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# Extracting an ounce of truth: Mainstream media coverage of Canadian mining neoliberalism

Sheena Cameron

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EXTRACTING AN OUNCE OF TRUTH:  
MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF CANADIAN MINING NEOLIBERALISM

By  
Sheena Cameron

A Thesis Submitted to the  
Faculty of Graduate Studies  
through Communication, Media and Film  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts at the  
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario Canada

2012

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**“Extracting an Ounce of Truth: Mainstream Media Coverage of  
Canadian Mining Neoliberalism”**

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## ABSTRACT

The neoliberal global economic framework facilitates the ability of Canadian mining corporations to maximize profits by operating in developing countries that lack strict environmental and human rights regulations. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been promoted as an opportunity to ensure the proper conduct of these corporations, however, these guidelines are voluntary, self-regulated and guarantee no legal or criminal accountability. This thesis attempts to confront the continued reinforcement of neoliberal values through the promotion of CSR of Canadian mining corporations in the corporate mainstream media. This document will argue that the dissemination of the neoliberal ideologies through these media pertaining to this particular topic leads to public obfuscation surrounding these issues and public policy in favour of corporate interests. Through the theoretical foundations of the fifth filter of the Propaganda Model and by conducting a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of two Canadian newspapers, the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star*, I will assess the ideological underpinnings of the coverage of this topic to uncover its hegemonic discourse.

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of all those who have lost their lives in pursuit of social justice. Their commitment and courage inspire us to continue.

“During times of universal deceit telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.” – George Orwell

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## INTRODUCTION

In October of 2010, after months of deliberation, the Liberal MP private member's Bill C-300, proposed to regulate the activities of Canadian extractive industries abroad, was narrowly defeated in Parliament. Heralded as the pioneering effort to establish accountability of this sector across borders, Bill C-300 was deeply opposed by the mining, oil and gas industries as well as the Conservative government and criticized by supporters for not going far enough. Yet, its defeat was a major blow to the efforts of human rights and environmental organizations as well as the communities most affected by the operations of some Canadian companies abroad.

Throughout the months leading up to the parliamentary decision, the Canadian mining industry was very actively lobbying against any form of regulation for their activities abroad, claiming that they uphold standards and maintain corporate social responsibility (CSR) without the need for formal regulations. However, evidence suggests otherwise. For years, Canadian mining companies have been operating in developing countries with impunity, causing widespread destruction, conflict and impoverishment (Clark, 2003; Drohan, 2004; Engler, 2009; Seck, 2007).

Various attempts by government and the Canadian public to create a legal framework that would hold companies accountable have been defeated, beginning in 2005 with investigative reports and ending with the defeat of Bill C-300. The media's dissemination of information to the public concerning this issue and the events leading up to it provides key insight into the make-up of the complex system in which we live and the creation and reinforcement of discourse that supports this system.

The neoliberal global economic framework facilitates the rise and success of transnational corporate entities; the Canadian context is no exception. Canadian

transnational corporations (TNCs), especially Canadian mining corporations, attempt to maximize profit and capitalize on expanded markets by operating in various regions around the world. Canada has become a world leader in the sector of resource extraction, accounting for 43% of mining exploration globally, thus situating Canadian mining companies among the wealthiest corporate mining entities in the world today (The Mining Association of Canada MAC, 2009 p.29). However, their operations sometimes come under scrutiny due to devastating environmental and health effects that detrimentally affect communities where these corporations operate. These allegations question their corporate social responsibility and challenge the Canadian legal frameworks that should be designed to prevent such atrocities from taking place.

Although it seems that strides have been made in recent years to hold corporations accountable for wrongdoings perpetrated in developing countries (e.g. *Chevron v. Ecuador*), overwhelming evidence still remains that our legal framework is unable or unwilling to right these wrongs on most occasions (e.g. the class action suit against Anvil Mining in Democratic Republic of Congo - DRC). It seems that the profit from the mining industry and laws of extraterritoriality prohibit the Canadian government from investigating claims and legislating to regulate the actions of these companies abroad. However, it is more that they are unwilling to adopt legislation and laws to hold corporations accountable and to thoroughly investigate reports of abuse (Grayson 2006; Seck 2007). The Canadian government is deeply embedded in mining investments and benefits strongly from the mining sector's economic growth (MAC, 2009). Many of the allegations from communities affected negatively by Canadian mining companies around the world, most of which have not been investigated by the Canadian government or the

corporate mainstream media, have been detailed by Yves Engler (2009), a free-lance journalist who has written many books and contributed to the alternative media.

However, even within Canada, mining companies have unethically and illegally violated laws in various communities without facing punishment (Saunders, 2008). Furthermore, activists and opponents to mining are regularly silenced through brutal violence and oppression or through media coverage that represents them as misguided, troublemakers, uneducated or even ‘terrorists’. The corporate mainstream media play an important role in the dissemination of information pertaining to this issue and its coverage is increasingly questioned by organizations and alternative independent media that are educated about this issue or have experienced or witnessed abuses firsthand. The alternative independent media become an important aspect of the critical analysis of this issue, as they are media that are independent of, and provide an alternative to, the mainstream corporate media, often challenging existing power and representing the marginalized.

Intrinsically, the point of departure of this analysis is the necessity to critically evaluate neoliberalism and the corporate social responsibility claims of Canadian mining companies. Part and parcel of this is the role of communicative discourse and the corporate mainstream media in shaping and reinforcing particular hegemonic and neoliberal ideologies of these institutional structures whilst denigrating alternatives or resistance. The Propaganda Model as delineated by Herman and Chomsky (2002) is an important tool to uncover these nuances and will inform the analysis. Herman and Chomsky (2002) explain:

The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs and codes

of behaviours that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfill this role requires systematic propaganda. (pg 1)

Additionally, it is important to problematize the term ‘development’ and to uncover the reinforcement of ‘othering’, as well as neo-imperial and neo-colonial discourse as it is used to justify the actions of the Canadian government and mining corporations. Critical analysis of these ideologies and discourse is necessary to uncover and expose whether and how the neoliberal agendas, of those in power, results in an uninformed or manipulated public. It is my belief that they are openly neoliberal, although they may not use this term, since one aspect of neoliberalism is its *apparent* transparency, however, even in the absence of the use of the term, the ideas and beliefs that neoliberalism embodies are overtly promoted.

Broadly, this document confronts the suspicion that Canadian mining companies use the technical term corporate social responsibility to facilitate their continued voluntary self-regulation, ultimately sustaining neoliberalist tendencies. This has prevented the adoption of legislation that would hold companies criminally and legally accountable and continues to obfuscate their accountability. This is partially achieved through their use of communicative discourse in the form of public relations and corporate policy promotion as well as through the corporate mainstream media.

Moreover, appropriation of the term ‘development’ arouses public support in the traditional sense of neo-colonial ideologies whereby Canadian mining companies and by extension Canada are perceived to be uplifting the plight of the poor in developing countries through superior technical resource extraction methods to develop the lands that are not being “efficiently used” by local citizens. Furthermore, neoliberalism has taken the form of neo-imperialism as corporations from ‘more developed’ countries exploit the

natural resources of 'less developed' resource rich countries to further their own culture of consumption.

Additionally, the political economic framework of communication in Canada and government approaches which emphasize free market fundamentalism facilitate this process both directly, through financial investment and diplomatic support, and indirectly, through the negotiation of trade agreements, the support of structural adjustment programs and the pressure on 'developing' countries to subscribe to foreign investment by decreasing barriers as well as by dangling the carrot of development aid. Recent Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) alignments to NGOs partnered with Canadian mining companies demonstrate this.

The research question that was critically examined and answered is: How are neoliberal values surrounding corporate social responsibility of Canadian mining companies transmitted through the mainstream media? My research objectives were to critically examine corporate media representation of mining issues and corporate social responsibility pertaining to mining and government response and ratification of policies to prevent destructive behaviours of mining companies abroad. This research was undertaken with the assumption that all such communiqués are designed to encourage the neoliberal framework which privileges corporations over citizens and that actions committed against 'the other' abroad are rationalized as attempts to bring development to the underdeveloped. Finally, in order to identify this reinforcement of neoliberalism in the corporate media, a comparison to the alternative independent media's coverage of mining issues was necessary, the assumption being that, an independent media source would not reinforce corporate and neoliberal values and would provide a different perspective on the issue presented.

My entry point for this work reflects the notion that the personal is political as I have been deeply involved with solidarity work pertaining to this issue as well as working in developing countries for a number of years. As such, the practical implications of this work will be extremely relevant for future application, for my own work and for the organizations that are vigorously working to ensure that community's rights are represented in the media and considered in enacting legislation to hold Canadian mining corporations accountable. This thesis will provide an outline of the pertinent literature surrounding this topic and both build towards and justify the specifics of my research question. This will be accomplished by examining: (a) a background to the pertinent environment of the Canadian mining industry, the current neoliberal system, CSR, the governmental response, and the development façade; (b) the political economic theoretical perspective, including the fifth filter of the Propaganda Model; (c) the methodological framework of Critical Discourse Analysis; (d) the Critical Discourse Analysis of the *Toronto Star* and *Globe and Mail* and (e) conclusions.

## **CHAPTER I: BACKGROUND**

### **(i) Canadian Mining Industry**

Considering the rich natural resources within the country Canada has always prided itself as a nation of miners or perhaps as a mining nation, with a booming mining industry. Although Canadian mining companies have been operating abroad for more than a century, it is in the last three decades, parallel with the onset of neoliberalism, that Canada and Canadian corporations have become dominant global players. Internationally, Canada is one of the leading mining countries and one of the largest producers of minerals and metals. It is estimated that some 11 – 13 million people are directly dependent on some form of mining worldwide (Henderson, 2006 p.1). Canada contributes immensely to this industry as a world leader in mining with a staggering 60% of the world's mining companies registered here (MAC, 2009). To this end, Canada has been the number one destination for investment in mineral exploration for 18 of the past 32 years (MAC, 2011).

Canadian companies account for about 40% of global exploration spending, the largest share of all nations (MAC, 2011). A major contributing factor to this is that the Canadian stock exchanges promote a friendly environment for junior mining companies by providing the best access in the world for capital for junior explorers (MAC, 2011). As the world's leading centre of expertise for mineral exploration some 1,200 exploration companies are located in British Columbia, most of which are in Vancouver. According to the Mining Association of Canada, Canadian firms account for the largest share of exploration spending in Canada, the US, Central and South America, Europe and most recently Africa (MAC, 2011).

The Toronto Stock Exchange is the global hub for mining finance; the TSX handled 83% of the world's mining equity transactions in the past five years and 90% of all global equity financings in 2011 (\$450 billion) amounting to 40% of all mining equity capital raised (MAC, 2011). Furthermore, \$12.5 billion in equity capital was raised on the TSX in 2011, the largest amount in the world with the London Stock Exchange (LSE/AIM) coming in second with \$11.9 billion. However, the TSX financed 2,021 mining projects compared to 142 on the LSE/AIM. Finally, there were 86 billion mining shares traded on the TSX and TSX Venture Exchange (TSXV) and the quoted market capital was \$426.8 billion, coming in behind the NYSE at \$1,137.1 billion (MAC, 2011).

The TSX and TSX Venture Exchange (TSXV) are home to 58% of the world's public mining companies (MAC, 2011). An estimated 800 TSX-listed companies are exploring outside Canada in over 100 countries. Additionally, 50% of the 9,300 mineral exploration projects held by TSX and TSXV companies are outside of Canada (MAC, 2011). During the past five years, 36% of global mining capital and 83% of global financing transactions were handled through the TSX (MAC, 2011). More specifically, a few mining projects in developing countries as of August 2011 included: 258 in Peru, 228 in Argentina, 150 in Brazil, 137 in Chile, 81 in Tanzania, 76 in South Africa, 69 in Mali, 59 in DR Congo, and 48 in Burkina Faso (MAC, 2011). Recently, Canadian mining companies invested over \$60 billion in developing countries abroad, with the majority of investments in Latin America and Africa (Cannon, 2009).

Stock prices of minerals also continue to rise, despite a global economic recession. Gold in the last 10 years has risen dramatically from \$300 per troy ounce to peak at \$1,860 per troy ounce in 2011 and in July 2012 it was at \$1,608 per troy ounce. TSX mining companies mainly deal in gold, potash, uranium, copper, silver, nickel, iron ore,



coal and diamonds (MAC, 2011). There are 353 senior mining firms on the TSX and these firms, together valued at \$521 billion, raised \$12.5 billion in 2010. Ten of them – Barrick, PotashCorp, Goldcorp, Teck, Kinross, Cameco, Agrium, Silver Wheaton, Agnico-Eagle and Ivanhoe – are valued at over \$10 billion each (MAC, 2011). In 2009, the top five Canadian mining corporations were also within the top ten in the world and Goldcorp Inc. founder Rob McEwan was 89<sup>th</sup> of the 100 richest Canadians with assets totaling \$568 million (*The Rich Get Richer*, 2009).

The Canadian mining industry also contributes significantly to national income. The Canadian mining industry contributed \$39.4 billion to GDP in 2010, 3.5% of the overall total as well as paying \$8.4 billion in taxes and royalties to Canadian governments (federal and provincial) that same year (MAC, 2011). As the saying goes, money talks, and this amount of money is difficult to ignore, especially when there are approximately 200 mining lobbyists in Ottawa pressuring the government to accommodate the interests of the mining industry (Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists in Brief, 2009).

The potential to make profit in mining is enormous, however, there are also many controversies. Canada has historically profited from mining extraction in countries around the world that are impoverished, infamous for their corrupt governments and at times engaged in conflict, usually over the mineral resources within the country. In 2002, a UN Special Report implicated ten Canadian mining companies in violating Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) guidelines in the war-ravaged Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (Engler, 2009 p.189). Unfortunately, the Canadian government refused to investigate and even provided support to defend the companies.

