the rise of a rather stable hegemony of geopolitical discourses. As Table 1 indicates, four key types of stories are consistently identified over a 40-year period since the 1970s. They are: those concerned with economic and resource development, those concerned with science and environment, those concerned with military and security issues and those concerned with the North as a cultural context or even public culture context (books, films, documentaries, museum exhibitions and other cultural positioning of Arctic materials).

Date	1970-79	1989	1999	2009	2013
Economic Development	**66**	**19**	**6**	**8**	**12**
Science and Environment	**7**	**19**	**22**	**26**	**14**
Military, Sovereignty and Security	**5**	**12**	**-**	**14**	**9**
Culture	**5**	**7**	**10**	**6**	**4**
History and Exploration	**2**	**4**	**10**	**5**	**4**
Land Claims and Inuit Communities	**2.2**	**5**	**15**	**5**	**3**
Disaster and Rescue	**3.2**	**5**	**1**	**4**	**31**
International North	**3**	**11**	**2**	**1**	**1**
Travel	**1.1**	**9**	**10**	**15**	**4**
Other	**5**	**9**	**24**	**18**	**18**
	99.5	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Table 1: Categories of ways in which the 'Arctic' appeared in news stories 1970-79, 1989, 1999, 2009: number of articles and percent per category per temporal period (Source, Canadian Newsstand, 1970-79; 1989; 1999; 2009)

As Figure 1 indicates, however, while these geopolitical discourses which represent the broader tropes of science, security, economy and culture are consistently present, they are also represented in different percentages and combinations over time: entangled, recombinant and recycled over the forty year period. For example, economic development was almost the exclusive lens for framing the North in the 1970s. It is also important today, but the percentages of such stories have declined as other frames for representation, or tropes, have become more important. This does not mean that the North has ceased to be an important source of economic speculation - anything but. Rather it means that other narratives have become entailed in this understanding of the North as a resource place.

Figure 1: Comparison of frequency of reporting on specific themes in 'Arctic' news (percentage of articles on the Arctic), at approximate 10-year intervals, over a 40 year cycle.

In other words, economic reportage has been supplemented and become entangled with other frames of reference, including assessments of territory, environment and security. The evidence of this is the fact that between 1970 and 1979 – a *nine year* period – 252 stories on the Arctic were published in Canadian newspapers. Of these 66 per cent, or just over half, framed the Arctic through an economic or resource lens (on average about 10 per year, or 1 per month). By 2013, however, over one thousand articles *per year* were published on the Arctic, and of these just over 100 framed the Arctic in economic ways: on average just under 10 per month, nearly double the coverage of the entire decade of the 1970s. It was not so much that economic reportage declined, but that other frames of reference grew.

Assembling a Discourse: The 1970s Media Accounts

The Emerging Themes

For southern media in the 1970s, it was difficult to imagine the Arctic as more than an abstract frontier for political and economic development. It was, for all intents and purposes, the edge of state. In April of 1979, for example, Carey French asked a Canadian *Globe and Mail* readership 'how safe are Arctic resources?' But she pitched this question in reference to the frozen, rather than melting, state of the Northwest Passage waters (French, 1979: B1). Referencing Soviet submarine capabilities in Arctic waters, and reporting on a presentation to the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee by security expert Harriet Critchley, French wrote: "taking into account the growing energy-related activity in the area, the logical solution for Canada is the acquisition of multiple-purpose equipment and multiple tasking of personnel… Plans for the construction of new patrol frigates – traditionally thin-hulled vessels – could incorporate some kind of ice capability, thus allowing Canada to plug the Davis Strait hole in the GIUK gap [Greenland, Iceland and the British Isles] (ibid).

Although Soviet submarines still commanded attention, and this was a period where fascination with Cold War topics were popular in cultural representations; it was the potential for energy resources, liquid natural gas and oil that riveted the media's attention in the Arctic. Despite the fact that the Cold War was well underway, less than one per cent of newspaper articles in the 1970s combined references to the Arctic with military themes. Instead, these media texts were more commonly associated within two discursive categories: economy and environment.

A Colonial Economy

As we have already seen, by the late 1970s, the Arctic was more generally framed by the media (through a series of texts, articles and images) as an economic frontier. But it was a frontier increasingly linked to the south, in ways which played to a burgeoning Canadian sense of national pride, a public history focused on 'staples', and a state-cultivated lust for natural resources. The exploits of Dome Petroleum, in mastering the icy waters of the Arctic Ocean, for example, were late 20th century narratives that rivalled those of heroic Victorian explorers. For example, in framing the

report of the deployment of the *Kigoriak,* in September 1979, for Dome Petroleum, French again wrote, and more enthusiastically than ever:

> Canadian Marine Drilling Ltd., the shipping arm of Calgary based Dome Petroleum Ltd., is out to set a new record for the length of time spent by an icebreaker in the Beaufort Sea this winter. The ship that will attempt to ride the Arctic onslaught is the, Kigoriak, a new addition to the Canmar fleet with an ice-handling rating of Arctic Class IV; second in power only to the Canadian Coast Guard's Louis St. Laurent. With the shipyard paint still fresh on her sides, the vessel left Halifax a week ago on her way north (French, 1979: B10).

Like French's reportage, many of the other contemporaneous articles which framed the North for southerners in the 1970s did so with reference to the point of view of 'singular' state interests. To some extent this was because between the 1950s and late 1970s, northern economic development boomed, but was heavily reliant upon the state (Bone, 2009). Any number of mineral and energy developments, like the Pine Point in the Northwest Territories, the Faro mine in the Yukon, or Normal Wells were funded or subsidized with federal funds, although most of this development was focused upon sub-Arctic rather than Arctic regions. But it was also a highly 'colonial' discourse.

Indeed, if we further interrogate these data, we find that within the category of economic development, newspaper stories were mostly still concerned with oil and liquid natural gas, and were preoccupied with the news of development on these fronts. Positioning the Arctic more prominently in relation to southern Canada, it countered a discourse which otherwise positioned Inuit as minor actors and "others". Indeed, a negligible number (only about 2.5 per cent) of articles on the Arctic were concerned with the indigenous peoples who actually lived in the region. Moreover, few of these articles recognized the existence of two worlds in the North. Inuit societies were generally described as under threat and malingering, desperately in need of jobs and economic development. This discourse opened the doors to large-scale corporate interests, but also to a renewed debate about the relationship between identity, sovereignty, resources and, indeed, territorial and military security. The 'frontier/homeland' dichotomy, which was to become reflected in the moniker for Chief Justice Berger's (1977) report on the Mackenzie Valley pipeline inquiry, clearly reacted to this problem, but it was a problem mainly pitched in environmental terms outside of media circles. Indeed, the concept of 'frontier and homeland' had more traction from a state-centred, southern Canada environmental perspective than from a post-colonial perspective.

Environment

While the media focused almost exclusively on oil and liquid natural gas bonanzas to be had in the Canadian Arctic, *The Nature of Things*, a CBC environmental programme, devoted an entire programme to raising the alarm about the impacts of oil spills on fragile Arctic environments in 1979, a programme reported on in the Globe and Mail, under the headline: "CBC stacks oil deck against oil industry" (*Globe and Mail*, 1979: P16). While not entirely subscribing to the environmental alarm raised, the reporter had the wits to know that this *was* news. Moreover, in context of the positioning of indigenous versus environmental homeland, the CBC reporter found it surprising that the program said nothing about the impact of such a disaster on indigenous communities in the Arctic.

