La guerre du Canada contre, et activisme pour, science et connaissance

Canada’s war on science and knowledge and growing counter-activism

Heather Morrison
Plan

- Qu’est-ce qui ce passe?
- Qu’est-ce qu’on fait? (activism)
- Qu’est-ce qu’on peut faire? (stratégies)
- What’s happening?
- What are people doing? (activism)
- What more can be done? (strategies)
Je vais commencer avec un grand merci pour John Dupuis, un bibliothécaire et blogger qui écrit une bibliographie très utile sur La guerre contre le science.

Cette bibliographie est libre accès. Dupuis a dit qu'il ne veut aucune droit d'auteur pour cette bibliographie; c'est public domain. Je suis une avocate pour libre accès. Pour moi, ceci est un excellent exemple de libre recherche. I’d like to begin by acknowledging the bibliography of John Dupuis which is most helpful to anyone wanting to work in this area. I am an open access advocate. For me, this is a great example of what I call open research. Instead of keeping his bibliography to himself, Dupuis is openly sharing it as public domain.
Beginning of the end for federal science: privatization of federal science positions. October 2008: Conservatives returned to power with a stronger minority. 16 lacs sont maintenant pour les Décharges toxiques. Les leaders de science et sécurité nuclear? Au chommage. Le gouvernement transfert les labs aux secteur privé.

The war / la guerre 2008

- Office of National Science Adviser phased out
- Nuclear safety watchdog head fired for ‘lack of leadership’
- 16 Canadian lakes are slated to be officially but quietly “reclassified” as toxic dump sites for mines
- It’s the Beginning of the End for Federal Science: Expert Panel on Lab Transfers/divestment (privatization of federal labs)

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The war / la guerre (2009)

- Navigable Waters Protection Act to remove objective definition of navigable and replace it with unaccountable Ministerial discretion
- Eau navigable?
- Décidé par le ministre, pas la science

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Monbiot: Canada “thuggish petro-state” (Guardian, Nov. 2009)

“Canada’s image lies in tatters. It is now to climate what Japan is to whaling. The tar barons have held the nation to ransom. This thuggish petro-state is now the greatest obstacle to a deal in Copenhagen”.
Monbiot, Guardian headline Nov. 2009

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The war / la guerre (2010)

- Information restrictions brought in by government have severely restricted the media’s access to government researchers.

- Interview approval rules introduced in at Environment Canada 2007 have lead to substantially reduced requests, especially about climate change coverage.

- AIDS funding announcement insufficient and disappointing, out of step with international community.

- Cuts to Environment Canada weather-service programs have compromised the government’s ability to assess climate change and left it with a “profoundly disturbing” quality of information in its data network.

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2010. C’est beaucoup plus difficiles pour les médias de poser les questions aux scientisites federale. Le gouvernement coupe le budget pour AIDS.
Opponents to elimination of Canadian long form census (2010)

- Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- City of Toronto
- Government of Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba

(Wikipedia)

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Canada’s national science agency axes food research (2011)

• Farmers for investment in agriculture: “At a time when most countries are making huge investments in farming to capitalize on our growing world food demand, Canada has decreased public research funding for agriculture by 40 per cent since 1994 and has lost over 10 per cent of our research scientists,” the coalition said.

• “At a time when the United Nations is expressing fears of a potential food crisis, countries like Canada have a responsibility to increase their commitment to food production,” says William Van Tassel, vice-chair of the Fédération des producteurs de culture commerciales du Québec, one of the coalition’s members. “By cutting agriculture from its priorities, the council seems to be disconnected from the current global reality.” (Manitoba Co-operator, 2011).

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réductions budgétaires pour la recherche sur la nourriture
The war / la guerre: 2011

- NSERC reduces funding for basic research
- Tri-Council reallocates funds from discovery to industry research
- Blocks asbestos from hazardous chemicals list at UN summit
- Budget cuts to Climate Change and Clean Air, Substance and Waste Management, Weather and Environmental Services, Water Resources and Internal Services, Action Plan on Clean Water, the Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan, Chemicals Management Plan, the Clean Air Agenda, the Air Quality Health Index, Species at Risk Program

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réductions budgétaires pour le recherche – mais Canada est pour l’asbestor
The war / la guerre: 2011

- NSERC Discovery Grants reduced
- DFO scientist Kristi Miller says that the Privy Council prevented her from talking to the media about her research into the 2009 sockeye salmon collapse in B.C.
- Arctic ozone monitoring & research unit & databases shut down as well as 40 year archive of ice cores
- Canadian Environmental Network closes
  Scientist David Tarasick speaks out after finding ‘record’ ozone hole over Canadian Arctic
- Withdraw from the Kyoto Accord

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Nature: frozen out

- U.S. in December promoting openness, encouraging government scientists to speak to the press

- Canada: “Policy directives and e-mails obtained from the government through freedom of information reveal a confused and Byzantine approach to the press, prioritizing message control and showing little understanding of the importance of the free flow of scientific knowledge.”