Mining is also one of the most destructive industries; devastating environments, pillaging resource-rich poor countries, destroying social and economic systems and

instigating widespread human rights abuses. “In recent years, the TNCs have increasingly moved to the Southern hemisphere where the opportunities are larger and the mining industries are less regulated; the environmental standards that are expected of the companies in the North do not apply in most of the South” (Madeley, 1999 p.87).

Numerous allegations continue to surface, from thirty different countries, accusing Canadian mining companies of human rights, environmental, and health violations, many of which have resulted in conflicts and in some cases death (Engler, 2009). Additionally, there have been many allegations by communities accusing mining companies of not undertaking proper consultations with community members prior to beginning extraction (Gedicks, 2001; Moody, 2007) as well as enlisting paramilitary forces in order to protect their interests and coerce silence from opposition (Drohan, 2003). Canadian mining company Goldcorp Inc. has negatively affected communities in Guatemala’s highlands by destroying land, creating massive cracks in their homes from explosions, contributing to divisions within the communities and operating without prior informed consent (Rodriguez, 2007). Golden Star Resources, a Canadian mining company operating in Ghana has contaminated water, not provided fair compensation for land and contracted security forces that have been involved in shooting locals who trespass (Sicotte-Levesque, 2007).

## **(ii) Capitalism, Globalization and Neoliberalism**

Capitalism, our current economic and social system, is a mode of production based on the division of wage labour, privatization, hierarchical class divisions and the exchange and accumulation of commodities (Marx, 1867). Capitalism promotes mass production and consumption requiring expansion into new markets, on an ongoing basis,

in order to meet these demands. A regulatory framework and ideological approach of advanced capitalism is neoliberalism. Neoliberalism, according to Klein (2007), is the phenomenon of liberating world markets, stripping capitalism of its Keynesian attributes and constraints leading to a free market economy (p.303). Neoliberalism arose in response to the crisis of over-accumulation in advanced capitalist economies, and is aimed at the restoration of profitability that was curtailed during the 1960s, through the aggressive restructuring of economic, political, financial and social policies (Gordon & Webber, 2008 p.65). It focuses on the importance of free market forces and minimal government intervention (Gordon & Webber, 2008). Smart (2003) elaborates that, since the 1970s, these neoliberal ideologies have been embraced and promoted by economists, policy makers and governments (p.83). In an effort to secure the capitalist mode of production, neoliberalism used democracy and private property to solidify its position.

Advocates of neoliberalism sought to reinvigorate the principles of classical liberalism, as espoused by scholars such as John Locke and Adam Smith, which claimed that free and democratic exercise of individual self-interest leads to the common social good. The primary means of realizing individual self-interest are private property rights and an unfettered market where unadulterated prices would serve as the most efficient means to allocate social resources. (Farmer 2009, p. 37).

Subsequently there has also been a de-linking of financial and other forms of fictitious capital from national states and the rise in transnational economic processes resulting in corporate globalization (Carroll, 2004 p. 9). Globalization, or corporate globalization, is defined by Mosco (2009) as the spatial agglomeration of capital, led by transnational business and the state that transforms the spaces through which flow resources and commodities, including communication and information services (p. 179). Spatial change is at the core of globalization because those in control of political economic resources are able to capitalize on reduced time and space constraints to

maximize the flow of profit. The roots of globalization may be traced back to colonization and are viewed as an undeniably capitalist process (Guttal, 2007). Guttal (2007) goes on to say that:

Globalization is both a result and a force of modernization and capitalist expansion, entailing the integration of all economic activity (local, national, and regional) into a 'global' market place: that is, a market place that transcends geo-political borders and is not subject to regulation by nation states. The practical manifestations of this integration are the dismantling of national barriers to external trade and finance, deregulation of the economy, export-driven economic growth, removal of controls on the transnational mobility of finance capital, expansion of portfolio capital, privatization, and the restructuring of local and national economies to facilitate free-market capitalism. (p.70)

Essentially, neoliberalism facilitates corporate globalization and results in a world capitalist economy, opening up new markets in the global South, through reduced trade barriers and liberalizing of economic policies. Furthermore, the world capitalist system, through corporate globalization, creates a "single world economy," comprised of numerous nation-states, "competing with each other directly and via their corporations" (Foster & Clark, 2004 p. 187). National and transnational corporations are the main proponents of "neo-liberal, economic globalization" (Guttal, 2007 p.72).

Since capitalism will only survive by constant expansion to ensure access to unlimited resources and commodities, the process of neoliberalization is necessary in order to open up new markets in the global South. Therefore, Carroll claims "it is no accident that the globalization of capital and the consolidation of a neo-liberal policy paradigm have gone hand in hand" (Carroll 2004 p. 10). "An integral companion to globalization is liberal democracy, which cloaks neo-liberal policy prescriptions in the language of individualized rights, liberties, and choice," and ultimately democracy itself (Guttal, 2007 p.71).

Neoliberalism and corporate globalization have led to a massive transfer of wealth from the South to the North by multinationals from the North, which “have gained unprecedented access to the economies and natural resources of developing countries” (Gordon & Webber, 2008 p. 66). Foster and Clark (2004) contend that “extraction of raw materials for commodity production is organized around meeting the demands of the countries of the North, where approximately 25 per cent of the world’s population lives but which consumes 75 per cent of global resources” (p. 194).

Characteristic of neoliberalism and corporate globalization are the loosening of trade barriers, altering of government roles and structures, and introduction of multilateral organizations in order to ensure the primacy of the free market and economic development. International trade and monetary organizations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as specialized UN agencies which “provide the economic and financial architecture”, and legislation focusing on free trade have facilitated this global expansion of capitalism and with it exploitation that cannot be regulated (Guttal, 2007 p. 73; Carroll, 2004 p. 9). Governments are crucial in this process as they are the facilitators of the very environment in which corporations operate by “securing domestic and external markets for these pet corporations through subsidies, preferential bidding and contract awards, export credits, development aid, trade and investment agreements, and military aggression” (Guttal, 2007 p.73). Without government policies or free trade agreements and treaties as well as the slashing of tariffs, regulations and taxes, corporations would not be able to operate with such freedom. According to Gordon and Webber (2008), free trade agreements are “aimed at codifying neo-liberalism and investment rights of capital from the North in developing nations” (p. 66). So in essence free trade is actually to

create more freedom for TNCs to operate without restriction. Brownlee (2005) asserts, “free trade agreements have little to do with freeing trade. Rather, the primary purpose (and corresponding effect) of these agreements is to free capital to pursue investments and profit-making without interference” (p. 51). The non-interference and freedom of the market that neoliberalism subscribes to is actually nothing of the sort. The system itself is riddled with interference and tampering by monopolies and TNCs as well as government policies that open up avenues or even freeways of corporate domination. The seeming erosion of the state is actually a veil that hides the fact that governments are acting in the interests of TNCs.

### **(iii) Corporate Social Responsibility**

Intrinsic to this process of neoliberal globalization are corporations. Corporations are a form of business ownership made up of individuals who own shares of the company but have limited liability. The original corporation, as an association of people contracted by the state to perform a particular function, has drastically changed. Corporations have been given “legal persons” status and are afforded with rights as a legal entity that is separate and distinct from their owners. A corporation has the rights and responsibilities of individuals, such as, to enter into contracts, loan and borrow money, sue and be sued, hire employees, own assets and pay taxes, but with limited liability for its shareholders. Shareholders are able to gain profits from stock but are not held personally responsible for the company’s actions or debts. Maximizing profit and appeasing shareholders are the ultimate goals of the contemporary corporation; having emerged centuries ago, they began to gain incredible strength and power at the beginning of the twentieth century (Carroll, 2004 p.2).

Increasingly, this power has been projected beyond national states in the form of transnational corporations (TNCs) and banks, a global capital market, and a complex of quasi-state institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and since 1994, the World Trade Organization. (Carroll, 2004 p. 2)

Corporations, and TNCs in particular, operate in countries where they can capitalize on higher profit rates and that have relaxed regulations in order to entice investment. Gedicks (2001) and Madelay (1999) both explain that pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank has caused many governments of developing countries in the global South to change their mining laws, ease regulations and offer tax concessions to TNCs in order to appear more attractive to foreign investment (Gedicks, 2001 p. 22; Madelay, 1999 p. 88). Additionally, similar class compromises and corporate control that are present in Canada also exist in host governments and, at times, the royalties given to them by mining companies blind governments. Furthermore, multilateral institutions and the governments of powerful nations pressure host governments by using loans with structural adjustment programs or promises of development aid. Mining companies gladly expand and extract what resources they can from countries with relaxed environmental and social laws, not suffering consequences for their actions, but instead are supported by multi-lateral and multi-national organizations, like the World Bank, IMF, WTO and their own governments. The Canadian government has even played a role in creating these mining havens as “the last decade saw the Canadian government provide technical and financial support to create industry-friendly mining codes around the world” (Schulman & Nieto, 2011). The Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability “documented how government initiatives in Colombia and Tanzania have translated into weaker environmental and social

safeguards, reduced royalties for the host countries and new tax holidays” (Schulman & Nieto, 2011).

The term Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become the newest trend word that is being used by corporate, government and non-profit officials surrounding corporate accountability and responsibilities, especially abroad. CSR is defined by Archie Carroll (1979) as “the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time” (p.500 qtd in Schwartz & Carroll, 2003). It is important to note that these expectations could and have changed over time according to global norms of conduct (Dashwood, 2005; 2007). Therefore, no single definition of CSR exists, however, most include elements of accountability, responsiveness, proactive corporate behaviour and voluntarism (Yakovleva, 2005 p.13). Enmeshed with CSR is the concept of Corporate Sustainable Development. Bansal (2005) defines corporate sustainable development as the intertwining and mutual exclusivity of three principles: environmental integrity through corporate environmental management; social equity through corporate social responsibility; and economic prosperity through value creation (p. 199-200).

The beginnings of CSR can be traced to Howard Bowen’s 1953 book *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman* but it was not until the 1960s that the concept became more fully developed (Yakovleva, 2005 p.10). CSR is derived from several concepts and theories including legitimacy theory, concepts of social contract and public responsibility, stakeholder theory, business ethics and corporate citizenship (Yakovleva, 2005 p.10). Yakovleva (2005) believes that the growth of CSR is linked to important societal changes including increased interests in business, the shrinking role of the government, an increased interest in social and environmental issues, a competitive labour market, supply



chain responsibility, growing investor pressure, growing peer pressure and demands for increased disclosure (p.15-6).

According to Spector (2008), the origins of the CSR movement are rooted in the attempt to justify capitalism, which was threatened during the Cold War. This justification was achieved by associating the responsibility of a “good society” with the business community. Spector (2008) elaborates that:

By supporting and encouraging free-market values, by fighting the spread of seditious and anti-capitalist points of view, and by opening trade and development with underserved regions in the global marketplace, business leaders could proclaim themselves to be agents of worldwide benefit in a way that also served their more immediate interests. (p.319)

To this end, democracy was equated with capitalism, a contradiction in terms, since capitalism is based on a system of exploitation and inequality. Furthermore, this demonstrates that CSR has underlying paternalistic and neo-imperialist roots. Nonetheless, business elites embraced their role in propagating capitalism and promoting the social potential of their corporations through the concept of CSR (Spector, 2008). This was further rationalized as the maintenance of the American way of life against the evils of communism, that would threaten private enterprise, and to persuade those who doubted capitalism after the effects of the Great Depression (Spector, 2008).

Stohl, Stohl and Townsley (2007) contend that there has been an evolution of CSR over time, in the form of three generations of CSR. These have evolved from negative responsibilities, to rights, and finally, to proactive or positive responsibilities (p.31). As was mentioned above, CSR changes as required by perceptions of global conduct. Stohl et al. (2007) explain that these evolutionary changes have manifested in conjunction with “evolutions to global standards of human rights and the increased collaboration of

corporations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and governmental organizations in the developing, monitoring, and implementing of human rights standards” (p.32).

Legitimacy, as mentioned above, is one of the benchmarks of CSR. As defined by Suchman (1995) legitimacy is “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (p. 574 in Palazzo & Scherer, 2006 p.2). Furthermore, it provides acceptable justification for actions by meeting context-specific expectations or norms. “Legitimacy is vital for organizational survival as it is the precondition for the continuous flow of resources and the sustained support by the organization’s constituents” (Parsons, 1960; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Weber, 1978 in Palazzo & Scherer, 2006).

Yet, the criteria for attaining legitimacy are determined by the authoritative body that would influence and decide the corporation’s survival. For corporations, whose main priority is profit, these would include investors, shareholders, and government regulators. Kuyek (2006) believes that the concept of CSR is a mechanism through which “the mining industry attempts to fashion its legitimacy in the public eye and retain and expand its power and influence” (in North et al., 2006 p.204). Furthermore, Bansal’s (2004) study of Canadian oil and gas, forestry and mining firms from 1986 to 1995 on corporate sustainable development determined that, among other things, media pressure has resulted in the adoption of and adherence to sustainable development (2004 p. 210). This reinforces the role the media play in disseminating vital information to the public and in shaping discourse. To this end, the roles of the public would be to pressure institutions that hold corporations accountable as well as by responding to reputational damage by affecting consumer spending and ultimately corporate profits. Public pressure, therefore,

plays a key role in legitimating corporations, if in fact other actors, such as government, are able to hold them accountable.

Sethi (2003) calls for a shift from CSR to Corporate Social Accountability (CSA) explaining that especially since corporations only accept CSR if exercised voluntarily it does not inspire good corporate conduct. Sethi instead proposes that it is the external economic-competitive conditions, incentives to uphold conduct and strong institutions of accountability that define the parameters and opportunities for good corporate conduct (Sethi, 2003). The corporation's incentives to conform to these standards are also dependent on the penalty for non-conformity, e.g. loss of profit or investment, as well as the presence of a system of regulation, accountability and penalty.