Throughout 1979, a series of stories about the destructive potential impacts of oil exploitation in the Arctic were released, some, for example, commenting upon the difficulty of capping oil spills in the event of an accident in offshore drilling as if it were merely an inconvenience. None worried about indigenous communities. For example, the Globe and Mail reported in 1979, that:

> For offshore drilling operations in the Beaufort Sea and the Eastern Arctic, the major stumbling blocks are ice and a short drilling season. The latter, because of the ice, would make drilling a relief well in the event of a blowout virtually impossible for almost a year. This would mean a runaway well would gush uninterrupted under thick layers of ice until work crews could get into the area at the start of the next drilling season (Malarek, 1979: P19).

Environmental worries in the press were few and far between: stories of potential disaster was less well covered than those which promised oil rigs and platforms. Much like the Cold War era, environment and nature were non-human agents to master and overcome. Indeed, of all the newspaper stories accessed through the Canadian Newsstand data base between 1970 and 1979, only about 7 per cent discussed environmental issues at all, compared to nearly 10 times that number which referenced the Arctic from an economic resource perspective. Indeed, it was in this context that Berger (1977) coined the phrase 'homeland/frontier' as his way of positioning local versus corporate and state interests in the North.

But this was not the entire story, of course. Outside of the press, a volley of reports, stories and more widely circulated texts by a number of scholars and practitioners resulted, beginning with Thomas Berger's report on the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline in the 1970s (Berger, 1977). Such reports and approaches identify the special nature of Canada's Arctic and sub-Arctic regions, the issues and challenges to its human populations, and the potential threat of large resource-oriented extraction projects like the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline. These early assessments rightly identified the potential for large scale environmental destruction and unalterable change to indigenous lifestyles in the north, counterpoising the politics of environment, in this region against the politics of resource extraction industries. In this way, the perception of the Canadian North as a resource frontier pitted environmental protection against economic development provided an entry from which indigenous perspectives could be inserted into a southern Canadian worldview which otherwise saw little but an empty, resource rich, northern space. Indeed, for Stuhl (2013), the 1970s stories were quite contradictory, but the hegemony of 'economy discourses' reflected the hegemony of a state-centred perspective. It is this understanding of a state-centred, although unstable assemblage of Arctic discourses, which the media seemed also to reflect.

> [E]cologist Cowan McTaggart described the human 'appetite for energy and minerals' as unleashing untold ecological and human consequences across the world, and potentially throughout the north. Scientists pointed to these concerns to advocate for the expansion of wilderness areas on the Beaufort Sea coast – namely to grow the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (legislated into being in 1960) into an internationally protected area to prevent the most-likely route for pipelines out of the region...Jean Chretien redressed ecological protection as colonialism, because locking up the north as a sanctuary would squash Inuit aspirations for jobs and leading roles in oil extraction. Development had

become both imperialism and decolonization, and conservation had become the tried and true trope of 'neglect and indifference' (Stuhl, 2013: 110-111).

Nation-Building and the National Glue

As Stuhl (2013) reminds us in his analysis of the 'new North' rhetoric of the 20th century, there was a considerable degree of 'déjà vu' in the Arctic media discourses constructed in the 1970s. Indeed, in ways very similar to the Victorian era, in the 20th and even today, this 1970s era saw the Arctic as a key piece in the building of nationhood in ways which are concerned less with acquiring territory, and more with the symbolic importance of that territory for larger nation-building agendas. This nation-building discourse was not lost on southern Quebeckers. Their provincial government, much like other southern Canadian governments, moved north in the 1970s. For Québec it was to the James Bay and Northern Québec, to claim resources and control over a vast hinterland which was crucial to Québec's own sovereignty agenda. The outcome, the Northern Québec and James Bay Agreement (NQJBA), was mixed. Despite its disastrous environmental and socio-economic legacy for indigenous peoples, the massive industrial complex energy it spawned was, at the time, seen as iconic by non-indigenous Canadians, reflecting the potential of the North to produce unlimited resources, once its indigenous claims had been settled.

It was not just the state, state actors, large corporations with political clout, or state agencies that constructed state-oriented Arctic discourses. "Can the North be the glue that holds Canada together", a younger Franklyn Griffiths mused in the Globe and Mail in 1979, asking if the imagery of the North and its potential for nation-building could overcome the divisions imposed by a French and English Canada? (Griffiths, 1979: P7). Such narratives built upon the idea of North, or the mythical North (Grace, 2001), much in the same way that Victorians, for example, saw the exploration of these icy climes as a metaphorical testing ground for both manhood and national virility (see Dittmer et al., 2011; Dodds, 2002). But instead of 'manhood' and 'mastery' the issue was overcoming cultural and linguistic diversity.

'Other' Tropes

While we have seen that Soviet submarines were in some cases an issue of concern, during the 1970s, overall only approximately 5 per cent of Canadian newspaper articles on the Arctic focused upon the Arctic as a field for defence and sovereignty. The process of successfully negotiating comprehensive land claims and articles focusing on Inuit society; as well as potential disasters stemming from oil spills and related economic development issues comprised another 5 per cent combined, while the 'international North' – that is the definition of the Canadian Arctic in ways which recognized the activities and interests of neighbours' – was negligible (1 per cent). A further 5 per cent was also made up of articles where Arctic was simply a term used as a metaphor: for brand names or for issues actually unrelated to the North.

Overall, then, the discourses promoted by newspaper articles in this era, while mindful of technology, climate and the role of science in the north, were clearly not framed by naturalized actors which authorized development or securitization by virtue of environmental relationships as is the case today. Rather, the discourses were counterpoised, and aligned with either the exploitation of

natural resources, or the need for protection from resource exploitation 'accidents'. For the media, it was the relationship between oil, energy and national policy that took precedence over environmental concerns, contributing to a strong state narrative which attempted to align north with south through corporate interests, or more accurately interacting with state-centred discourses to give meaning to the host of representations it encountered in the North. Still, if the role of the Arctic and its environment in state building and public discourse in this era was not substantial, the Arctic itself was a mere sub-text in a larger spectrum of state-building discourses and interests more generally focused elsewhere: on relations with the United States, for example. Of the approximately 33,000 articles published in Canadian major daily newspapers on the Arctic since 1970, in fact, less than one per cent came from this entire decade, reinforcing William's (2013) observation that the power relations embedded in Arctic discourses are neither homogeneous and unchanging, nor do they run exclusively between the Arctic and the Canadian south.

An International North? The Arctic in the 1980s and 1990s

'Recombinant' Discourse

By the 1980s, and well into the 1990s, a shifting focus of concern saw the rise of an Arctic media discourse framed through the lens of environmental cooperation, emphasizing a series of treaties, agreements and institutions which forged what has subsequently been called 'the circumpolar North', or the 'international North (Keskitalo, 2004; Heininen, 2004; Heininen & Nicol, 2007). Table 1 references the fact that by 1989, the main interest of the media clearly revolved around five general themes. These included environmental issues, like ozone depletion and climate change, PCBs and oil spills (19 per cent of articles dwelt on these themes); economic development issues, mainly related to energy development and pipelines (another 19 per cent of articles); sovereignty and security threats, most generally related to the Conservative Government's reluctance to purchase nuclear submarines and international activity in the Arctic (12 per cent of stories); and a corresponding interest in the way in which the Arctic was increasingly the subject of international cooperation and negotiation (11 per cent of stories deal with the international North).

