

ECOPOLITICS PODCAST: Additional Pedagogical Resources (Episode 6)

Episode 6: Federalism, Party Politics and Environment

Overview: Using the example of carbon pricing, Dr. Kathryn Harrison (UBC) and Dr. Andrea Olive (Toronto) walk us through the complex factors influencing environmental policy-making in the Canadian Federation.

Key Takeaways

- “I think of federalism as a really complicated machine, and it's got all kinds of different levers and in the Canadian case, it's got 11 different steering wheels, 10 provinces and the federal government” (Dr. Harrison, 5:18-5:58).
- The landscape of federalism has led to complicated outcomes in carbon pricing, with provincial legislation changing over time due to changing political, social, cultural, and economic contexts.
- The environmental policy process features different actors with unique interests and different levels of power. For example, industry has considerable resources and access to decision-makers through a powerful lobby. At the same time, there is a strong and growing climate movement increasingly contesting power.

Discussion Questions

1. Building on the examples provided by Dr. Olive and Dr. Harrison, how would you characterize the dynamic between different levels of government on climate policy today?
2. How do you see *your* role as an individual in shaping environmental policy in Canada today (i.e. informed citizen; activist; influencer; good Samaritan; strategic voter; political actor; campaign funder; other)?
3. How would you describe the power of collective action through youth-led climate strikes and other movements in Canada? How has the youth climate movement changed the climate politics discussion?
4. How do you think the political context in Canada both nationally and regionally, as discussed by Dr. Harrison and Dr. Olive, has impacted how well Canada's environment is protected?

Episode 6: Environmental Political History in Canada

Learn more about our Guests

Dr. Kathryn Harrison

- <https://politics.ubc.ca/profile/kathryn-harrison/>

Select articles and videos

- **Harrison, Kathryn.** "Political Institutions and Supply-Side Climate Politics: Lessons from Coal Ports in the United States and Canada," *Global Environmental Politics* 20 (2020) 51-72.
- **Harrison, Kathryn.** "Federalism and Climate Policy Innovation: A Critical Reassessment," *Canadian Public Policy*. 39 (2013): 95-108.
- **Harrison, Kathryn.** *Passing the Buck: Federalism and Canadian Environmental Policy*. Vancouver, B.C: UBC Press. 1996.
- SFU Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies. "The Impact of Civil Disobedience on Public Policy | Kathryn Harrison." Youtube. September 15, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NiXrAXJ5uvE>
- Parkland Institute. "Is the Canadian Federation up to the Challenge of Climate Change?" 2020 annual conference with presentation by **Kathryn Harrison**. Youtube. January 18 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltlpiO7Watc>

Dr. Andrea Olive

- <http://sites.utm.utoronto.ca/politicalolive/>

Select articles and videos

- Hisey, Forrest, Chance Finegan, and **Andrea Olive**. "Bison Reintroduction as Reconciliation" *NiCHE Canada*. February 2021. niche-canada.org/2021/02/18/bison-reintroduction-as-reconciliation-in-saskatchewan/
- Boise State College of Innovation + Design. "HES Seminar: **Andrea Olive** "Land & Legitimacy: Species at Risk Policy in Canada & the US" October 23 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEVTi5d3f1Q>
- Boyd, Brendan and **Andrea Olive** (editors). *Provincial Policy Laboratories: Policy Transfer and Diffusion in Canada's Federal System*. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press. 2021.
- **Olive, Andrea**, Emily Eaton, Randy Besco, Nathan Olmstead, and Catherine Moez. "Transition Time? Energy Attitudes in Southern Saskatchewan." *Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*. www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/transition-time
- **Olive, Andrea**. *Canadian Environment in Political Context*. 2nd edition. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press. 2019

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Learn more about Federalism and Environmental Policy Making in Canada:

- Brown, Douglas, Herman Bakvis, and Gerald Baier. *Contested Federalism: Certainty and Ambiguity in the Canadian Federation*, 2nd ed., Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Supreme Court of Canada. “Case in Brief: References re Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act.” March 25 2021.
www.scc-csc.ca/case-dossier/cb/2021/38663-38781-39116-eng.aspx
- Policy Options. “The Evolution of Carbon Pricing in the Provinces.” 2019. Web.
<https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/july-2019/the-evolution-of-carbon-pricing-in-the-provinces/>
- VanNijnatten, Debora L. *Canadian Environmental Policy and Politics: The Challenges of Austerity and Ambivalence*. Oxford University Press. 4th edition. 2015.
- Winfield, Mark and Douglas Madonald. “Federalism and Canadian Climate Change Policy.” in *Canadian Federalism: Performance, Effectiveness, and Legitimacy*, Fourth Edition. University of Toronto Press. Ed. Herman Bakvis, Grace Skogstad. 2020.