Regulation had always been used to hold corporations accountable, however, with the expansion of operations beyond national borders "the ability of an individual state to hold corporations accountable for their activities" has drastically diminished (Richter, 2001 p.8). Yet, the environment of unbridled pursuit of profit by corporations is the situation where regulation is needed the most. "But no effective and consistent web of binding laws and standards at the international level has emerged as yet, largely because of several changes of the past three decades in international economic and political spheres" (Richter, 2001 p.8).

As an alternative, self-regulation has become the order of the day: unfortunately and not surprisingly, it is not working. Reports of abuses continue to increase and corporations continue to operate with impunity. Grayson (2006) explains that the rationale behind self-regulation did not originate within the Canadian government or corporate community. "Rather, the justification for self-regulation rests on four key propositions that have been mined from neoclassical economic theory and which, over the

past three decades, have become entrenched governance principles at the national and global levels” (Grayson, 2006 p.483). These principles include: (1) the notion that governments’ interference with business (public interference in private) should be avoided as it creates inefficiencies that reduce profit and prosperity and discourages innovation; (2) businesses will abide by CSR standards to avoid bad publicity, consumer boycotts and shareholder unrest making the market the best regulator of corporate behaviour; (3) business-led norms will be better internalized and lead to a higher rate of compliance as members understand the nature of the industry better and possess the necessary social capital to assume legitimate leadership; and (4) mandatory codes place corporations at a higher risk for false allegations leading to reputational damage and unnecessary legal costs (Grayson, 2006 p. 483).

These principles prove that corporations and the CSR discourse still cling to the myth of the benevolent company touting ‘business ethics as good for business’ slogans. Promises of corporate responsibility and good governance replace binding public regulation, which “appeal to good intentions but overlook significant differential relationships of power” and in the age of post-modernism seems quite naïve (Richter, 2001 p. 18). Furthermore, voluntary measures seem to primarily focus on the reduction of costs and risks to corporations instead of eliminating bad practices (Grayson, 2006 p. 484).

CSR in the mining sector has been receiving a large amount of attention due to the destructive nature of the industry. Acutt et al. (2001) contend, that “CSR in the mining industry is viewed as a mechanism for maximization of positive and minimization of negative social and environmental impacts of mining, while maintaining profits” (in Yakovleva, 2005 p.19). Ultimately, as one of the masterminds behind free market

fundamentalism, Milton Friedman agreed “the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits... to make the most money as possible while conforming to the basic rules of the society, both those embodied in law and those embodied in ethical culture” (qtd in Houck & Williams, 1996). And if there are no particular laws that ensure corporations conform, should we assume that corporations will act appropriately?

Yakovleva (2005) explains, “CSR is particularly relevant to the mining industries, because they cause significant effects upon economic, social and environmental dimensions, and are particularly viewed amongst the most damaging and dangerous industrial sectors” (p.19). This is largely since there have been many examples of environmental disasters and human rights violations linked to the mining industry. However, the current structure of CSR does not inspire conformity and in particular mining debunks the notion that public pressure will force firms to behave appropriately, therefore, it does not work as a form of disciplinary mechanism. This is due to the fact that the mining sector does not sell directly to the public but sells its products to other enterprises and combines them with other materials before selling them to the public. “Consumer awareness of where specific natural resource products originate is virtually nil and the information is difficult to find or unavailable” (Grayson, 2006 p.486). Although there are attempts to monitor ethics and trace the origins of some minerals, such as diamonds, through the Kimberly Process, this system is not without flaws (Brilliant Earth, 2012). To this end, most corporations in the natural resource sector do not face the same punitive measures of public profile and image issues as other commercial sectors. Until mandatory regulations with penalties, both financial and criminal, are initiated to force corporate compliance, mining corporations will continue to operate with impunity.

#### **(iv) Regulatory Difficulties**

States have come under scrutiny concerning their roles in regulating corporations operating in foreign countries. Shamir (2008) believes that the contemporary state of CSR is linked to pressures on corporations from civic groups, activists, consumers, and NGOs. This pressure replaces socio-moral duties absent in government, in the increasingly neoliberal state. Shamir refers to the “economization of the political” as states acting in a corporate-like form, incorporating neoliberal tendencies into all aspects of operation, which ultimately penetrates social relations and discourse in “the practice of commodification, capital accumulation, and profit making” (Shamir, 2008 p.3). This permeation of neoliberalism into all institutions, including government, dissolves the distinction between economy and society. This manifests itself in a form of internalized oppression, government corruption or deliberate corporate interest, whereby governments feel roles previously held by them are better performed by business actors and transferred as such. Additionally, morality becomes economized, meaning that social relations and morality are situated within a neoliberal framework and rationalized within the capitalist market to maintain and perpetuate the system (Shamir, 2008 p.3).

Important to note is the assumption that, in an increasingly neoliberal environment, the state should not assume particular roles that interfere with the market and that the private sector is more competent in meeting the social good. Contrary to this myth, “the transition to neo-liberalism has not meant a simple withdrawal of the state from the world of corporate business”, but instead, an active role in it (Carroll, 2004 p. 46). Clark (2003) outlines the active role played by the Canadian government in mineral extraction in Latin America, both indirectly, by promoting international agreements and institutions that encourage and regulate “worldwide market integration and

liberalization”, including the World Trade Organization (WTO), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank (WB), and directly, through its relationships with Canadian mining companies (p.5). Additionally, the Canadian government has not attempted to establish legislation that would “protect the interests of the environment, labour, and communities,” and when legislation does exist they have not enforced or respected such laws, “nor have they championed strong domestic regulation of corporate activities abroad” (Clark, 2003 p.5).

Seck (2007) demonstrates that the Canadian government’s support of Canadian mining investment abroad is publicized as an economic opportunity and a way to propel Canadian competitiveness globally as well as an important development strategy for less developed countries (p.53). Furthermore, the Canadian government supports Canadian mining corporations with consular services, CIDA support in mineral-rich developing countries, Export Development Canada (EDC) financing, and Canada Pension Plan investments (Seck, 2007 p.56-7). Further still, in the last two years, CIDA has realigned its development spending to support NGOs partnered with Canadian mining companies (Schulman & Nieto, 2011).

Since the 1990s, the Canadian government has been involved in discussions of the CSR of Canadian mining companies with recognition that there have been destructive behaviours within the mining sector. In response to this, the industry and the Canadian government have attempted to create industry-led codes of conduct, guidelines, and initiatives (Seck, 2007 p. 64). In 2005, a Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT) Report was developed in response to a delegation of community members from the Philippines who were affected by a Canadian mining company and who testified before the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Human Rights and

International Development of the SCFAIT. This report set in motion a series of events that have garnered increased attention to Canadian mining companies and CSR. These included a governmental response that same year, roundtables for CSR in the extractive industries in cities across Canada in 2006 and a report with recommendations from these events in 2007 as well as the subsequent Private Members Bill C-300 in 2009, which was defeated in Parliament in October of 2010. Unfortunately, all of these initiatives are voluntary and self-regulated with no criminal or legal accountability for Canadian mining companies.

Bill C-300, “An Act respecting Corporate Accountability for the Activities of Mining, Oil or Gas in Developing Countries”, a Private Member’s Bill introduced by Liberal MP John McKay had its first reading February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009. It was the most progressive attempt to date to hold Canadian corporations accountable abroad, yet it was defeated at its third reading on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and many felt that it was a weak effort that failed to address the legal gaps in the system. According to the bill’s summary:

The purpose of this enactment is to promote environmental best practices and to ensure the protection and promotion of international human rights standards in respect of the mining, oil or gas activities of Canadian corporations in developing countries. It also gives the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of International Trade the responsibility to issue guidelines that articulate corporate accountability standards for mining, oil or gas activities and it requires the Ministers to submit an annual report to both Houses of Parliament on the provisions and operation of this Act. (Bill C-300, 2009)

The Act goes on to say that it would affect corporations “receiving support from the Government of Canada” and would rely on international environmental best practices and international human rights standards (Bill C-300, 2009). Both of these points have been criticized by organizations such as Rights Action who explain that from the beginning it is clear that the “main purpose of Bill C-300 eliminates the policies and activities of a



majority of Canadian mining, oil and gas corporations from being covered by this Bill, as they do not receive support from the Canadian government” (Rights Action, 2009). Furthermore, the 2005 Standing Committee (SCFAIT) acknowledged that “Canada does not yet have laws to ensure that the activities of Canadian mining companies in developing countries conform to human rights standards” and according to the rule of law, Bill C-300 would not remedy this problem (Rights Action, 2009).

The Bill explained, in the powers and functions section, that

the Ministers [Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of International Trade] shall receive complaints regarding Canadian companies engaged in mining, oil or gas activities from any Canadian citizen or permanent resident or any resident or citizen of a developing country in which such activities have occurred or are occurring. (Bill C-300, 2009)

As Rights Action explain “Bill C-300 keeps the entire process of holding corporations accountable... out of our legal system” and disregards any enforcement of criminal and/or civil law sanction and/or punishments (Rights Action, 2009). By placing the power in the hands of “the Ministers” this undermines the rule of law. Furthermore, it demonstrates the weakness of our legal system as the 2005 SCFAIT pronounced and does not attempt to rectify the legal gaps in the system, instead by-passing the legal system and making “the Ministers” judge and jury with no power to hold corporations criminally accountable.

The Bill then outlined the complaint and investigative process explaining that the complaint must be in writing and identify which violations have occurred as well as provide “reasonable grounds for the belief that a contravention has occurred” (Bill C-300, 2009).

If the Minister who receives the complaint determines that the request is frivolous or vexatious or is made in bad faith, he or she may decline to examine the matter. Otherwise, he or she shall examine the matter described in the complaint and assess compliance with the guidelines. (Bill C-300, 2009)

It goes on to explain that the investigative process may include consideration of information from the corporation or from the public (including evidence from witnesses outside of Canada). The results of the examination, valid or frivolous or vexatious or made in bad faith, shall be published in the *Canada Gazette* including reasons for the determination.

Additionally, “The Ministers shall notify the President of Export Development Canada and the Chairperson of the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board where they determine that a corporation’s mining, oil or gas activities are inconsistent with the guidelines” (Bill C-300, 2009). Rights Action explains that this is the most powerful point of the Bill because although “few corporations get support from Export Development Canada, the Canada Pension Plan is ... invested in many mining, oil or gas corporations” (Rights Action, 2009). Demonstrating that the CPP also had a lot to lose from the success of Bill C-300, potentially an additional reason for its defeat. Furthermore:

The Ministers shall notify the Governor in Council of any inconsistency with the guidelines ... that has or may give rise to a grave breach of international peace and security or international human rights within the meaning of section 4 of the Special Economic Measures Act. (Bill C-300, 2009)

This refers to making a resolution to an international organization, of which Canada is a member, in the event of the occurrence of crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide wherein economic sanctions may be imposed. Again this does not ensure that criminal sanctions are placed on companies involved in any of these serious offenses.

Finally, “The Ministers may prepare, compile, publish and distribute information on mining, oil or gas activities and on international human rights standards and provide advice to Canadian corporations concerning the latter” (Bill C-300, 2009). From this

statement the relationship between the Canadian government and Canadian mining, oil and gas companies could be questioned. Instead of holding them legally or criminally accountable for their actions abroad they will be given advice on international human rights standards.

The Ministers would be responsible for issuing guidelines that articulate corporate accountability standards for mining, oil and gas activities and would incorporate (a) the IFC's Policy on Social & Environmental Sustainability, Performance Standards on Social & Environmental Sustainability, Guidance Notes to those standards, and Environmental, Health and Safety General Guidelines; (b) the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights; (c) human rights provisions that ensure corporations operate in a manner that is consistent with international human rights standards; and (d) any other standard consistent with international human rights standards (Bill C-300, 2009). Rights Action explains that these guidelines include a list of non-binding and voluntary compliance guidelines that provide no criminal or civil enforceability or sanction mechanism (Rights Action, 2009).

Instead the Bill's sanctions are economic in nature including that the Export Development Corporation "shall not enter into, continue or renew a transaction related to mining, oil or gas activities, as that term is defined in the Corporate Accountability of Mining, Oil and Gas Corporations in Developing Countries Act" unless they adhere to and continue compliance of the guidelines (Bill C-300, 2009). In addition, the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board would be required to take the act into consideration when investing assets and not allow for investment in any company that has been found in violation of the act. Finally, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade would ensure that activities related to mining, oil and gas adhere to the agreed upon

guidelines and that they would not provide additional consular support or promotion of mining, oil and gas companies to those who do not adhere to the guidelines.

CSR is promoted as an attempt to ensure that corporations uphold commitments to community stakeholders, however, essentially corporations are only accountable to their shareholders. Clark (2003) explains that:

Based on corporate charters, [the corporate perspective], focuses on the primacy of profitability and the maximization of shareholder value. Community objectives are not seen as necessarily opposed to this perspective, but can be incorporated only to the extent that they do not impede these two dominant corporate aims. (p.7)

CSR assumes that these objectives are compatible and understandable to all involved and denies the fact that corporations are in a position of power over communities. Although the concept of “multi-stakeholder” is used quite frequently in rhetoric surrounding corporate accountability, the neoliberal framework suggests that there is an equal sharing of power amongst all stakeholders involved when in fact communities, which are even referred to as stakeholders, do not hold equal power (Clark, 2003 p.8). “Citizen actors, including affected communities and their allies are historically both the most deeply affected by mining and the least able to influence its conditions of operation” (Sagebien, Lindsay, Campbell, Cameron, & Smith, 2008 p.107).