While the percentages and emphasis are variable, what actually emerges in the 1980s is stream of media texts which reflect both continuation, as well as a recombination, of 1970s tropes: environment and science, economic development and military security and sovereignty. One of the triggers for recombination and recycling of persistent themes in 1989, however, was the way in which a shifting international context appeared to be changing the 'great game'. In context of the end of the Cold War, the media was fascinated with the relationship between Canada and the international community (specifically the Soviet Union), while still suspicious of its military interests. Unlike the previous decade, however, the media began to focus upon the environment, and indeed by 1989, the theme of environmental protection was increasingly represented in the media: almost 20 per cent of all articles referenced environment, most in context of its vulnerability, the impact of the Cold War on Arctic environments (especially Soviet Arctic), and the need for cooperation.

Indeed, by 1989, it is clear that some significant shifts had begun to occur in the public discourses of the Canadian Arctic (Table 1), and the assemblages by which the region was understood to represent

the 'state'. This was particularly true with the way in which 'environment' was positioned as a means of engaging southern Canada with the Arctic. The sense of the Arctic as a testing ground for masculinity and state prowess had changed considerably, and was being increasingly defined in terms of climate change. Scientists were more actively speculating about the way in which greenhouse gases and industrial pollution were affecting global environments, and this speculation found its way to the press. Of the some '1000 plus' articles on the Arctic, in 1989, for example, one of the largest percentages dealt with the subject of a changing Arctic environment. No longer a testing ground, the north signalled instead a shifting ground with potential environmental, political, economic and cultural fallout. The threat of climate change, and the link between climate change and Arctic human security broadly defined, was increasingly referenced.

This was the decade which saw the beginning of the Rovaniemi process, leading to the subsequent establishment of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy and the Arctic Council in the 1990s. 'Environment' became a topic for state action, through a series of international meetings regarding 'peaceful cooperation' in the North, which was subscribed to by the Canadian government. Indeed, various scholars have recorded the history of this international cooperation which led to the founding of the Arctic Council in 1996 (Heininen & Nicol, 2007; Axworthy, 2012; Keskitalo, 2004). The lens of 'state' was evoked through the international cooperation which the Rovaniemi process of the 1980s subsequently triggered. It was initially coupled with a changing Cold War paradigm to create a new awareness of environment, human security, and demilitarization (Heininen, 2004). At the time, Griffiths reminded nervous Canadians, through the pages of the Toronto Star, that the "Soviets" had proven to be good allies with respect to northern security and environment:

> Canada and the Soviet Union, despite belonging to opposed military alliances, have long had a good deal in common in their approach to Arctic waters in international law. For example, Moscow helped to block efforts of the Nixon administration to prevent Canada from enacting the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act of 1970 following the unauthorized voyages of U.S. icebreakers accompanying the tanker Manhattan in Canadian Arctic waters. As well, Canadian and Soviet diplomats worked together in the mid-1970s to procure Article 234 of the Law of the Sea Treaty, which gives coastal states special rights of non-discriminatory regulation over adjacent ice-covered waters. Indeed, were Canada ever required to defend its Arctic sovereignty claim before the World Court, we would definitely want a Soviet jurist on the panel of judges that heard the case" (Griffiths, 1989: A17).

An interest in environment was subsequently reflected in the press more generally. Not only did the number of articles published on the Arctic in this decade grow with respect to a state-based environmental agenda, so did the idea that Canadian Arctic might be understood from a post-Cold War lens. For the Canadian Government this meant a focus upon 'human security', and subscription to a larger international agenda on the circumpolar North (Heininen & Nicol, 2007; Kesitalo, 2004). Such a reorientation was in keeping with a growing international consensus which, beyond the purview of both the media and state, included landmark texts like the Brundtland Report (Williams, 2010; Heininen & Nicol, 2007; UN, 1987). Still, the decade closed with a lamentation that a burgeoning environmental awareness, throughout Canada and not just in the North, was poorly presented in the governance agenda of the state, although an interest in Arctic environmentalism

had been fuelled by the Exxon Valdez disaster (see Table 1: Disaster and Rescue, where a higher number of incidents for this year stem from the Exxon Valdez incident).[1]

It is important, however, not to overstate the shift in perception and representation. While a new understanding of military civilian relations was emergent within the Arctic region, the complex interweaving of a military and mastery of climate discourse as a corollary of the Arctic 'science' discourse still remained important if somewhat less so than in previous times. For example, an article reporting on a military exercise on Ellesmere Island, using the aptly titled "Icy cold, polar bears Arctic test for soldiers", repeated the gendered and colonial texts, and observed that "Warrant Officer Larry Hartenberger of Regina said 'outdoor challenges like this are good for the fellows', and that Brig.-Gen. C.A. Walker, commander of the Prairie Militia, said the exercise helps to reinforce Canadian sovereignty in the North…'It's a way of showing the flag and demonstrating the capability of our troops to put down anywhere in Canada regardless of the terrain or temperatures.' (Toronto Star, 1989).

Re-Framing Indigenous Peoples' Interests

'Showing the flag', however, became an increasingly qualified exercise in the late 1980s. The discursive shift from Cold War to post-Cold War geopolitics left some wondering just why nuclear submarines were necessary, and why military capacity was necessary for sovereignty. Along with the rise of an international context for environmental negotiations in the Arctic, for example, came a corresponding increase in the way in which the Arctic was constructed as a potential nuclear-free zone, and one in which Inuit peoples played a role within sovereignty and security discourses. *The Toronto Star* noted, in December, 1985 for example, that:

> Inuit spokesman, Mark Gordon, suggested that to exercise sovereignty on the ground in this Arctic of ours, there should be more reliance on the people who have actually lived there for centuries, the Inuit. As he noted, they can live more easily in the cold than the troops from the warm south, and whereas tanks can make only 21 kilometres a day over ice and snow, Inuit dog teams could cover twice that distance, and are doing it now as the small Canadian Rangers teams that scout the territory as best they can (Walker, 1985).

This new sensitivity to indigenous actors was really not so new, however, as Exner-Pirot (2013) reminds us, its legacy is larger, related to changes occurring throughout the circumpolar North during the era previous to the Rovaniemi process. It involved not only Inuit, but Sami and Russia's indigenous peoples, and by the time of the internationalization of Northern discourses reflected in the late 1980s, indigenous interests were embedded within the AEPS. While the Canadian media reframed the issues in the context of national concerns, addressing cooperation, indigenous participation and sovereignty as if it was freshly minted in the Canadian North, such discourses were well-developed elsewhere (Exner-Pirot, 2013).