French

Environmental and other "radical groups" are trying to block trade and undermine Canada's economy, Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver said...

...one day before federal regulatory hearings begin on whether to approve Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipeline, which would deliver crude from Alberta's oilsands to Kitimat, B.C., for shipment to Asia (Payton, CBC News, 2012).

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Selon Joe Oliver, les environmentalistes sont radicales. Il a dit ca un jour apres qu’on parle de oilsands pipeline.
“Some charitable environmental groups in Canada are "laundering" funds from offshore donors to obstruct Canada's environmental assessment process, Environment Minister Peter Kent says” (CBC News, May 2012)

“This week, David Suzuki and his foundation came under attack by the ironically named Ethical Oil group, a new American anti-environmental video has been making the rounds online, and the $500,000 Koch brothers contribution to Canada's right-wing Fraser Institute made the news.” (Huffington Post, April 27, 2012)
• Pour l’environnement = radical? (Ministre, Ressources Naturel Joe Oliver)
• Criminel (Ministre d’Environnement Peter Kent)
Black Out Speak Out

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The war / la guerre: 2012

- Canada threatens trade war with EU over tar sands, over the bloc’s plan to label oil from Alberta’s vast tar sands as highly polluting
- Cuts to the ozone monitoring program are affecting ability to monitor air quality and ozone depletion. Canada is jeopardizing the scientific community’s ability to monitor for holes in the ozone, especially over the Arctic
- Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences closes
- Gutting the Fisheries Act

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The war / la guerre: 2012

- Cereal Research Centre cut
- Muzzling of scientists at international conferences
- Repeal of Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, download to provinces
- Sustainable Water Management Division cut
- Transport Canada Aircraft Services cut
- The Centre for Plant Health relocated
- Scientists monitored at polar conference
- National Aboriginal Health Organization’s funding cut

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The war / la guerre: 2012

- [Parks Canada cuts affect four national marine conservation areas](http://www.sis.uottawa.ca/faculty/hmorrison.html)
- [Budget cuts Centre of Excellence at B.C. Children’s and Women’s hospitals in Vancouver, Quebec Network of Action for Women’s Health, Prairie Women’s Health Centre of Excellence](http://www.sis.uottawa.ca/faculty/hmorrison.html)
- [1000 jobs cut at Department of Fisheries and Oceans Ocean Contaminants & Marine Toxicology Program axed.](http://www.sis.uottawa.ca/faculty/hmorrison.html)

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The war / la guerre: 2012

- Eliminate Experimental Lakes Area program (rescued by Ontario)
- Addictions Research Centre cut
- When asked if he believes in evolution, Minister of Science and Technology refuses to answer question; suggests MP who asked the question has brain damage
- Arctic Institute of North America’s Kluane Research Station cut
- Major Resources Support (MRS) Program Moratorium impacts National High Field Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Centre, the Canadian Centre for Isotopic Microanalysis and the Canadian Charged Particle Accelerator Consortium and others

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The war / la guerre: 2012

- Revamp Species-at-Risk act
- Navigable Waters Protection Act changed to weaken environmental oversight, changes sought by pipeline industry
- Bill C-45 weakens environmental laws and democracy, such as Navigable Waters Protection Act
- PEI Salmon research lab targeted
- Navigable Waters Protection Act altered to give developers more freedom to build around most Canadian rivers and lakes
- Environment Canada scientists Derek Muir and Jane Kirk discouraged from commenting on oilsands contaminant study
- Eliminating the Hazardous Materials Information Review Commission

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The war / la guerre (2013: 75 entries to date including...)