Additionally, the very essence of the organizational structure of a corporation actually absolves individuals of their actions and therefore some suggest that, “CSR exist(s) in the main as a vehicle through which public relations departments pursue their aims” (Clark, 2003 p.8). Clark (2003) believes that “the concept of CSR seems to have been concocted in order to legitimate the broader trend towards non-state standard setting and regulation” and particular CSR programs such as the consultative process called Mines, Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD) “serve the public relations

purpose of validating the means and ends of the dominant actors – mining investors” (p.9). This corresponds with what Rampton and Stauber (2004) describe as “perception management” whereby the corporation creates an illusion or perception of responsibility or accountability in order to gain the public’s trust and maintain voluntary self-regulation. To this end, corporations attempt to use CSR to legitimate their actions (Palazzo & Scherer, 2002; Vaara & Tienari, 2008) and to affect public policy through public relations campaigns (Hiebert, 2005; Moody, 2007; Sullivan & Frankental, 2002).

Meanwhile Drohan (2004) discusses in detail corporations’ lack of accountability and the failure of national governments (that of the country of origin of the corporation and of the country of operation) to take responsibility, as well as the “gaping hole” at the international level in the laws that apply to corporations. Drohan (2004) outlines the various loopholes that exist at the national and international levels through the use of voluntary guidelines rather than laws, which serve to impede the ability to bring corporations to justice. Furthermore, she discusses the pressures imposed by the business community on international organizations and national governments in order to maintain de-regulation, relaxed policies and voluntary compliance (Drohan, 2004).

Attempts at a regulatory corporate framework at the international level, in the United Nations, have been quashed for decades but neoliberal ideologies have reigned supreme and the corporate agenda has co-opted efforts to discuss, let alone pass, anything resembling regulation such as the UN Code of Conduct on Transnational Corporations which was drafted in the 1970s and abandoned in the 1980s (Richter, 2001). The closest thing the UN has come up with is the UN-ICC (International Chamber of Commerce) Global Compact launched in 1999, which relies on corporations to regulate themselves and on voluntary membership without monitoring or enforcement. Surprisingly, the

World Bank (1997), in its *World Development Report 1997: The state in a changing world* even called for mandatory state-based regulation of corporate conduct in key areas like the environment in an effort to aid in the provision of human security (p. 64-67). Yet, there remains no mandatory regulatory framework for corporate standards of conduct.

Canadian legislation has yet to be passed which would hold Canadian mining corporations working abroad accountable both legally and criminally for environmental, social and human rights violations. Most of the documents and policies that have been passed thus far, including the most recently debated and defeated Private Member's Bill C-300, involved voluntary compliance by corporations. Key objections to regulations by the mining industry are largely based on the assumptions of neoclassical economic models, which are difficult to break free from if one adulterates free-market principles, and misses the important point of regulation, which is to protect those vulnerable to abuse (Grayson, 2006 p.488).

However, Henderson (2006) and Dashwood (2005) believe that Canadian mining companies have been at the forefront of innovative and groundbreaking initiatives for the mining sector and in CSR in the form of the Global Mining Initiative (GMI) of 1998. The GMI was a voluntary, self-regulated initiative created by mining and metals companies to identify the industry's role in the transition and long-term contribution to sustainable development. This leadership on behalf of Canadian mining companies, Dashwood (2005) contends, is only partially due to a desire for corporations to improve their public image and is primarily fundamental to discourse surrounding the "devolution of political authority away from national governments" in favour of an increased role of the private sector (p.979). Accordingly, she argues that the private sector's increased role has

contributed to the advancement of corporate social responsibility as a concept (Dashwood, 2005 p. 979).

The Canadian government as well as mining proponents continue to argue that mining investment can contribute to development, exulting the “world-class corporate social responsibility initiatives of Canadian mining companies” as well as the National Roundtable report on CSR as examples, however, academic and many civil society critics note many anti-development effects related to mining (Sagebien et al., 2008 p.104). Sagebien et al. (2008) are convinced that CSR in itself “an effective risk-management strategy for companies, affected communities, or host nations, nor does CSR alone contribute sufficiently to genuinely sustainable development goals” (p.vi). Although CSR is considered a positive step towards sustainable development, Sagebien et al. believe that “greater diplomatic oversight and support is warranted in order to enhance the uneven efficacy of corporate initiatives” (2008 p.iv).

Seck (2007) and Grayson (2006) report that there are institutions and laws in place, or that could be created, which have the potential to regulate Canadian mining companies operating abroad but government willingness to do so is lacking. CSR with voluntary compliance is presented as the only plausible solution. Bill C-300 was an attempt to create transparency and hold corporations accountable, however, any possibility of being passed was not likely since if it was passed it would have acknowledged the flaw with the current legal, regulatory and economic systems that favour profit over people and environment.

Not surprisingly, many scholars describe Canadian mining abroad as a form of neo-imperialism. Gordon and Webber (2008) point out that “Canada is an advanced capitalist state within a hierarchy of nations operating within the global capitalist economy” and

that “the activities of Canadian mining companies and the Canadian state....must therefore be analysed within the broader dynamics of global capitalism and, in particular, the relations between countries of the global North and those of the global South” (p. 64). Gordon and Webber (2008) explain that Canada has played a role in neo-imperialism in the form of political and economic restructuring through their mining corporations and their participation in the IMF and World Bank (p. 66). Ultimately, Canadian mining companies are exhibiting neo-imperialist tendencies resulting in what Foster and Clark (2004) call “ecological imperialism” (p.187). Ecological imperialism entails the pillage of the resources of some countries by others and the transformation of whole ecosystems upon which states and nations depend (Foster & Clark, 2004 p. 187). This concept essentially describes imperialism but emphasizes the environmental impact of the practice on ecosystems instead of populations in an era of environmental consciousness.

Galeano (1973) described many of these themes of neo-imperialism, in the form of resource pillaging to maintain the hierarchy of exploitation and the culture of consumption of the global North so long ago, yet they prevail today. Smart (2003) explains how the capitalist economic system of production and consumption pervades all facets of society and results in a “culture of consumption” (p.53-79). This commodification resonates within the mining industry as well, since companies flourish in the over-accumulation of commodities and capital. This obsession with commodity fetishism and conspicuous consumption has resulted in the expansion of the Canadian mining industry into foreign markets in order to meet the global demand, more specifically, the demand of consumers in advanced capitalist countries (Smart, 2003 p.55). Consequently, failing to identify neo-imperialism exposes the possibility “that the problematic behaviour of Canadian mining companies in regions like Latin America can



be addressed through notions of corporate responsibility – that is, that these corporations can self-regulate in a socially responsible manner”, instead of identifying the real issues: capitalism and neoliberalism (Gordon & Webber, 2008 p. 64).

#### **(v) The Development Façade**

Development is a word that triggers images of a better world for the less fortunate, deliverance to a new standard of living and fulfilling potentials. As Cornwall (2007) explains “words make worlds” (p.1). “The language of development defines worlds-in-the-making, animating and justifying intervention on currently existing worlds with fulsome promises of the possible” (Cornwall, 2007 p.1). Most neoliberal policy and corporate globalization is justified under the guise of “development” without the critical analysis of the insatiable consumption of countries of the North, in what Gedicks calls the “discourse of dominance” (Madelay, 1999 p. 88; Gedicks, 2001 p.21). Development is also frequently given as the outcome for the activities of Canadian mining companies in ‘developing’ countries, yet the term itself is problematical.

The meaning of the term ‘development’ is vague with no agreed upon definition despite its widespread usage. Instead it tends to refer to “a set of beliefs and assumptions about the nature of social progress rather than to anything more precise” (Rist, 2007 p.19). However, with the inception of the term in the 1960s it seemed to be accompanied by the unquestioned assumption that whatever it was, development “could lead to improvement in the situation of poor people” (Hayter, 2005 p.89 in Rist, 2007 p.20). It also lends itself to wishful or idealistic thinking that whisks us away to envision a better world. However, its elusiveness is what propels us to strive for continued strategies and theories of how to achieve it. To this end, Wolfgang Sachs contends, “development is

much more than just a socio-economic endeavour; it is a perception which models reality, a myth which comforts societies, and a fantasy which unleashes passions” (1992 p.1 in Cornwall, 2007 p.1).

The elusive and undefined nature of the term has unfortunately led to its appropriation for various agendas. Guttal (2007) points out, “from its inception, development was conceptualized as a modernizing endeavour through which people in the South could consume, think, and act like their counterparts in the North” (p.74). Therefore, development is often used as a tool to promote neoliberalism and globalization and to present these processes as justified and well intentioned.

The vague nature of the term also elicits different definitions depending on who is doing the defining. Development is usually defined as economic development and unfortunately does not always coincide with community understandings or desires of development (Levy, 2002; Moody, 2007). Even the Canadian government promotes Canadian investment abroad by mining companies, citing it as an infusion of much needed capital for developing countries (DFAIT 2005, p.1). Rist (2007) suggests that when defining development you put aside the emotional and normative connotations associated with the term and instead define it for the actual social practices and consequences that result in its name. According to him “the essence of ‘development’ is the general transformation and destruction of the natural environment and of social relations in order to increase the production of commodities (goods and services) geared, by means of market exchange, to effective demand” (Rist, 2007 p.23). From this definition it becomes clear that Canadian mining companies actually are doing development but most of the public is still blinded by the façade of development as a positive improvement to lives and not the crude but realistic definition provided above.

Opposition to any of the concepts described above: capitalism, globalization, neoliberalism, development or neo-imperialism, is met with staunch criticism and negativity. Seen as standing in the way of progress or development, those who resist and attempt to maintain control over their own resources or to define development in their own terms are represented as backward, uneducated or uncivilized in the case of local people and as misled, radical or uninformed in the case of people from ‘developed’ countries. Linked to the culture of consumption and the expansion to foreign lands Gedicks explains that indigenous communities that resist or stand in the way of the economic exploitation of valuable resources are dehumanized in a form of “developmental genocide” (2001, p.16). This manifests itself in the ‘othering’ of local people or dissidents, especially in the mainstream corporate media.

## CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

First and foremost, this research is grounded in the foundation of critical theory, which, although fragmented, displays common themes. These themes focus on social constructivism and subjectivity, critical reflection on structures of inequality, power relations and domination, a normative framework as a base, and the principles of emancipation through understanding for social change (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005). According to Habermas, “the role of the critical theorist is to reveal the social structures and processes that have led to ideological hegemony” (in Miller, 2005 p.73). This is especially pertinent for this study as it examines the ideological hegemony that exists within media discourse due to these social structures and processes.

Although there remain differing opinions within the approach, the concepts of social constructivism, cognitive emancipation and praxis remain steadfast and universally accepted. Moreover, “theorists in the critical theory tradition feel a responsibility not to simply represent the social world...but to work as active agents of reform and radical change” (Miller, 2005 p.66). This research has been grounded in the belief that once structures of inequality and power relations have been uncovered the researcher has a duty not only to describe such instances but also to actively challenge them.

Within this critical theory tradition, political economy encompasses the strongest expression of the theoretical framework that was used in this research. Cox (1995) explains that political economy is critical theory as it situates political and economic activity within a historically constituted framework and evaluates the evolution of these over time. Furthermore, the research goes further to incorporate Herman and Chomsky’s Propaganda Model into the analysis as a conceptual framework within a political economic theory of communication.

### **(i) Political Economy**

Research based in a political economy framework studies the connections and influences between politics and economics or the “interaction of state and market” (Hettne, 1995 p.2). Although the origins of the classical frameworks of political economic theory can be traced to Adam Smith and David Ricardo and have been adapted by Marx and more recently Kuhn, it is Mosco’s description of it as “the study of *the social relations, particularly the power relations, that mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of resources*” that was employed for this research (Mosco, 2009 p. 24). An analysis of power is central to this framework as it explains the essence of how the state and market interact to maintain control of resources, human and material. Mosco (2009) explains that political economy “asks us to concentrate on a specific set of social relations organized around *power* or the ability to control other people, processes and things, even in the face of resistance” (p.24). Marx believed that by controlling the economic mode of production you also control social and political relations because all institutions that emerge within a society are conditioned by the mode of production (1867). Furthermore, the class which is the material force of society is also the ruling intellectual force, therefore, the ideas of the ruling class become the dominant ideas of that society, achieved by means of hegemony (Yantao Bi, 2012).

Mosco points out that this definition is merely a starting point and that it is limited when applied in a “too rigidly categorical or mechanistic fashion” (p. 24). Understandings of political economy have evolved over time with the changes that have occurred within the various political and economic systems. Furthermore, it cannot be understood in a linear or static fashion. Political economy “is concerned with the historically constituted frameworks or structures within which political and economic activity takes place” (Cox,

1995 p.32). The current prevailing system is characterized by a liberal democratic political structure and a capitalist economic structure, a vision retained by the privileged elites of the “apotheosis of capitalism and formal liberal democracy” (Cox, 1995 p.36). Furthermore, the system has been transformed with the onset of neoliberal ideology encompassed by the Washington Consensus in the 1980s and now demonstrated in the perceived “depoliticization and non-participation that undermine the legitimacy of political institutions” through the increase in privatization and the widespread, albeit false, acknowledgement of inaction or incompetence of the state (Cox, 1995 p.36). Since this time, the state has actually been very active in encouraging privatization and subsidizing corporations. With these changes transnational corporations now occupy a large role in the power relations that shape the global political economy. Transcending national boundaries, wielding extreme financial capability and striving to achieve maximum profit, corporations thrive in a neoliberal capitalist environment where globalization acts as a form of neo-imperialism and the ruling class includes both states and corporate entities. Gilpin (2001) explains that the study of international political economy “presumes that states, multinational corporations, and other powerful actors attempt to use their power to influence the nature of international regimes” (p. 78). For the purposes of my analysis a political economic framework is necessary to understand the way in which these interactions have resulted in the current state of CSR and Canadian mining corporations and the media coverage of such issues.