The 1990s: 'Environment' Continues

Collective Narratives

The growing importance of environment as the *prima facia* scientific concern continued in the 1990s. While earlier 'mastery' of cold climates has driven Arctic explorers and expeditions, by the 1990s the

theme was clearly 'stewardship'. Table 1 suggests that in the late 1990s, the most important way in which the Arctic was framed for southern audiences was in environmental terms: namely through stories and articles focusing upon climate change and thinning ozone layers. Throughout the 1990s, culminating in 1999, this focus on a 'shifting environment' featured in stories referenced scientific expeditions, state-funded scientific research, and to a limited degree, governmental responsibility for remediation, and other state-centred narratives: the Canadian Government was chastised, for example, for its underfunding of Arctic research. Weather, ocean currents and ice were the central features of these science and environmental stories. Narratives of mastery and the heroics of exploration were not nearly as prominent in real time stories, but were very much referenced by a significant emphasis upon travel and history. For example, the media followed closely the travel narratives of Pamela Coulston, whose missives were titled in ways which referenced heroic explorers of the past. On July 25, 1999, for example, Coulston's contribution to the Gazette was entitled: "Nature's mighty hand: We camp at the base of Mount Herodier, exhausted from hauling our gear across the uneven ice. I think about travelers who have died here, and know we are at the mercy of the land: [Final Edition]".

Along similar lines, *The Gazette* opened her article with an explanatory paragraph to the effect that: "[w]riter Pamela Coulston and photographer Mike Beedell are circumnavigating Bylot Island on foot, in kayaks and on skis. Their trip through this spectacular landscape is intended as a celebration of the new territory of Nunavut and the soon-to-be-established Sirmilik National Park. Through recording and sharing their experiences, they hope to bring a greater understanding of the Arctic to people in Canada and abroad. Accounts of their adventure will be published each week in the Magazine"(1999: C3). Similarly, a rather large category of stories reflected upon the accomplishments of Arctic explorers, and books or exhibits regularly reinterpreted their accomplishments" (Coulston, 1999).

Culture and Metaphor

Combined with this focus upon Arctic legacy was a rather well-developed sense of the Arctic as a cultural context. This was the era of the Nunavut negotiations, and a time of change for both Inuit and non-native alike. Art, books, film and theatre referenced the Arctic – the Inuit as well as European Arctic that is – while the media focused upon history, Inuit life and those non-natives who had 'pioneered' in the Arctic, through their involvement in exploration, education and health initiatives, for example. What was still evident, however, was the way in which such cultural images, referenced rather colonial views 'from the south', and reasserted the 'Canadian context' of the North. Moreover, and this I think is rather significant, there were a large number of articles in which the term 'Arctic' was used frequently as an adjective to refer to cold climates, air masses, snow storms, products and colours, or remote conditions existing outside of the north, as part of a normative practice of abstractly capturing and embedding the North in the south by metaphor. Moreover, what was almost entirely absent from media accounts was a sense of the Arctic as a geopolitical context, quite a striking observation when comparing these to media texts a decade later where fully two thirds of articles referenced security, military and geopolitical competition.

Human Security and Arctic Peoples

Where was the state? Relatively absent in public discussions in the late 1990s? Or present in new form? Towards the end of 1999, media texts discuss the establishment of Nunavut, positioning it as a monumental political accomplishment in governance as well as for indigenous societies. The positioning of Inuit as Canadian citizens, or as actors centrally implicated within the framing of Canadian identity and geography was limited, however, to consideration of Inuit within Nunavut, rather than a more general consideration of Aboriginal self-governance. This was a period when through international forums like the Arctic Environmental Programme (AEP) the Canadian state was involved in an international reframing of the Arctic in ways which stressed human security and multilateralism (Heininen & Nicol, 2007, Williams, 2004). The Arctic was crucial to this exercise, and with the development of both an international environmental security agenda and a domestic Northern Dimension of Foreign Policy, policy-makers attempted to reposition the Canadian Arctic within a broader human security context. Still, while environmental cooperation was the leitmotif for the process, and the role of indigenous peoples emphasized as integral to this agenda, for the media the North remained a significant source for historical narratives; informed reading on exotic indigenous cultures; and fed a contested field of scientific inquiry. Stories concerning the international North, geopolitics or even the Arctic Council were lacking. Only a few dozen articles appeared in the press concerning the Arctic Council, for example, despite its 1996 description by Circumpolar Ambassador Mary Simon, as "a breakthrough" in the Arctic (Barthos, 1996). Still, curiosity pieces found their way to print: for example the story of the Inuit community whose sealskin puppets were seized at the American border, and which required considerable diplomatic action on the part of both Inuit and the federal government, to retrieve.

While the changes involved in devolution, a deterioration of climate, shifting post-Cold war geopolitical contexts, and an increasingly global world are detected in these discourses which represented the North to southern Canadians, several things are clear. First, as Mary Simon noted in an editorial piece crafted for southern Canadians, their knowledge of Inuit and northern cultures was woefully inadequate. Still, the lens through which the media saw the North had not overcome this shortcoming, but contributed to it. Second, the Canadian North continued to be understood primarily through historical, cultural and travel adventure lenses which stressed its remote, exotic nature and its "otherness". These foundational discourses continued the conversation in ways which, as Williams (2010: 241) reminds us, were to continue to position the 'Arctic' and its discourses within a "set of three co-mingling and contestable knowledges: that the Arctic is a colonial, marginalized and indigenous space" in the early 21st century. But in Williams' assessment, such images were not to be contrasted to a unified understanding of the state in the North – these *were* the discourses of state. Much as Simon reminded us, this resulted in a real deficit of knowledge on the part of most Canadians, with respect to the details of people and life within the region. Still, while these public discourses were clearly steeped in a traditional Canadian colonial mentality - focused on state, myth and environment - the geopolitical imagination they referenced was of a very different era. Russians were not understood to be natural enemies, for example, but rather allies in the north. As for the Northwest Passage, while the American position was noted, some questioned why we needed the Northwest Passage anyway. These were indeed different times, and these stories reflected the foundations upon which a subsequent generation of geopolitical narratives were to be overlaid.

The 21st Century: New Naturalizations/Reframing Geopolitical Perceptions

By the early 21st century, narratives about the North shifted to position the state as an international actor within an international North (Keskitalo, 2004; Heininen & Nicol, 2007). During the period from 2000 to 2007, for example, the Canadian Government had produced a series of policies, reports and general texts, which spoke to this geopolitical positioning (Williams, 2010). This is also reflected in the percentages of stories and articles printed in 2009, two years after the Russian flag planting 'incident'. Here, 14 per cent of framings, the highest level registered over the forty years covered by this study, positioned military security and sovereignty as key issues for policy-makers and Canadians interested in the North. It was a positioning which spoke to cooperation on environment and indigenous affairs, inclusion and consensus. And yet, as Williams reminds us, increasingly as the decade wore on, this promising human security discourse took on a residual role and the themes of sovereignty and security increasingly dominated human security: "[t]his means that the issues and discourses not included in the traditional state security problematic (such as environmental threats and social concerns for indigenous Arctic peoples) take on a residual role, overshadowed by centralized government control to secure the Arctic's land and waters and protect its sovereignty over them" (244).

Competition Trumps Co-Operation?

While Stuhl (2013) argues, cogently, that all Arctic news is old news, it is nonetheless important to realize that as the first decade of the 21st century progressed, this cooperative and regional approach to the 'North' was being replaced by a more competitive vision of international relations, in which 'national Norths' figured more prominently. Concentrating upon potential conflict over sea beds and waterways, natural resources and militaries, North American media coverage, at least, while heightened, tends to downplay the fact of significant developments in regional agreements concerning environmental protection and search and rescue responsibilities. In 2009, for example, of the just over 1600 articles which appeared in Canadian major dailies discussing the Arctic, roughly two thirds were focused on science and environment or military security and geopolitics—and roughly equal proportions. While the interplay between environment and security was a prominent discourse, only rarely did regional cooperation find mention.