- Very long list of scientist muzzlings from Democracy Watch
- Oil & Gas Industry thanks government for changing a series of environmental laws to advance "both economic growth and environmental performance.
- Restrict how researchers can share data
  Information commissioner investigates ‘Muzzling’ of federal scientists, called a threat to democracy
  Prairies Regional Office: Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency closes
- The government votes against public science, basic research and the free and open exchange of scientific information are essential to evidence-based policy-making
- $100 million cut from Department of Fisheries & Oceans over three years
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Scientifiques fédéraux</th>
<th>Federal scientists</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coup de froid</strong></td>
<td><strong>The big chill</strong></td>
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<td>l’Institut professionnel de la fonction publique du Canada (IPFPC, 2013)</td>
<td>Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC, 2013)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Enquête: 15,000 scientifiques, &gt; 4,000 ont répondu</em></td>
<td><em>Survey: 15,000 scientists, &gt; 4,000 responded</em></td>
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Commissioned Environics Research Group, early 2013. Survey sent to 15 398 members, response rate 4 069, marge d’erreur 1,6 %, 19 fois sur 20
“90 % des scientifiques employés au gouvernement fédéral ne se sentent pas libres de parler librement de leurs travaux aux médias (IPFPC, 2013)

90% [of federal government scientists] feel they are not allowed to speak freely to the media about the work they do (PIpsc, 2013)

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<th>Est-ce vrai?</th>
<th>For real?</th>
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<td>“Demande d’omettre ou de modifier de l’info pour des raisons non-scientifiques:”</td>
<td>“nearly one-quarter (24%)...had been directly asked to exclude or alter information for non-scientific reasons “ (PIPSC, 2013)</td>
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<td><strong>24%</strong></td>
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(IPFPC, 2013)

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<td>“plus du tiers (37 %) affirment qu’on les a empêchés de répondre à des questions du public et des médias au cours des cinq dernières années”</td>
<td>“over one-third (37%) had been prevented in the past five years from responding to questions from the public and media”</td>
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<td>(IPFPC, 2013)</td>
<td>(PIPSC, 2013)</td>
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Est-ce vrai? For real?

- “La santé et la sécurité ont été compromises par ingérence politique”

50% 50%

(IPFPC, 2013) (PIPSC, 2013)

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- “Over the last few years, the government of Canada — led by Stephen Harper — has made it harder and harder for publicly financed scientists to communicate with the public and with other scientists. “
- There was trouble of this kind here in the George W. Bush years, when scientists were asked to toe the party line on climate policy and endangered species. But nothing came close to what is being done in Canada. “

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The CSWA and the Association des communicateurs scientifiques won the 14th annual Press Freedom Award in 2012 for their work in exposing how the government has silenced scientists.”
Death of evidence (Sept. 2012)
http://www.deathofevidence.ca/

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2013: rallies in 16 cities
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<th>Quoit faire?</th>
<th>What can we do?</th>
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Activisme
sans frontières / without borders

L’état n’est pas seul aux "public sphere"

(Keck & Sikkink, 1998)

“the state does not monopolize the public sphere”

(Keck & Sikkink, 1998, p. 32)

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Activism without borders

3 areas where transnational advocacy networks have made significant progress in the public sphere: human rights, women’s rights, environment
Information politics: Dupuis, Canada’s Science Writers’ Association, this talk, journalists. Symbolic politics: black out speak out, death of evidence, press award for Canadian Science Writer’s Association. Can we do more to recognize and celebrate those who speak up? Leverage politics is where we make use of our advocacy networks to overcome barriers that we may face. For example, if federal scientists cannot speak up then academic scientists and publishers can speak up on their behalf. This is happening to some extent, but we could do more. What about trade? Governments around the world are pushing for more and more free trade agreements, and this is tending to lead to a race to the bottom – the country with the lowest environmental and labour standards gives companies a cost advantage. Why not push instead to raise the floor? Canada’s War on Science is in direct contradiction with the Conservative Party’s public stance on accountability – that’s something else that we can leverage.
Conclusion

- There is substantial evidence that the Canadian government is fighting science and knowledge. A primary driver appears to be the oil and gas industry, particularly the tar sands. However, ideology opposing science per se appears to be at play.
- Results of recent cuts are likely to be felt in the environment, society at large (cutting mandatory long form census), and may be felt in other areas as well, such as food security and Canada’s ability to develop new economic areas.
- Advocacy efforts to affect change have been growing over the past few years and it is worthwhile considering a networked approach to advocacy.

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Libre accès / open access

- Les avocats pour libre accès canadien (APLAC) / Advocates for Canadian Open Access (ACOA)

- https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C4HksXI399pqUNitVy0eEcIn0cTC9hU1g5tmUYA4QY/edit?pli=
Références


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Références

- Moncton Co-operator: Canada’s national science agency axes food research http://www.manitobacooperator.ca/2011/01/20/national-science-agency-axes-food-research/

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