Increasing levels of economic and social inequality around the world in general, and in Canada in particular, have driven many to question the parameters under which this has transpired. Many have transfixed their gaze towards the escalating power and wealth of corporations and the falsely perceived decline in governmental capability and

action to balance such inequality. Capitalism has traditionally functioned under the assumption that the market has the ability to regulate itself without interference and that the principles of economics of competition, supply and demand, comparative advantage and economies of scale will provide the perfect platform for a perfect economic system. However, this assumption disregards “the essential role of government in providing the legal and regulatory frameworks that are essential to capitalism” (Scott, 2006 p.1). Alternatively, Scott (2006) defines capitalism as “a system of indirect governance for economic relationships, where all markets exist within institutional frameworks that are provided by political authorities” (p.i). By analyzing these contemporary situations through a political economic perspective we are able to discover that this shift has resulted from the transfer of ideological confidence in state intervention and a social welfare system to a growing dependency on the private sector to fulfill what were previously state responsibilities. This shift has also resulted in a modification in the role that government plays and not in its lack of participation, as supporters of the system would have us believe. Scott (2006) goes on to describe capitalism as a three level system; markets occupy the first level, institutional foundations that underpin markets the second and political authority that administers the system the third. This shift has also coincided with a more neoliberal style of government and media as well as the permeation of neoliberal ideology into all aspects of life especially through the culture of consumerism and globalization.

As Marx (1859) pointed out, material conditions of life will constitute the basis of society and the “mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general,” therefore, the capitalist economic mode of production emanates throughout society (p. 4). Gramsci argued, “that over the two centuries of its

expansion and consolidation, capitalism maintained and organized its leadership through agencies of information and culture such as schools and universities, the churches, literature, philosophy, media, and corporate ideologies” (in Downing, 2001 p. 14). In order to maintain such control a hegemonic system, or domination through consent, has been implemented. Gramsci’s model of hegemony explains that, “relations of power and resistance are conceptually resolved in favor of the reaffirmation of the status quo whereby resistance to structures of domination is valorized in a largely uncritical manner” (Mumby 1997, p.1). Hegemony is embodied in a range of substantive ideas including “free markets, free elections, a free press, the free flow of information” and global neoliberalism, some of which deliberately or unintentionally promote capitalism as the ultimate mode of production (Mosco, 2009 p. 206). Central to current hegemonic models is the favoring of the private sector as more competent and better equipped to fulfill previously held state functions. To this end corporations occupy the ultimate space of legitimacy.

The political influence of modern corporations partly can be attributed to their elite organization and unification around particular policies in their own interest. Within Canada, this form of class elitism and cohesion has resulted in a corporate takeover of the state and information outlets that have affected public opinion (Brownlee, 2005; Carroll, 2004; Clarke, 1997). This co-optation has taken the form of concentration of industry ownership, interlocking directorships, expansion of corporate lobbyists, policy associations, corporate forums, etc. and has influenced policies to enhance the economic gain of corporations and, according to some, by consequence created the demise of democracy and the rise of the neoliberal state (Brownlee, 2005; Carroll, 2004). The



degree of influence that this group possesses leads to their ability to influence public opinion and government in their favour.

Reminiscent of the Robber Barons of the early 1900s, networks of this kind and the achievement of such power and influence by corporations is not a new phenomenon. Affiliations and grouping have long facilitated achievements and bonded institutions in the business sector. Networks provide three broad categories of benefits: access, timelines and referrals (Burt 1992 in Smith-Doerr & Powell, 2003). Smith-Doerr and Powell (2003) elaborate that:

Ties can facilitate access to parties that provide information and/or resources. Linkages that generate access in an expeditious manner afford advantage over those who lack comparable connections. Referrals offer the opportunity to bypass formal, impersonal channels. Thus, the cumulative effects of networks on economic outcomes can be considerable indeed. (p.2).

Much of the literature on networks emphasizes “they are the most salient in a domain between the flexibility of markets and the visible hand of organizational authority” (Powell, 1990 in Smith-Doerr & Powell, 2003 p.2).

According to Brownlee (2005), within Canada, there is a class of corporate elites that attempt to lobby governments and influence the public interest in order to increase their profit margins. This group “controls the country’s major industrial, financial, and commercial companies and utilities” and can be categorized as “the economic elite” (Brownlee, 2005 p. 10). Carroll (2004) explains that Marx initiated analysis on corporate capitalism as a system of class power, contending, “control over economic surplus is a decisive form of power” (p. 2). Canadian mining corporations are also included in this “economic elite”, essentially, granting them access to the network of political, economic and social power that is afforded to this group.

The Canadian corporate climate is one shaped by interlocking directorships between industry corporations, media corporations, associations, policy boards, financial institutions, and past government officials (Brownlee 2005; Clarke 1997; Carroll 2004). The mining industry is no exception, as interlocking directorates are commonplace. In this, one or more directors of the board of one company sits on one or more boards of another company either within the same industry or of another sector in order to increase connections, advantages and potential influence. Some mining CEOs do not hide their intentions for board member selection and agenda setting. When Peter Munk, Founder and Chairman of Barrick Gold Inc. was asked why he appointed Former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to his board, he stated, “He has great contacts. He knows every dictator in the world on a first name basis” (qtd in Engler, 2009 p. 138).

Associations and policy boards also serve as a forum for networking with various directors across industries. The Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE) enlists the membership of top executives in Canada in order to achieve specific corporate goals and agendas through the collaborative efforts of capital-rich and influential corporate elite (Brownlee, 2005). Such objectives include lobbying the government in favour of corporate interests such as free trade or against legislation to regulate the industry such as Bill C-300. In 2009 and 2010, when Bill C-300 was being hotly debated in Parliament, there were 193 mining lobbyists in Ottawa putting pressure on government to vote against the bill. Current members of the CCCE include John Cassaday (Corus Entertainment), Nadir Mohammed (Rogers Communications), George A. Cope (BCE Inc. and Bell Canada), Jamie C. Sokalsky (Barrick Gold), Jacynthe Cote (Rio Tinto Alcan), Donald R. Lindsay (Teck Resources Ltd), and John P. Manley, the former Deputy Prime Minister, is

the current President and CEO. This membership leads to the assumption that this would also be an opportunity for such members to collaborate for their own interests as well.

Also in 2009, the Canadian Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Year Selection Committee included two board members from Goldcorp Inc (Ian Telfer and Beverley Briscoe) and a board member from BCE (Thomas O'Neill) as well as sponsorship from BCE and the recipient of the award for that year was David Garofalo, an executive from Agnico-Eagle, one of Canada's top mining companies. Finally, "Canada's influential vanguard of right wing, 'free-market' research, the Fraser Institute, has started a new Global Centre for Mining Studies. This center will most likely cater to the industry's need to have 'facts' that support weaker environmental standards and lower taxation rates" (Saunders, 2008 p. 3).

## **(ii) Political Economy of Communication**

According to Mosco (2009), whose definition of political economy was mentioned earlier, the political economy of communication is "the study of the social relations, particularly the power relations, that mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of resources, including communication resources" (p. 2). This definition highlights the pivotal role that communication resources play in maintaining the power relations of our political economic system within society. According to Chomsky (2002), large media companies share many of the same interests as other large corporations, and consistently reflect elite opinion (in Mitchell & Schoeffel). To this end, the corporate mainstream media are also included in the 'economic elite' and play a central role in maintaining hegemony within our current system. The role that the media play in disseminating information to the public places

them at the centre of the hegemonic model. It is from their position that the ideologies of the dominant class are perpetuated within society, however, since they are also part of the 'elite class' they are not in a position to resist and instead maintain the status quo.

This supports what Winter (2002) calls "Media Think" whereby, based on membership in the corporate elite, the media construct and reinforce what George Orwell called the "prevailing orthodoxy", the "body of ideas which it is assumed that all right-thinking people will accept without question" (p.xviii; Orwell in Winter, 2002 p.xxvi).

Instead of offering diverse perspectives on events and issues, the corporate media portray an increasingly myopic and orthodox picture of the world around us. The consistency with which they do this has its consequent, intended effect on public opinion and policy formation. (Winter, 2002 p.xxvii)

The media, as part of the corporate elite, do not deviate from this orthodoxy, even though their original role was to act as a watchdog for the public good. Nonetheless, "Anyone who challenges the prevailing orthodoxy finds himself silenced with surprising effectiveness" either by the loss of a job or the loss of advertising revenues and profit margins (Orwell in Winter, 2002 p.xxvi).

The ideologies of the current dominant class favor capitalism and neoliberalism and oppose any form of resistance to these ideas, creating a discourse of no alternatives. Canadian mining companies occupy a very influential position within Canadian society and share the same interests as corporate media: therefore their interests are represented by the corporate mainstream media. Chomsky (2002) explains, "the media will present a picture of the world which defends and inculcates the economic, social, and political agendas of the privileged groups that dominate the domestic economy and who therefore also largely control the government" (in Mitchell & Schoeffel, p.15).

[M]edia bias usually does not occur in random fashion; rather it moves in more or less consistent directions, favouring management over labour, corporations over corporate critics, affluent Whites over low income minorities, officialdom over protestors, the two party monopoly over leftist third parties, privatization and free market 'reforms' over public sector development, U.S. dominance of the Third World over revolutionary or populist social change, and conservative commentators and columnists over progressive or radical ones. (Parenti, 2001 in Winter, 2002 p.xxvii)

Mosco (2009) elaborates on this as delineated in the tradition of C. Wright Mills' classic work on the power elite, which examines "the dense network that links media entrepreneurs to the rest of the elite class, through the range of connections on corporate boards, business associations, civic organizations, and private clubs" (Mosco, 2009 p. 190). These media corporate elites are able to influence governments and enact a "set of powerful institutional 'filters'" that shape the construction of news and media content (Mosco, 2009 p. 191). This class of economic elite enacts hegemonic control over the political, economic, financial and social structures of Canada.

The maintenance of hegemony is not static as consensus must continuously be re-won from the public. "Hegemony is the ongoing formation of both image and information to produce a map of common sense which is sufficiently persuasive to most people so that it provides the social and cultural coordinates to define the "natural" attitude of social life" (Mosco, 2009 p. 206). Hegemony acts to maintain a form of control and strives to create and retain ideological consent through covert influence and domination by a certain group of people; in this case the capitalist agendas of the economic elite are reiterated and perpetuated throughout society, especially through the media. Chomsky (2002) explains, "there is a noticeable split between elite and popular opinion, and the media consistently reflect *elite* opinion" (in Mitchell & Schoeffel, p.19).

Although the study of the political economy of communication is complex Mosco provides three main points of entry: commodification, spatialization, and structuration. Commodification, as delineated by Marx, is the process of changing use values into exchange values whereby the product attains exchange value based on its use value thereby warranting an exchange. Within the political economy of communications everything is commoditized, material and human, but especially the audience. Smythe (1957) and more recently, Garnham (2000) and Mosco (2009), explain that the audience is the primary commodity of the mass media, wherein they sell audiences to advertisers in order to cover their costs of production (Mosco, 2009). Chomsky (2002) explains, “the product is audiences, and the market is advertisers” (in Mitchell & Schoeffel, p.14).

For the political economy of communication spatialization addresses the institutional extension of corporate power in the communication industry with growth in the size of media firms, corporate concentration and horizontal and vertical domination. This also refers to the growing power of capitalism to use and improve on the means of transportation and communication to diminish spatial distance as a constraint on the expansion of capital (Mosco, 2009 p.157).

The last point to consider in a political economy of communication is structuration which refers to the structure of power in relation to class, race, gender and social movements (Mosco, 1996 p.212-245). Mosco’s (1996) discussion of structuration explains how the economic ideals of neoliberalism inundate the media landscape to support dominant ideology through hegemony of media discourse to maintain corporate interests and social class structures. The neoliberal ideology permeates all media discourse that will be further elaborated in discussions of the fifth filter of the Propaganda Model.

### **(iii) The Propaganda Model**

Appropriate for the political economic analysis of the media is the theoretical framework of the Propaganda Model by Herman and Chomsky (2002). The Propaganda Model attempts to flush out and explain the “inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interests and choices” (Herman & Chomsky, 2002 p.2). These elements of money and power are traced as routes that “are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public” (Herman & Chomsky, 2002 p.2). The five filters of the Propaganda Model are (1) the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms; (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass-media; (3) the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and “experts” funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power; (4) “flak” as a means of disciplining the media; and (5) “anticommunism” as a national religion and control mechanism (Herman & Chomsky 2002 p.2). Although Herman and Chomsky initially explained the fifth filter as “anti-communist” ideology, Klaehn (2009) explains that it is actually the dominant ideology at a particular time, which currently is neoliberalism. It is this alteration that will be used for the purposes of this research. Herman and Chomsky (2002) explain in a new introduction of the Propaganda Model that “the greater ideological force [is] the belief in the ‘miracle of the market’”. They go on to say that:

The triumph of capitalism and the increasing power of those with an interest in privatization and market rule have strengthened the grip of market ideology, at least among the elite, so that regardless of evidence, markets are assumed to be benevolent and even democratic and nonmarket mechanisms are suspect, although exceptions are allowed when private firms need subsidies, bailouts, and government help in doing business abroad. (p. xvii)

These filters interact with and reinforce each other and are very relevant in the overall analysis as well as buttressing Mosco's three points of entry for the political economy of communication: commodification, spatialization and structuration. However, the fifth filter best exemplifies the way in which the media cover Canadian mining companies, especially pertaining to CSR. These filters, in effect, manipulate and set discourse and interpretation often unintentionally and unconsciously due to the naturalized systematic process and values (Herman & Chomsky, 2002 p.2).

Due to their pervasiveness and accessibility, the media successfully reinforce particular ideological discourses that ultimately end up influencing all facets of social, economic and political relations of society. Hall (1982) defines ideology as those images, concepts and sites which provide the frameworks through which we represent, interpret, understand and 'make sense' of some aspect of social existence and discusses the intentional and unintentional perpetuation of certain ideologies in the media. The fifth filter of the Propaganda Model, which was initially referred to as the Anti-communist filter, Klaehn (2009) explains, is actually the perpetuation of the dominant ideology at the particular time by the media. Currently, this is the capitalist mode of production and neoliberal ideology. By producing messages that negatively portray any ideologies that deviate from capitalism the population is mobilized against an enemy that is threatening the proscribed way of life (Herman & Chomsky, 2002 p.2). Propaganda is necessary to successfully reinforce and legitimize the capitalist system and neoliberal ideologies.