This was a break from the previous decade. The much debated shift from geopolitics of cooperation to competition (Nicol & Heininen, 2013; Heininen, 2004) took place sometime during this period. The result? An emerging security discourse in which the media reported: "[t]he Arctic is under siege as never before". This a CBC news report proclaimed in August 2010, reflecting what was then a rather general consensus that not only were recent development in the Canadian Arctic becoming a 'hot' issue for newsmakers, these developments were being recast in ways which played to a burgeoning Canadian sense of national pride (CBC News, 2009)

The process of Arctic maritime boundary-making was, in the days and months to follow, recast by the media as a litmus test for the strength of the Canadian state in an international arena. In the media, the subtleties of maritime boundary making, international law and border disputes were glossed, while the Arctic was presented as a new 'frontier' potentially ripe for the picking. This was

an agenda which, although not unique, fit nicely into the existing contours of Canada's national political landscape. For the Conservative Government led by Canadian Prime Minster Stephen Harper, it was a chance to trumpet an aggressive Canadian nationalism aimed at an international partner where little to no retaliation was possible. For the opposition, as personified by then New Democratic Party leader, Jack Layton, it was an opportunity to criticize the government as being unconcerned with Canadian sovereignty, practicing instead a type of rhetorical aggression without teeth. As one columnist noted, "[i]n the view of opposition … the government has responded with little more than rhetoric to threats to Canadian sovereignty in its frozen backyard. Canada must move quickly and make immediate, strategic investments in its Arctic" (Washington Post, August 6 2010).

Views From the Foreign Press

Academics too, jumped into the fray. The Arctic was mapped and positioned in terms of boundary lines, national interests and international security. A host of scholars discussed how the scenario of melting ice might reframe Canada's national interests and lead to challenges for places and spaces previously undisputed (Huebert, 2010). The Canadian military responded from their point of view: a 2008 Canadian Parliamentary paper on Defence argued that there was a direct link between climate change and insecurity: "more recently, the effects of climate change have served to add another dimension to an already complex policy area, and once again the challenge for Canada is to adapt its Arctic security and defence strategy to meet changing threats" (Mychajlyszyn, 2008). This meant an emphasis upon a greater capacity to patrol Arctic waters and to undertake surveillance in the region.

The Canadian media and news-makers were not alone in perceiving the Arctic in this way. Some of the Russian media reported the flag-plating event of August 2007 in a way which really spoke to the symbolic, rather than legal significance of the event: "a Tass reporter on board the mission support ship said crew members cheered as Chilingarov climbed out of the submersible and was handed a pair of slippers… 'This may sound grandiloquent but for me this is like placing a flag on the moon, this is really a massive scientific achievement,' Sergei Balyasnikov, spokesman for Russia's Arctic and Antarctic Institute, told Reuters" (CNN.com, August 4 2007).

Americans too, had developed a perspective on the Arctic, and they, too, tended to adopt the 'Arctic siege' mentality. At the same time, the U.S. continued on its trajectory of 'science and oil', meaning that its interests in Arctic regions and its Arctic agenda was driven by promoting American science as if it were a foreign policy, as well as by big oil interests in offshore Alaska, and the Canadian Arctic (Borgerson, 2008). Still, the Washington Post, responding to the planting of a Russian flag on the Arctic Ocean seabed in 2007, emphasized similarities between Canada and the U.S., and noted that: "Canada and the United States scoffed at the legal significance of the dive by a Russian mini-sub to set the flag on the seabed Thursday. 'This isn't the 15th century. You can't go around the world and just plant flags' to claim territory, Canada's minister of foreign affairs, Peter MacKay, told reporters" (Struck, 2010) Similarly, despite the aggressive sovereignty rhetoric issue by the current Harper Government, as one American columnist has noted, "the government has responded with little more than rhetoric to threats to Canadian sovereignty in its frozen backyard. Canada must move quickly and make immediate, strategic investments in its Arctic." (Washington Post, 2010)

New Discourses

What was the result of this moment in time in terms of Canadian geopolitical discourses? It was a striking array of themes and discourses in new combinations. Table 1 suggests some real differences between the topics covered by newspaper in 2009 and those covered in previous decades. Most importantly, perhaps, is the role which science and environmental stories play within all Canadian newspapers. Clearly one third of all articles assess climate change in one way or another. But, environmental discourses also referenced the need for military action: the rise of military, sovereignty and security discourses recast climate change as a geopolitical and security issue. In 2009, for example, there was little contestation concerning the role of the Canadian Government and its military intervention in the north, naturalized by the process of climate change and its impacts on the Arctic Ocean. The result was that by 2010, the Canadian Government revved up its concern with military security in the Arctic. It also made a number of promises regarding military surveillance of the North. These were focused upon expanding human and technological surveillance and apprehension capacities and enhancing search and rescue capabilities, and shifted patrol responsibilities from the Canadian Coast Guard to the Canadian Navy.

Throughout all of this time period, media discourses recreated a new and popularized account of the North as an 'icy treasure trove' where nations waited in the wings to stake claims to the Arctic Ocean, in what had the potential to be a protracted and conflicted process – a new 'Cold War' as the media called it. The media reports generated by the flag-planting incident, which followed over the next few years, attempted to explain the national context of the Arctic region in raw, geopolitical terms. The break reflected more than just a Russian publicity stunt, however. It also referenced the way in which discourses stressing state interest in Arctic waters and seabed resources were triggering a call for state presence in the North in very different ways that had the cooperative environmental agendas of the earlier Rovaniemi process of the 1980s.

Back to the (1970s) Future?

Since 2009, there have been signs of a shifting focus, or rather a realignment of sorts. In May of 2012, for example, the Canadian government announced that its fleet of armed vessels for Arctic patrol would be delayed by at least three years: "the Defence Department had been expecting to take delivery of Canada's first of between six and eight Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships in 2015. But documents tabled in the House of Commons on Tuesday show the timeline has been pushed back to 2018" (Berthhiaume, 2012). While in the media today, the subtleties of maritime boundary making, international law and border disputes has been debated from all angles, the rhetorically aggressive response of the government has been duly noted and, until the very recent past, been more often than not met with approval. Increasingly, however, the failure of the current Canadian government to deliver a series of rather extravagant promises connected to the building of ships, naval facilities, and general Northern security infrastructure, has been met by media disapproval. This fit well with a general orientation of the Canadian public towards improving the military security capability of the state. Polls suggest that the top foreign policy issue for Canadians has been 'Arctic sovereignty'. In a 2011 poll, for example, "more than 40 per cent of Canadians [surveyed]

said the country should pursue a firm line in defending its sections of the North, compared to just 10 per cent of Americans (Mahoney, 2011).

Responding to Constructed Sovereignty Threats

The result of media reportage on climate change and sovereignty vulnerability, from both within and outside of the Canadian press, has been mixed. There is a rather publically positioned outcry, both for and against the seeming abandonment of the promise of a rapid deployment of ships and jets to the North. For example, in the wake of a series of contradictory editorials published by two of Canada's top Arctic scholars, one reporter lamented that:

> Sovereignty, security, patriotism and pride are attractive and powerful concepts that have played prominently in Prime Minister Stephen Harper's rhetoric surrounding the Arctic since he was elected in 2006. His promises to bolster Canada's claims to the Northwest Passage, the creation of Permanent Canadian Forces Ranger units to protect the nation's North and the building of naval vessels capable of patrolling Arctic waters have consistently been highlighted as aspects of his vision for a Canada First national defence strategy.
>
> During Harper's recent northern sojourn, Canadians were again inundated with media images of the Prime Minister taking target practice and making announcements of federal initiatives focusing on economic development as a key means of ensuring his continued commitment to the Arctic. But all that attention leaves me wondering why Harper continues to act as if the Arctic remains at the top of his defence-policy priority list. He has been making promises for years to bolster a Canadian presence in the Arctic - especially in the form of the Canadian Forces – but to date, there has been no significant progress in delivering on his commitments (Murray, 2013).

Still, this perspective is not monolithic. Others were relieved to think that rather than focus on defence, the Canadian Government was now more interested in securing northern economic development for its citizens. Indeed, much like the dichotomy between the environment and resource development in the 1970s, the concept of economic development for northerners, versus securitization (or more aptly securitization rhetoric) for southerners became a contrasting series of tropes in the popular press. Parodying the Conservative political vision of the North and its role as capstone to a 'unified' Canadian state, for example, Hunter (1980) wrote a rather satirical article for the Globe and Mail in August 2013, following Prime Minster Harper's most recent trip to Nunavut and Operation Nanook:

> Back in 2010, Prime Minister Stephen Harper went north of 60 in a fighting mood, with clenched fists. Surrounded by soldiers in desert camouflage, he talked of defending Canada's North against all comers, especially harpoon-wielding Vladimir Putin, the Russian president. Back in 2007, Harper had promised six Polar Class vessels to patrol the Arctic shoreline, a deep-water station at Nanisivik on Baffin Island near the eastern entrance to the Northwest Passage, a military training centre at Resolute Bay.
>
> He promised, again, to re-arm and re-equip the Canadian Rangers, the band of happy warriors who stand on chilly guard for the rest of us. As he said in 2007 of the true North, strong and free: "We use it, or lose it."

> His view of our Arctic has seemed to be the old Cold War version; the North has value only as a zone of defence for Canada's South...It's apparent that, despite Putin's pugnaciousness, there are more pressing threats to our northern frontier – things like pollution from shipping, illegal migration, and trafficking in drugs, weapons and human beings. So this time on his northern adventure, Harper kept his clenched fists in his parka pockets. He's singing from the songbook prepared for Canada's assuming the chairmanship of the Arctic Council last May – a chair it will fill until 2015.
>
> The new themes are "development for people of the North", "responsible resource development", "safe Arctic shipping" and "sustainable circumpolar communities" (Hunter, 2013).

By the end of the summer of 2013, at the time of writing, there are other signs that the 'economic' North has begun to resurface as the most important way of situating this region in the news. Not just a sub-text of the climate change and sovereignty discourse, it has gained traction of its own. As Table 1 shows, of all the articles published in the major dailies to September 1 of this year (2013), 12 per cent of stories focused upon economic stories, compared to 14 per cent which positioned the Arctic as an environmental issue. Fewer stories focused upon defence and sovereignty in the North – only about 9 per cent positioned the North as a vulnerable sovereignty space, or spoke to the relationship between military and Arctic spaces. There was, however, considerable overlap in the positioning of environment and economy – either as oppositional or mutually constituted issues. In other words there was a political context to environmental policies which preconditions the outcome of resource development initiatives in terms of regional economic effects.

In one way, therefore, the states' continued focus on this exclusive security motif is very '2010'. It has proven difficult to 'deliver' and since then, increased militarization of the Arctic, promised through new government spending on vessels, ports, airplanes and other infrastructure has not been forthcoming despite its rhetorical importance. Instead other means of 'militarization' have been accentuated: the increased attention to Operation Nanook, Canada's northern defence exercise in the Canadian Arctic, or the increased numbers of Arctic Rangers, a more home grown, 'low tech' and arguably less expensive means of providing surveillance and protection in the North. Moreover, although increased transits raise potential for increased human tragedies and environmental destruction, the 'sovereignty threat' imposed by such transits has yet to materialize, just like the promised ships, planes and ports. China has been accepted as an observer state in the Arctic Council, suggesting that tales of 'conflicted' Asian challenge are overblown. Instead, the Canadian government has reopened the region for resource development – specifically, but not exclusively, for oil extraction. This involved reframing geopolitically 'strategic' issues as geo-economic ones. In 2008, for example, the Canadian government's 'McCrank Report' (2008) recommended significant changes to co-management processes in the Mackenzie Valley area, to streamline environmental assessment. It promoted development strategies in tandem with the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency's renewed focus on promoting business and development opportunities in the North.

All this suggests that resource development is, rather than a secondary prong on the agenda of Arctic security, a companion to the climate change discourse, which, until now, had focused steadily

upon the opening of transportation routes and challenges to Canada's singular control over the Northwest Passage or its potential icy treasure trove. Still, as the *Hill Times* reported as early as 2006, the connection between Arctic boundary-making and resource extraction was probably more cogent than any appeal to nationalist sentiments, and it was embedded within the sovereignty discourses which subsequently emerged. Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor stated, in 2006, for example, that "the basic problem in these disputes is a matter of resources – who owns which resources. For instance, let's take the Beaufort Sea. We may declare that a boundary goes to the Beaufort Sea in one position and the Americans in another. If a country wanted to drill for oil in the Beaufort Sea, and there's a lot of oil and gas there, they, at the moment, if they're in this disputed area, wouldn't know who to approach, whether it's the United States in Canada to get drilling rights. So these sorts of things have to get resolved" (Vongdouangchanh, 2006). In this sense, economic development was an important part of the rationale for strategic defence and it was captured in a narrative that conflated climate, resources, borders and power.

While speaking to a securitization agenda more publically, the Canadian government has also created structural capacity for northern development initiatives, and most recently, the press has reported that oil exploration and extraction are looming on the horizon, encouraged by Ottawa and its northern development mandate (Vanderklippe, 2012). Indeed, in conjunction with its focus on releasing hectares for oil exploration, the Conservative Government has also recently implemented some massive changes to environmental regulation requirements for megaprojects such as oil extraction and pipelines:

> Ottawa has placed 905,000 hectares of the northern offshore up for bids, clearing the way for energy companies to snap up exploration rights for an area half the size of Lake Ontario. The scale of the offer indicates eagerness in the oil patch to drill for new finds in Canada's northern waters less than two years after such plans were put on hold following the BP spill in the Gulf of Mexico and a major Arctic drilling safety review.
>
> The Arctic exploration auction resumes as the Harper government is promoting greater development of the country's resources. It has taken steps to speed regulatory approvals for major energy projects such as the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline, promising to limit the ability of environmental groups and other opponents to block or delay new developments.
>
> The prospect of further drilling fits squarely with that mandate, said Jason MacDonald, spokesman for John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, which oversees the northern land auction" (Vanderklippe, 2012).

Indeed, in conjunction with its focus on releasing hectares for oil exploration, the Conservative Government has also recently implemented some massive changes to environmental regulation requirements for megaprojects such as oil extraction and pipelines.