Consumerism and private property are promoted and legitimized as the population's ultimate act of freedom, promoting capitalism as the best possible system for producing, maintaining, and expanding freedoms and profit. Anything that is not



capitalist is demonized and marginalized. This promotion of the dominant ideology “reaches through the system to exercise a profound influence on the mass media” (Herman & Chomsky 2002 p.30). The political economic framework and the fifth filter of the Propaganda Model mirror these principles in their attempt to investigate and explain the relations of power, particularly in terms of capitalist ideologies, as they are demonstrated within the policies, texts and media representation of CSR and Canadian mining companies. The Propaganda Model of media operations is concerned with the question of “how ideological and communicative power connect with economic, political and social power, and to explore the consequent effects upon media output” (Klaehn, 2009 p.43). This analysis broadens the understanding of the ways in which media discourse intersects with broader power struggles (Klaehn, 2009 p.45).

Pertinent to this research is the way in which powerful corporate and governmental influence lead to the perpetuation of neoliberal ideologies within the media with regards to the way in which CSR and Canadian mining corporations are covered. “Some propaganda campaigns are jointly initiated by government and media; all of them require the collaboration of the mass media” (Herman & Chomsky, 2002 p.33). In fact, Chomsky (2002) contends that the Propaganda Model predicts that these elite perspectives will be reflected in the media through their selection of topics, framing of issues, and focus of their analysis that serve to control the public mind (in Mitchell and Schoeffel, p.15). This in essence is what Lippman referred to as the “calculated manufacture of consent” (Lippman, in Mitchell & Schoeffel, 2002 p.16). The current corporate structure of the media ensures that they play a propaganda role (Mitchell & Schoeffel, 2002 p.17).

Most of the Canadian mass media (television, radio and the press) are corporate-owned and driven by the agendas of the economic elite. This creates information biases and undermines the ability of the public to gain complete information and acts as a filter. The majority of Canadians depend on mainstream mass media for their information needs. DeJong, Shaw, and Stammers (2005) describe mass-mediated communication as “the very essence of contemporary western society” (2005 p.11), and an instrumental function of the public sphere. However, our media are heavily concentrated in the hands of only a few corporations, which own the majority of the market and which are “extensively connected and integrated with other large firms” and ultimately, to the economic elite (Brownlee, 2005 p. 40).

The consolidation of the media industry ensures that “a small handful of corporations dominate the major markets for news and information” and as Clarke (1997) illustrates those who own and control the media exert a great deal of influence over content (Skinner & Gasher, 2005 p.53; Clarke, 1997 p.129). Evidence of this is the coverage of mining issues within the mainstream corporate media, which usually focuses on business aspects of the industry and has a neoliberal slant. Therefore, it is also important to include discussions of alternative forms of media in an analysis of mining issues. In the alternative independent newspaper, *The Dominion*, an article entitled “Media Avoids the Dirt”, addresses the issue of the mainstream media focusing solely on the economics of mining as well as the increased advertising campaigns of mining corporations promoting their corporate social responsibility and environmental and social sustainability (McSorley, 2008). This perspective supports the interests of the dominant class and completely omits any discussion on the harmful effects of mining on communities and the environment.

The alternative independent media, not driven by profit or corporate interests, present a different opinion of the issues. They regularly present more background information, a deeper analysis of the issue (especially structural inequality), and provide more local or routinely marginalized perspectives. For example, in an article in *The Dominion* headlined “Colombians Refuse Canadian Mine: Farmers’ stance against extractive project ignored in Ottawa” the sources used were local farmers and community members, community group representatives and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working with communities (Gardner, 2012).

In contradiction to the corporate mainstream media, the alternative independent media also provide discussion and analysis of the harmful effects of mining on the environment and socio-economic conditions in the community. One article reads “All I see that can come from this project is conflict and displacement” and goes on to say “The first thing we lost [when the company came] was peace” (Gardner, 2012). The article goes on to describe the harassment, death threats and violent assaults against company critics and their families. One source explained “First comes the money, then comes the violence – the armed groups, drinking [and] crime” (Gardener, 2012). Some of these problems come directly from private security for the mining project and some from other community members in support of the projects creating a conflict-ridden community. Furthermore, environmental and health problems are also described, including the impacts on water levels and noise pollution (Gardner, 2012). Additionally, although many mining companies claim to engage in community development projects, many of these projects are not initiated in consultation with community members and are not supported (Gardner, 2012).

Finally, the alternative independent media tend to provide more in-depth and contextual analysis concerning structural inequalities. For example, this same article by Gardner (2012) explains how the Colombian free trade agreement with Canada has created a friendlier climate for foreign investment and has contributed to internal displacement and an ongoing struggle for human rights in the country. This type of analysis would rarely be found in the corporate mainstream media as it admits the structural inequalities that exist in our neoliberal system.

This situation threatens the public interest, as documentation shows that, “media owners have used their economic power to interfere with, even restrict, the news and information content of their media properties” (Skinner & Gasher, 2005 p.71). Also many of the board members of Canadian mining companies also sit on the boards of some of these media corporations or are involved in broadcasting with smaller media companies. For example, Robert E. Brown, the Corporate Director of the Board of Directors of Bell Canada Enterprise (BCE) Inc. is also a director of Bell Canada, Rio Tinto Limited and Rio Tinto PLC (BCE Website). This demonstrates that their connections with Canadian mining corporations could ultimately influence the coverage of these issues in an unbalanced way and in an effort to promote certain ideologies. Brownlee (2005) states that:

Media agencies play a crucial role in the legitimization of the capitalist economic system and in the construction, dissemination and reinforcement of ideologies. They work to gather acceptance for those policies and programs advocated by business and, just as significantly, to saturate political discourse with the capitalist ‘ethos’ – the values, commitments and goals of the economic elite. (p. 44)

The media represent “a vehicle through which the economic elite can set the agenda for public debate and propagate ideas, values and policy initiatives that represent an elite

consensus” (Brownlee, 2005 p. 39). Consequently, the control of public information by a minority of corporate elites who are connected to the mining industry could very well pose a threat to the information that we are receiving. The concentrated structure and ownership of the Canadian media is driven by the corporate agenda which has prompted government regulation of markets to serve the interests of the corporation and has effectively undermined democracy and the public interest (Skinner & Gasher, 2005).

Furthermore, the type of coverage or lack of coverage by the mainstream media could also be attributed to the reiteration of neo-imperialism, in the attitude of underdeveloped, unknowing and unappreciative people who are resisting development. Saunders (2008) explains that:

The nexus of mining companies, the mainstream media, the Canadian government, International Finance Institutions and bought off NGOs work hard to keep the reality of large-scale, open pit mines out of the picture, keep community resistance marginalized, and no matter what, to keep talking about “development”. (p. 3)

Since the mainstream corporate media serve the interests of the corporate elite the Propaganda Model goes further to explain that the voices of dissidents are either omitted or marginalized. Herman and Chomsky (2002) explain, “messages from and about dissidents and weak, unorganized individuals and groups, domestic and foreign, are at an initial disadvantage in sourcing costs and credibility, and they often do not comport with the ideology or interests of the gatekeepers and other powerful parties that influence the filtering process” making their news unworthy (p.31). This corresponds with Edward Said’s work on othering in Orientalism whereby ‘the Other’ is a construct, by those in power, of individuals or groups who do not conform to the status quo or dominant group in society. ‘The Other’ is represented as ‘primitive’, ‘originary’, ‘exotic’, and ‘mysterious’ or as ‘inferior’, ‘disorderly’ and ‘irrational’ (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 2002

p.53;). These representations are created to contrast with assumptions of Western superiority that encompasses a web of racism, cultural stereotypes, political imperialism and a de-humanizing ideology (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 2002 p.54). Ashcroft and Ahluwalia (2002) stress “that power determines which representations may be accepted as ‘true’” and that this discourse “emerges out of, and confirms, a global structure of imperial domination” that is “inextricably linked to capitalism” (p.75; p.57). The construction and continuation of the discourse of ‘the Other’ is also very beneficial to maintain neo-colonial concepts of development and CSR in mining.

### **CHAPTER III: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY**

Discourse, the mode of organizing knowledge, ideas or experiences, is rooted in language and context, and as a social practice incorporates the various interconnected elements (cultural, political, social, economic) to construct and reinforce social meaning (Fairclough 2002). To this end, concepts adopt mutually accepted understandings, become unconsciously taken for granted by the collective and widely undisputed as norms. Unfortunately, discourse becomes a product, structure and exercise of power as those in positions of authority manipulate contemporary discourse, whether intentionally or unintentionally. According to Foucault, discourse refers to “ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and relations between them. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning.” (in Weedon, 1987, p. 108). They construct realities.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as defined by van Dijk (1998), “is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (p.1). As such, CDA focuses on examining how power relations are manifested in discourse, with an emphasis on analyzing micro-level text that is linked to the macro-level discourse. According to Wodak (2004), CDA is “fundamentally concerned with analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (p.2) as well as all forms of discourse, including text. “CDA will ask questions about the way specific discourse structures are deployed in the reproduction of social dominance,

whether they are part of a conversation or a news report or other genres and contexts” (van Dijk, 1998 p.3).

CDA is as much a theory as it is a methodology, drawing its strength from its interdisciplinary underpinnings, as such recognizing the complexity of influences on discourse. To this end, there exists no unitary theoretical framework, however, the focus of theoretical background depends on the objectives of the study. Intrinsically, CDA is deeply rooted in such scholarly work as Foucault, Habermas and Gramsci, to unveil power relations and hegemony. The theoretical framework of CDA mirrors that of political economy and the Propaganda Model in their attempt to investigate and explain the relations of power. Additionally, CDA and the Propaganda Model share methodological tools such as examining framing, foregrounding, backgrounding, use of and sources.

Therefore, as a particular method of textual analysis for the critical examination of the media representations of Canadian mining companies operating in developing countries, CDA was used. In addition to locating the political economic tendencies of neoliberalism within these texts, the research analyzed the supportive nature of such ideologies in direct contrast to the opposition of activities and policies. Increasingly, mining has become a contested issue, especially in the Canadian context. This is in part due to the increased number of Canadian mining companies working abroad and the large profits ensuing from this. Also, there are more incidences of conflicts and destructive mining behaviours reported as well as resistance to mining by communities affected and the international community. Furthermore, the rise of corporate globalization has facilitated the freedom and lawlessness of corporations and CSR has become the loophole and justification for self-regulation. This research will assess whether the media



contribute to the reinforcement of neoliberal messages that favour the corporation over the communities affected by Canadian mining operations abroad. Also it critically investigates the policies that the Canadian government has enacted that reiterate neoliberalism, supporting the corporation over citizen and community rights. Furthermore, this research analyzes the media's coverage of the representation of opposition to Canadian mining companies and whether they marginalize or demonize this resistance by labeling it as "anti-developmental" or "anti-capitalist". Finally, an analysis of the reinforcement of neo-imperialist and neo-colonial ideology concerning the depiction of communities affected is also included. This is done through a direct comparison with the coverage of these issues by the alternative media to analyze the differences in construction of discourse of the issue and to fill gaps in context.

Considering the theoretical underpinnings of CDA, a unique characteristic of this method emphasizes the importance of the researcher situating oneself within the context of the environment in which the text is produced. Therefore, CDA does not claim to be objective or non-biased but instead is forthcoming in acknowledging the position and stance the research, and in effect, the researcher is taking.

Inasmuch as there is no unitary theoretical framework for CDA there is also no unitary methodological framework as CDA is employed for various forms of discourse. For the purposes of my analysis of media coverage of Canadian mining corporations, the CDA methodology as delineated by Thomas Huckin (2000) was utilized.

There are a number of characteristics of CDA that differentiate it from other forms of textual analysis. CDA is context-specific and attempts to identify "relevant textual and contextual factors, including historical ones, which contribute to the production and interpretation of a given text" (Huckin 2000 p.1). It also involves the

integration of the text, the discursive practices and the larger social context. Additionally, it is concerned with important societal issues and, as was mentioned above, encourages researchers to take an ethical stance that exposes power imbalances and social inequality in an effort to create praxis. Furthermore, CDA is critical of social and political practices and assumes a social constructivist view of discourse. Finally, in an effort to maintain its democratic goals, CDA attempts to ensure its analysis is accessible to the general public by minimizing scholarly jargon.

Huckin's (2000) general strategy for CDA explains that the text should first be read as a typical reader who is just trying to comprehend the text in an uncritical manner. The second step is to step back from the text and look at it critically, analyzing the text as a whole, at the sentence-by-sentence level and at the word-by-word level. This analysis requires following particular elements including: recognizing that the text belongs to a certain genre; examining the framing, angle or perspective of the writer; identifying what is foregrounded and backgrounded; considering what is omitted or deleted; analyzing presupposition; assessing discursive differences; reviewing topicalization at the sentence level; investigating agency; considering insinuation; identifying connotations and other figures of speech; evaluating register and examining modality. Huckin (2000) explains that "this involves revisiting the text at different levels, raising questions about it, imagining how it could have been constructed differently, mentally comparing it to related texts, etc." (p.2). For my research this may entail reimagining how a seemingly pro-mining industry article in the *Toronto Star* may have been written differently in a more neutral, pro-responsible mining or anti-mining stance.

Beginning by analyzing the text as a whole, the first step of CDA analysis of newspapers is to identify the genre of the article. Huckin (2000) defines genre as a text

type that manifests a characteristic set of formal features serving a characteristic purpose. He explains that CDA analysts should begin by determining the genre of the text under analysis and observing how that text conforms to it. Since each genre has different requirements of writing style, content, level of objectivity and research, knowing the genre of the article would provide essential details concerning how the text should be analyzed. This allows the analyst to observe the different kinds of information that has been deliberately omitted or slanted and why certain encoded statements appear in the text. All articles that were analyzed for this study fell into the ‘news article’ genre and were further divided into sub-genres ‘news’, ‘editorial’, ‘letter to the editor’ ‘opinion’ and ‘feature’ or ‘special report’.