Beyond Nanook

By the time that Operation Nanook was underway in 2013, the press and academics were divided both on the ability of the Harper Government to deliver on its promises, and even the necessity for doing so. This parallels the way in which Canada's government itself positions climate change

and resource accessibility as the foundations for a new Northern Strategy which includes challenges to sovereignty, social and economic development, environment and defence (Northern Strategy, 2007). The Canadian Northern Development Agency, for example, situates its mandate and it is partly through this, and other similar agencies, that economic development is being facilitated. On the other hand, there is a link between economic and security discourses which although shifting, have ostensibly been 'reconciled' through geopolitical naturalizations. As Williams (2011) reminds us, even as the Canadian government developed its human security mandate though foreign policies and international agreements in the years between 2000 and 2007, the very broad basis of human security created the technology for its implosion, if simply because "environmental human security concerns appear within the same policy documents that call for developing oil, gas and minerals" (Williams, 2012: 245).

Rather than replacing sovereignty discourses, such policies expand and embed them more deeply, and rely upon the same 'naturalizations' to do so. For Flanagan (2013), reporting on Operation Nanook in 2013, there is both a political strategy and a degree of pragmatism here:

> Even as Conservative military policy for the Arctic has been scaled back to reasonable proportions, Mr. Harper has stuck with the North, while shifting his attention to other areas. His government has created huge new national parks in the North and granted devolution to the government of the Northwest Territories, effective next April.
>
> The theme of this year's northern tour is economic development through extraction of natural resources, which makes a lot of sense. The North is indeed a great storehouse of resources, from hydrocarbons in the Mackenzie Valley and Delta to diamonds and minerals in the Canadian Shield. The Liberals and New Democrats also have a valid point when they say Mr. Harper should pay more attention to social issues among native people in the North, but the two approaches are not incompatible. As Bill Clinton said, channelling Ronald Reagan: 'The best social program is a good job.'

Reinforcing State or Breaking New Ground?

This analysis brings us to the conclusion that the geopolitical underpinnings and justifications for action in the Canadian Arctic have always been, over time, embedded in media assumptions about which state-centred understandings of Arctic as universal, comprehensive and unchallengeable are normalized. More recently, however, a resurgence of naturalized geopolitical rationales which organize assemblages of perceptions, practices and actions, allow the media to play upon the popular understanding that the Arctic is Canadian, and to authorize the idea that the interests of the state, defined from the perspective of 'southern' and international interests, pre-empts regional, indigenous or local agency. In doing so they recalibrated existing representations of science, environment, security and technology, and repositioned them in evolving grand narratives which reference familiar icons. Such themes are also recycled in the context of different geopolitical rationales and by different actors and agencies who, like the Canadian press, were not state agencies but who, much like the Canadian press, supported and reproduced representations and discourses in support of state agency and agenda or 'the idea of state' (Penrose, 2011).

Conclusions

This article is not meant to present an empirical 'measure' of the state of geopolitical discourses, although it uses a rather basic content analysis and coding approach whose methods reflect a grounded theory approach. Rather, it makes a case to show how state-centred geopolitical rationales develop, shift and change, even when constructed by non-state actors, and yet retain agency in both shaping and reflecting the broader discourses in which they are embedded. Currently, a distinctive assemblage based upon a 'naturalized' geopolitical discourse has developed within southern Canadian political and media accounts to create the tropes which inform southern engagement with the Arctic and which continue to fuel Arctic political relations. They do work to reinforce a distinctive and compelling, and seemingly unified, 'Canadian' perspective on the North. In other words, this unified discourse is also a constructed and iterative assemblage, reflecting a variety of voices, but also describing a highly unstable and shifting consensus of sorts: much like a 'running average' in statistics.

This brings us to the conclusion that much of the media and public texts that today inform Canadians about the Arctic still produce an assemblage of naturalizations, or naturalized popular geopolitics, which reinforce state-centred, if not neo-colonial options for northern development, security and environmental protection. Given the fact that so few Canadians, North Americans or others have visited, or even studied the North, these current 'naturalized' popular geopolitical strategies cannot be challenged by experiential knowledge, and have instead become entrenched within an everyday reading of Canada as 'northern' and resource-dependent.

Notes

1. Suzuki was to observe that the Arctic fit into a broader picture: As David Suzuki, already a popular scientist and activist, noted in 1989" a powerful grassroots movement is sweeping the land. Ordinary citizens are forming groups to fight pollution, save wilderness, reduce garbage. Even in the traditionally pro-development province of Alberta, citizens are vociferously objecting to proposed new pulp mills in the north. There is a growing sense of public frustration that none of the three major parties has presented a credible environmental program" (Suzuki, 1989).

References

Atami, Pita. (2012). Ne perdons pas le nord: The North Matters: Visions of governance for Nunavik Enhancing Relationships with Aboriginal peoples. *Forum Plan Nord*. (May 2-3, Québec City). Retreived from, http://www.forumplannord.com/.../pita_atami_-_notes_for_forum_plan_nord_-_may_203%20_2012%20_quebec_city..docx

Axworthy, T. S. (2013, March). Changing the Arctic Paradigm from Cold War to Cooperation: How

Canada's Indigenous Leaders Shaped the Arctic Council. *The Gordon Foundation*. Available from, http://www.gordonfoundation.ca/%20publication/588

Balzacq, T. (2011). *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve*. London and New York: Routledge

Barthos, G. (1996, 20 January). Canada to steer new body on protecting the Arctic: [Final Edition]. *Toronto Star*. A.1.

Berland, J. (2009). *North of Empire: Essays on the Cultural Technologies of Space*. Duke University Press.

Berthiaume, Lee. (2012). "Armed Arctic vessels face delay in latest procurement setback: $3.1-billion project is now expected to cost $40 million more than anticipated." *Nunatsiaq News*, NEWS: Around the Arctic May 08, 2012

Bone, R. 2009. *The Canadian North: Issues and Challenges*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Borgerson, S.G. (2008, March/April). Arctic Meltdown: The Economic and Security Implications of Global Warming. *Foreign Affairs*: 63-77.

Buzan, B., O. Wæver, J. de Wilde. (1997). *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Boulder CO: Lynne Reinner.

c.a.s.e. collective. (2006). Critical Approaches to Security in Europe: A Networked Manifesto. *Security Dialogue*. 37(4): 443–487.

CBC. August 10, 2010. Battle for the Arctric Heats Up. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2009/02/27/f-arctic-sovereignty.html

CNN.com. (2007, August 4) "Russia plants flag on Arctic floor". Retrieved September 29, 2013 from [http://edition.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/europe/08/02/arctic.sub.reut/].

Coulston, P. (1999, 25 July). Nature's mighty hand: We camp at the base of Mount Herodier, exhausted from hauling our gear across the uneven ice. I think about travelers who have died here, and know we are at the mercy of the land. *The Gazette*. C3.

Depledge, D. (2013). Assembling a (British) Arctic. *The Polar Journal*. 3(1): 163-177. DOI: 10.1080/2154896X.2013.783273

Dittmer, J. et al., (2011). Have you heard the one about the disappearing ice? Recasting Arctic geopolitics. *Political Geography*. 30: 202-214.

Dodds, K. (2002). *Pink Ice: Britain and the South Atlantic Empire*. London: I.B. Tarius.

Dodds, K. (2010). Flag planting and finger pointing: The Law of the Sea, the Arctic and the political geographies of the outer continental shelf. *Political Geography*. 29(2): 63–73

Exner-Pirot, H. (2013). What is the Arctic a case of? The Arctic as a regional environmental security complex and the implications for policy. *The Polar Journal*, 3(1): 120-35. DOI:10.1080/2154896X.2013.766006.

Farish, M. (2010). *The Contours of America's Cold War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Fabbi, N. (2012). Inuit Political Engagement in the Arctic. In L. Heininen. (Ed.). *Arctic Yearbook* 2012 (pp. 160-176). Akureyri, Iceland: Northern Research Forum.

Flanagan, T. (2013, 21 August). Arctic symbolism, Harper stagecraft. *The Globe and Mail*. A.13.

French, C. (1979, 2 April). New look at Arctic defenses poses the question of just how safe Canada's northern resources are. *The Globe and Mail*. B.1

French, C. 1979 (20 September). SHIPPING Canmar icebreaker is out to set a record in Arctic. *The Globe and Mail*. B.10.

Grace, S. (2001). *Canada and the Idea of North*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press

Grant, S. (2010). *Polar Imperative: A History of Arctic Sovereignty in North America*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre

Griffiths, F. (1979, 19 June). Is the Arctic the glue Canada needs for unity? *The Globe and Mail*. P.7.

Griffiths, F. (1989, 23 October). Soviets should recognize our right to Arctic. *The Toronto Star*. A17.

Heininen, L. (2004). Circumpolar International Relations and Geopolitics. In AHDR (Arctic Human Development Report) (pp. 207-225). Akureyri: Stefansson Arctic Institute.

Heininen, L. & H.N. Nicol. (2007). The Importance of Northern Dimension Foreign Policies in the Geopolitics of the Circumpolar North. *Geopolitics*. 12: 133-165.

Heininen, L. & H.N. Nicol. (2008). Canada and the New Geopolitics of the North Pacific Rim. In *Seeking Balance in a Changing North. The Proceedings Papers from the 5th Northern Research Forum Open Assembly in Anchorage, Alaska* (Plenary Session 1: The Future of Northern Cooperation). Available from http://www.nrf.is.

Huebert, R. (2010). *The Newly Emerging Arctic Security Environment*. Prepared for the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute. Available from http://www.cdfai.org.

Hunter, I. (2013, 25 August). Far-seeing politicians blaze trail. *Times – Colonist*. D2.

Inuit Circumpolar Council. (2011). *A Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles in Inuit Nunaaaat*. (Declaration). Available from, www.iccalaska.org/servlet/download?id=80.

Inuit Qaujisarvingat. (2013). *Nilliajut: Inuit Perspectives on Security, Patriotism and Sovereignty*. Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

Keskitalo, E.C.H. (2004). *Negotiating the Arctic: The Construction of an International Region*. New York & London: Routledge.

Lackenbauer, P. W. & M. Farish (2007). The Cold War on Canadian Soil: Militarizing a Northern Environment. *Environmental History*. 12(4): 921-950.

Lasserre, F., J. Le Roy & R. Garon. (2012). Is there an arms race in the Arctic? *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*. 14(3&4): 1-56.

Loukacheva, N. (2009, Spring). Nunavut and Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. *Journal of Canadian Studies*. 43(2): 82-108.

Mahoney, J. (2011, 25 January). "In the Arctic, Canada willing to fight to keep the true north free." *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved September 29, 2013 from [http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/in-the-arcticcanada-willing-to-fight-to-keep-the-true-north-free/article1881683/].

Malarek, V. (1979). An Arctic oil spill could take a year to begin capping. *The Globe and Mail*. P.19.

Murray, Robert (2013, 9 September). "Harper's Arctic Failure." *Winnipeg Free Press*. Retrieved September 29, 2013 from [http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/Harpers-Arctic-failure-221867681.html?device=mobile]

McCann, L. & A.M. Gunn. (1997). *Heartland and Hinterland: A Geography of Canada* (3rd Edition). Newmarket, Ontario: Pearson Education Canada.

McCrank, N. (2008). *Road to improvement: the review of the regulatory systems across the North*. Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Myers, S.L. (2013). Arctic Council Adds 6 Nations as Observer States, Including China. *New York Times*. Retrieved from, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/16/world/europe/arctic-council-adds-six-members-including-china.html?_r=0

Mychajlyszyn, N. (2008, 24 October). The Arctic: Canadian Security and Defence. *International Affairs, Trade and Finance Division*. Parliament of Canada. (PRB 08-13E). Available from, http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb0813-e.htm.

Nicol, H.N. & L. Heininen. (2008). Networking the North: Cross Border Connections and the New International Circumpolar Geopolitics. *Southern Journal of Canadian Studies*. (2)1: 11-26.

Nicol, H.N. (2010). Reframing sovereignty: indigenous peoples and Arctic states. *Political Geography*. 29: 78-80.

Nicol, H.N. & L. Heininen. (2013). Human security, the Arctic Council and climate change:

competition or co-existence? *Polar Record*, available on CJO2013.

Penrose, J. (2011). Designing the nation. Banknotes, banal nationalism and alternative conceptions of the state. *Political Geography*. 30(8): 429-440.

Steinberg, P. (2010). You are (Not) Here: On the Ambiguity of Flag Planting and Finger-Pointing in the Arctic. *Political Geography*. 29(2): 81-84.

Stern, M. & J. Öjendal. (2010). Mapping the security–development nexus: Conflict, complexity, cacophony, convergence? *Security Dialogue*. 41(1): 5–29.

Stuhl, A. (2013). The politics of the "New North": putting history and geography at stake in Arctic futures. *The Polar Journal*. 3: 94-119.

Struck, Douglas (2007, August 7). "Russia's Deep-Sea Flag-Planting at North Pole Strikes a Chill in Canada." *Washington Post*. Retrieved September 29, 2013 from [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/06/AR2007080601369.html].

Suzuki, D. (1989, 29 December). Far-seeing politicians blaze trail: [Final Edition]. *Calgary Herald*. D6.

United Nations. (1987). Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future. UN Documents. Available from, http://conspect.nl/pdf/Our_Common_Future-Brundtland_Report_1987.pdf.

United States. (2009). National Security Presidential Directive 66. Available from, http://www.fas.org/irp/%20offdocs/nspd/nspd-66.htm.

United States. (1971). National Security Decision Memorandum 144. Retriived from, http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary documents/nationalsecuritydecision memoranda.php.

Walker, J.R. (1985, December 14). More reliance on Inuit suggested for Canada's sovereignty in Arctic. *The Ottawa Citizen*. B14.

Williams, L. (2010). Telling an Arctic Tale: Arctic Discourses in Canadian Foreign Policy. In A. Ryall et al. *Arctic Discourses* (pp. 240-258). UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Vanderklippe, N. (2012, 17 May). Reviving Arctic oil rush, Ottawa to auction rights in massive area. *The Globe and Mail*. Pg#? No page no retrieved online from, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/reviving-arctic-oil-rush-ottawa-to-auction-rights-in-massive-area/article4184419/.

Vongdouangchanh, B. (2006, 16 October). *Cabinet Waiting for Defense Department's 10-Year Arctic*

Military Plan. (Policy Briefing Canada's North). Retrieved 7.1.13 from, www.hilltimes.com/pb/view/2006-10-16.

Young, O. (2012, Fall/Winter). Arctic Politics in an Era of Global Change. *Brown Journal World Affairs*. XIX(1): 165+