Subsequently, the frames within the article are examined. Framing refers to the way in which content of a text is presented and the type of perspective, angle or slant the writer takes. In order to pull all the details of a story together there may be frames within frames. At times the arguments are framed in a polarized fashion with good vs. bad, one group being favoured over the other. Frames also provide insight into the themes present within the text, for example, governments of developing countries as corrupt or the ability of corporations to self-regulate. In most articles reviewed by Richardson (2009) concerning an environmental campaign to save a rainforest being threatened by the logging industry in British Colombia (BC) the good vs. bad frame was used with environmentalists as ‘the bad’ and the BC government or the logging industry as ‘the good’ (Richardson, 2009).

Foregrounding and backgrounding are related to framing and refer to how the writer can emphasize or de-emphasize certain concepts by their level of prominence. Most news articles take the form of an ‘inverted pyramid’ structure, whereby the author

places what is considered as the most important information at the beginning of the article and the perceived importance of the information consistently declines throughout the article with the least important information at the end, hence, the form of an inverted pyramid (Huckin, 2000). This format also affects the readership of the text as studies have shown that most people do not read the entire newspaper article, therefore, what is placed at the front is what most readers will read and this declines as the article progresses (Huckin, 2000). Huckin (2000) points out that often genres will automatically grant prominence to certain information by foregrounding it.

Topicalization is a form of sentence-level foregrounding as it works to reinforce the importance of a particular topic by continuing from one sentence to another. This both serves to construct the basic meaning of each sentence and examines the topics of the sentence. “By choosing what to put in the topic position, writers create a perspective, or slant, that influences the reader’s perception” (Huckin 2000 p.8 para 21). To Huckin, the ultimate form of backgrounding is omission. This prevents the reader from critically analyzing that information because, through it being left out, the information may not even enter the reader’s mind and is then not subjected to scrutiny. Huckin (2000) presents an example of an article whereby the protesters-versus-police frame is foregrounded, ultimately backgrounding important societal issues that were being protested and completely omitting background information on environmental research and policies (p.5).

Omission, for this study was very important, due to the political economic importance of the issues addressed and the potential for deliberate manipulation by those in positions of power. By examining the power of silence to affect communication the concept of omission becomes important in discussing CDA. Huckin (2002) demonstrates

this through his study on manipulative silence and a case study of the discourse of homelessness. This research illustrates that “often what is not said or written can be as important, if not more so, than what is” (Huckin, 2002 p.348). Of these forms of silence, manipulative silence, or silences that “deliberately conceal relevant information”, is the most difficult to identify and analyze as they operate with the utmost intention of not being noticed by the listener/reader to the advantage of the speaker/writer (Huckin, 2002 p.348). In Huckin’s (2002) work on the homeless it was found that in many articles over fifty percent (50%), of what are considered as the root causes of homelessness, were omitted. Most of what was absent were structural causes that required structural solutions and instead the homeless were usually blamed for their situations (Huckin, 2002 p.362).

This type of silence is intentionally deceptive and advantageous to the writer, considering of course, the organizational power of the media outlet and their socio-political pressures in the interest of the writer. Huckin (2000) says that omission is often the most potent aspect of textualization but also the most difficult to analyze. This is due to the necessity of having the contextual understanding to be able to notice that there are certain pieces of the story missing. Huckin (2000) finds that most agent-deletion occurs through the use of passive verbs and nominalization. There are two questions that he poses that would allow the analyst to determine what has been left out: What could the writers have said here, and what information does the genre allow?

Furthermore, through presupposition, writers can manipulate readers by using language in a way that takes certain ideas for granted, as if there were no alternative. Huckin (2000) explains that the reader may be hesitant to question statements that the author appears to take for granted. For the purpose of this research this element becomes

very important, as we have been conditioned to believe, through the media and other social processes, that there is no alternative (TINA) to our economic framework.

Huckin (2000) notes that researchers should also be cognizant of the agency or agent-patient relations in phrases, as many texts will describe events or stories so that certain people “are consistently depicted as initiating actions (and thus exerting power), while others are depicted as being (often passive) recipients of those actions” (p.8 para 22).

Register refers to the level of formality of the writing as well as the degree of technicality and its subject field. Writers sometimes manipulate by using discursive differences; through the use of various styles of discourse. Experts or official sources in a particular field are sometimes used to create credibility to one angle of the story and use technical jargon that is beyond the scope of knowledge of people outside of this group. Additionally, colloquial or other forms of language are used to discredit other actors. In the same respect, the writer may use particular verbs that present actors either favourably or unfavourably in an effort to gain or surrender support.

An additional layer of analysis involves examining potential insinuations. Insinuations are comments that are furtively suggestive and are difficult for readers to challenge due to their double meaning structure. If challenged, the writer could claim innocence, pretending to have only one of these meanings in mind, thus creating a loophole in accountability and responsibility for usage.

Huckin (2000) defines connotations as deriving from the frequent use of a word or phrase in a particular type of context and are the special meanings that certain words or phrases carry. By representing something in a certain way enough times it will begin to be automatically associated with that particular meaning. Labels, groups, metaphors and

other figures of speech often carry connotations. Van Dijk describes in detail the strategy of *Positive Self-Presentation* of the dominant in-group, and *Negative Other-Presentation* of the dominated out-groups that result in the connotations of Us and Them or ‘the other’ (1998 p.9). Van Dijk (1998) highlights this representation of ‘the other’ in his analysis of discourse and racism in D’Souza’s *The End of Racism*. CDA has verified that ‘the other’ is consistently portrayed as exotic or as inferior and that “these discourses have shaped public opinion and led to broadly shared social representations” (Van Dijk, 1998, p.13). One of the most relevant findings for the purpose of my research is that ‘the other’ is depicted as deviating from or violating the dominant norms and values that the dominant group finds important, including institutional values.

Modality refers to the tone of statements with regards to their degree of authority or certainty. This is usually transmitted through the use of particular words or phrases such as *may, might, could, will, it seems to me, without a doubt, and it’s possible that*. Through the use of modal verbs and phrases, Huckin (2000) illustrates that “some texts convey an air of heavy-handed authority while others, at the other extreme, convey a tone of deference” (p.10 para 28).

Considering that one of the pillars of CDA is that it is context-specific, it is important to include a contextualized interpretation that draws conclusions about tactics used by the writer and the slant of the text. Huckin recommends that the articles under analysis must also take into account the larger socio-cultural context surrounding the issue and a discussion of the media in influencing Canadian public opinion (Richardson 2009 p.55). Furthermore, it is important to question whether the article is typical of this type of coverage (Richardson 2009 p.55). If it is typical, other questions arise concerning “the role of the media in informing the public, the role of the media in democracies, the

responsibility of the educational system in the face of such ideological manipulation, etc.”

(Huckin 2000 p.16 para. 49).



## CHAPTER IV: MEDIA ANALYSIS

### (i) Parameters of Research

I conducted an analysis of media coverage from the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2010 on Canadian mining companies, their activities in developing countries and attempts to regulate them with a responsible mining bill, Private Member's Bill C-300. An initial search of the articles for this period on Canadian Newsstand Complete, an electronic database accessible through the University of Windsor, Leddy Library e-resources, with the keyword "mining" produced over 10,000 results and with "Canadian mining companies" only 123 results, 90 of which were unrelated to my topic. A combination of "Canadian mining companies" or "Bill C-300" and "developing countries" yielded similar results of 126 with the majority unrelated to my topic.

The search was then widened to include variations of the keywords "Canadian mining companies", "mining", "corporate social responsibility", "extractive industries", "Bill C-300", "responsible mining bill", "developing countries", "development", "environmental and human rights abuses", and "conflict". The result of these searches was over two hundred articles, which were then downsized further by excluding any articles that did not directly relate to mining or discussed domestic mining issues instead of Canadian mining companies operating abroad as well as operations in countries not considered to be developing nations. The end result was a total of 87 articles during this period of time that matched the search; this sample was what was used for the purpose of this research.

The sample was taken from the period of January 1, 2005 until December 31, 2010. This time period was selected because it was an intense period of public debate

surrounding mining operations abroad, allegations of abuse, and about whether Canadian mining companies should or could be regulated by the Canadian government. The start date of January 1, 2005 was chosen to coincide with the year that, as was mentioned above, a delegation of community members from the Philippines travelled to Canada to speak with the Canadian government about abuses by Barrick Gold Inc. that had taken place at a mine site in their community. This visit set in motion a series of events and reactions from the Canadian government, the mining industry, various non-governmental and community organizations and the public over the next five years that culminated in the narrow defeat of Bill C-300, commonly referred to as the responsible mining bill, in October 2010.

Although the delegation travelled to Canada in the spring of 2005 to testify before the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Development of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT), the months prior to the visit were included to incorporate any articles about mining that were written prior to the visit since it was already becoming an important topic due to the release of a number of reports. One of these reports was a briefing note sent to the top bureaucrat at the Department of Natural Resources in 2004 warning that “under current circumstances, there is a continuing risk of an incident occurring at a Canadian mining operation in a developing country that could seriously embarrass Canada” (Tuck, 2006). Additionally, there had been a United Nations (UN) report entitled *The Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo* that implicated a number of Canadian mining companies operating in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as complicit actors that contributed to the civil unrest and humanitarian crisis there in direct violation of OECD guidelines. These included Anvil

Mining, First Quantum Minerals, Harambee Mining Corporation, International Panorama Resources, Melkior Resources Inc, and Tenke Mining Corporation (UN Report, 2002).

In 2006, as a result of the SCFAIT report from 2005, Roundtables for CSR in the Extractive Industries took place in cities across Canada including discussions between stakeholders from industry, government, NGOs, and concerned citizens and the production of a consensus of recommendations for the development of a regulatory framework. In 2007, the recommendations were published in a report entitled *National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Canadian Extractive Industry in Developing Countries: Advisory Group Report*. It was not until two years later, in March of 2009, that the federal government finally responded with an initiative called *Building the Canadian Advantage: A Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy for the Canadian International Extractive Sector*, which failed to address most of the recommendations of the roundtables and clearly approached the issue from an industry standpoint. In the winter of 2009, Liberal MP John McKay of the Scarborough Guildwood riding introduced Private Member's Bill C-300, to create legislation to hold corporations abroad responsible, with financial and consular sanctions for non-compliance, which was defeated in October, 2010 in its third reading. For the purposes of the analysis, the two months after the defeat of Bill C-300 in 2010 were included in order to incorporate media coverage, including public reactions, in the months following the defeat.

I analyzed the media coverage over these six years to decipher if the media coverage of Canadian mining companies operating in developing countries and the Canadian government's attempts to regulate their activities followed the political economy of communication and Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, especially

that of the fifth filter, the dominant ideology of neoliberalism. Furthermore, I attempted to determine whether dissidents, those in opposition to mining, or who supported regulation of mining operations, were represented, as explained in the Propaganda Model, in negative terms or omitted. Finally, I attempted to discover whether there was an evolution in the way the media covered the issues and those involved. By analyzing the articles through Huckin's CDA methodology in search of common themes and frames these objectives were obtained.

The *Globe and Mail* was chosen because it is generally regarded as Canada's national newspaper and the "newspaper of record", with the highest national circulation and the second largest daily circulation in Canada, after the *Toronto Star*. It is also recognized for its coverage of international news. The *Globe and Mail*, with its emphasis on The Report on Business, has long been acknowledged as the voice of the business community and Canada's elite. The *Toronto Star* was chosen as it is usually considered as a somewhat more progressive newspaper, originating as a newspaper for the ordinary citizen and promoting itself as a "Paper for the People" and therefore, I felt it was important to analyze what many consider to be a more liberal view of the issue, presenting it from a different angle (*Toronto Star* website, 2012).

The *Globe and Mail*, previously owned by the Thomson Corporation from 1980 to 2001 and Bell Globemedia (BCE), a major media conglomerate, from 2001 to 2010, was acquired (85 percent) by The Woodbridge Company Limited (the Thomson family holding company) in late 2010 leaving BCE with 15 percent. The Woodbridge Company is also the principal shareholder (55 percent) of Thomson Reuters and primary investment vehicle for members of the Thomson family. The *Globe and Mail* has been in print for 167 years and has a cumulative six-day readership of 3.3 million. Based on all of these

points, the *Globe and Mail* is considered a highly regarded medium in Canada and one that policy-makers attend to.

The *Toronto Star*, owned by Toronto Star Newspapers Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation, has been in print for 120 years. It is Canada's highest circulation newspaper, with its print edition distributed almost entirely in Ontario. Historically, it has advocated for social change and the interests of ordinary people. Often criticized and recognized for its somewhat more progressive opinions, it openly opposed the FTA in the 1980s and the Iraq War but it has also shown varying opinions on other issues such as support for Canadian participation in the US Continental missile defense. The *Toronto Star* is also one of only two newspapers in Canada that employs a "public editor" and openly provides its newsroom policy and journalistic standards guide online.

Since each of these newspapers is considered to be part of the corporate mainstream media it was imperative that, aside from comparing the coverage of each of these, there should be information from the independent alternative media to provide additional comparison or to append any omissions that may exist. To this end, a search was done within credible independent alternative media in Canada and articles that fell within the same categories from the same period (January 1, 2005 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010) were chosen from *Briarpatch Magazine*, *Canadian Dimension*, and *The Dominion*. A total of 62 articles from the alternative independent media were used to compare, contrast and fill gaps from the mainstream corporate media analysis, the majority coming from *The Dominion*, mostly due to a special issue published in the winter of 2008 dedicated to mining. Of the total, 5 were from *Briarpatch Magazine*, 5 were from *Canadian Dimension* and 52 were from *The Dominion*.

*Briarpatch Magazine*, established in 1973, evolved from a newsletter produced by a welfare rights group in 1971 and prides itself as being “fiercely independent and frequently irreverent” (Briarpatch Website, 2012). With a history of providing a critical analysis of government and corporate policies and actions, *Briarpatch* “tackles today’s most pressing problems from a radical, grassroots perspective” (Briarpatch Website, 2012). Maude Barlow of the Council of Canadians says, *Briarpatch* is “one of the few voices that will still challenge the corporate agenda and present workable alternatives” (Briarpatch Website, 2012). “Believing that a truly free press is essential to the creation of a truly democratic society, *Briarpatch* provides a thoughtful, principled, and irreverent alternative to the false consensus of the corporate media” (Briarpatch Website, 2012). *Briarpatch* is published bimonthly by, Briarpatch Incorporated, an independent non-profit organization overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors, and is considered “reader-supported journalism”. After almost forty years the magazine “stands as one of Canada’s leading independent voices on issues of social justice and the environment” (Briarpatch Website, 2012).

*Canadian Dimension* is a bimonthly magazine that was founded in 1963 and since 1975, has been run by a democratic decision-making collective. It describes itself as “an independent forum for Left-wing political thought and discussion” and a “progressive publication” (Canadian Dimension Website, 2012). *Canadian Dimension* covers topics “often marginalized by mainstream Left politics” such as “accounts of corporate, neoliberal malfeasance” (Kauri, 2011). They state, they “are a magazine which shows there is an alternative to the corporate agenda and the dictates of the global market; that the dream of a better society is still alive” (Canadian Dimension Website, 2012).

*The Dominion*, established in 2003, is a monthly paper, published by a network of independent journalists who provide “news from the grassroots”. *The Dominion* is Canada’s first media cooperative, jointly owned and democratically controlled by its readers, contributors and editors. “Taking its name from Canada’s official status as both a colony and a colonial force, the Dominion examines politics, culture and daily life with a view to understanding the exercise of power” (Dominion Website, 2012). *The Dominion* is “a rare, authentic independent voice – of people not of power” (John Pilger, Dominion Website, 2012). In order to address the consolidation of corporate control, including that of the media, *The Dominion* “aims to widen the range of debate by covering stories marginalized, spun, or simply ignored by the mainstream press” (Dominion Website, 2012). Naomi Klein states, “*The Dominion* has the guts to look at Canada without the fairytales about our national virtue that comfort and blind us” (Dominion Website, 2012). *The Dominion* represents a new model of newspaper in Canada, as an independent publication relying primarily on reader support rather than advertisers, it was “created unambiguously for the public good, rather than for maximizing profit”. Noam Chomsky states:

It would be a major contribution for the functioning of a free society to have independent new sources, free from corporate or state control, internally organized in ways that exemplify what a truly participatory and democratic society would be. I was therefore delighted to learn of the *Dominion*... an ambitious and impressive effort to fulfill this urgent need. (Noam Chomsky, Dominion Website, 2012).

For the purpose of my research, hard news coverage as well as columns, editorials, letters, feature articles and relevant articles from the business section were examined for the analysis. My research into media coverage of this issue did not include radio, television broadcasting, or Internet sources as I decided to limit my analysis to print

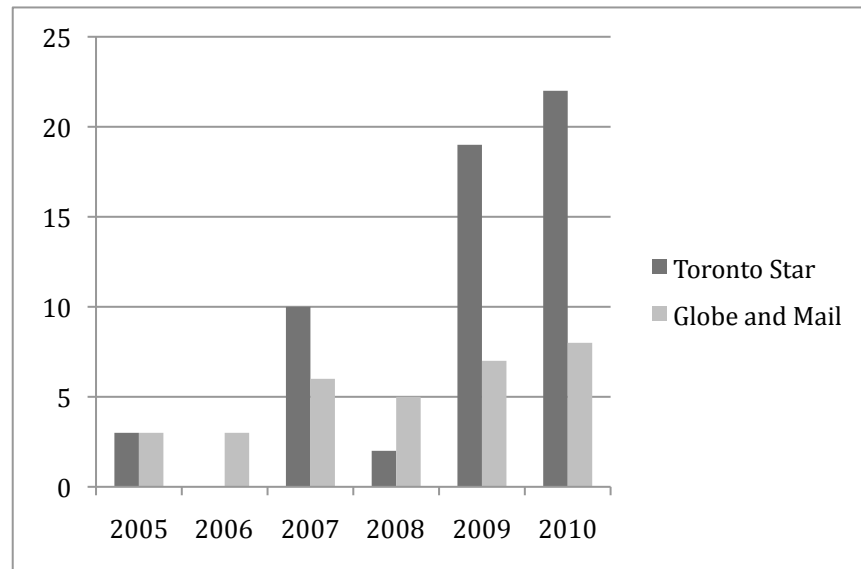
media in the form of newspapers. As I mentioned earlier, *Briarpatch* and *Canadian Dimension*, although magazines, were included only to provide additional information and none of the alternative media were included in the CDA.

## **(ii) General Overview**

There were a total of 87 articles in the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* between January 1, 2005 and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 that discussed the issue of Canadian mining companies operations in developing countries and responsible mining. Of the 87 articles, 55 were from the *Toronto Star* and 32 were from the *Globe and Mail*, analyzed using CDA methodology. The complete list can be found in reverse chronological order in Appendix I and are referred to throughout this chapter.

The chart displayed below shows these 87 articles published between 2005 and 2010 by each newspaper to demonstrate the trends pictorially. The chart clearly illustrates that the *Toronto Star* provided much more coverage of the issue in the selected articles. Additionally, the amount of coverage increased in 2007, 2009 and 2010, especially in the *Toronto Star*.





**Fig. 1 – Number of articles published by the *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star* from 2005 – 2010 that covered Canadian mining companies operating in developing countries**

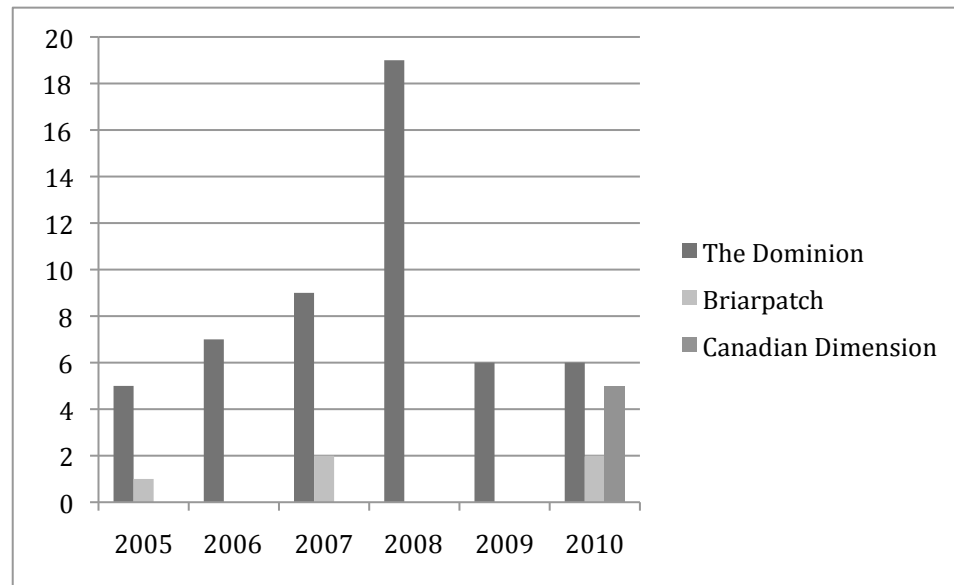
During 2007, coverage centered mostly on meetings that Prime Minister Stephen Harper held with Barrick Gold Inc. while visiting Chile and Tanzania as well as praise for the creation of the Clinton Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative by mining magnate Frank Giustra (Sinclair & Hoffman, 2007; Hume, 2007; Lewis-Watts, 2007; Armstrong, 2007). Many of the articles (40) were concentrated in the last two years and discussed Bill C-300 or responsible mining, which accounts for the large number of articles in 2009 and 2010, when the bill was first introduced, debated and finally defeated in parliament. In 2009, most of the coverage focused on the introduction of Bill C-300 and the committee's hearings of accusations of abuses of Canadian mining companies abroad. In 2010, similar coverage continued, mostly focusing on Bill C-300 and the objections to it by the mining industry. During the months of October and November 2010, leading up to and immediately following the defeat of Bill C-300 in parliament, there was a substantial increase in the number of news articles and the number of letters to the editor published in the *Toronto Star*. There were 8 letters, 4 news articles and 2 op eds published, 14 items in

total of which the majority of writers called for responsible mining and were outraged, ashamed or saddened by the defeat of Bill C-300. During this same time period there was one news article and one letter published in the *Globe and Mail*. This could lead us to assume that the *Toronto Star*, during this time period, provided more space for public debate on the issue and perhaps a more complete depiction of public perceptions and desires.

Choosing the time period, January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2010, and cross-referencing that with the events that were happening surrounding mining at the time, I was able to determine whether these issues were deemed newsworthy and the way they were covered over time. For example, during the year 2005 when the community delegation from the Philippines travelled to Canada to speak with the Canadian government and the ensuing report and recommendations were created only one article covered the story, appearing in the *Globe and Mail* (Stueck 2005). Furthermore, although there were three articles from the *Globe and Mail* in 2006 there was no coverage in either newspaper about the CSR roundtables or the recommendations that were developed, however, between 2009 and 2010 there were 30 articles that discussed Bill C-300, obviously this topic was deemed news worthy where the others were not.

Furthermore, there was an upsurge in the number of articles when a sensational story hit, such as the murder of a Mexican activist in 2009 who was connected to Blackfire, a Canadian mining company (Popplewell, 2009d; Hoffman & Campbell, 2009; Montgomery 2009; Jarry-Shore 2009c; Hoffman 2009; Whittington & Popplewell 2010). Many of these stories were covered by both newspapers but from different angles providing different sources and perspectives. Despite the fact that the *Toronto Star's* coverage of the issues skyrocketed in 2009 and 2010, the coverage in the *Globe and Mail*

remained limited. From this it could be deduced that the *Globe and Mail* potentially does not want to upset the mining industry by covering the issue to a great extent.

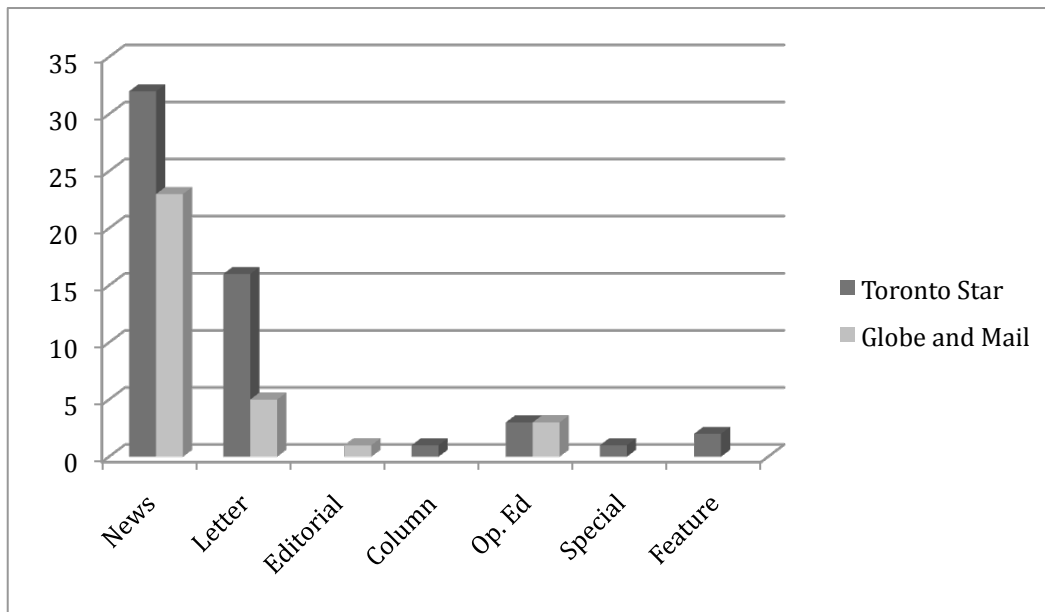


**Fig. 2 – Number of articles published by *The Dominion*, *Briarpatch* and *Canadian Dimension* from 2005 – 2010 that covered Canadian mining companies operating in developing countries**

Although a number of important events occurred in the years with low coverage in both the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail*, there was still coverage in the independent alternative media during these years. For example, in 2008 the El Salvadorian government created a moratorium on mining and revoked the mining licenses of the Canadian mining company Pacific Rim Mining Corp. due to community discontent and opposition. In response, Pacific Rim, through its US subsidiary, brought a lawsuit against the government of El Salvador accusing them of being in direct violation of the CAFTA guidelines and holding them accountable for profits lost. Although a pioneering effort it was never mentioned in either newspaper. Furthermore, the alternative independent media not only provided coverage of more instances of Canadian mining abuses in developing countries, they provided more background information, in-depth analysis and local

perspectives (Rodriquez 2010; Philipovich 2010; Croft 2010a; Jarry-Shore 2009b; Russell 2010; Jarry-Shore 2009a; Freeston 2008).

The genre also played a role in the analysis. Of the total articles from the *Toronto Star*, 58% were from the News section and 29% were Letters to the Editor and from the *Globe and Mail*, 71% were from the News section and 16% were Letters to the Editor. These are illustrated in the chart below.



**Fig. 3 – Breakdown of genre in *Toronto Star* and *Globe and Mail* that covered Canadian mining companies in developing countries between 2005 and 2010.**

The average length of articles in the *Toronto Star* was 633 words and in the *Globe and Mail* 610 words. There were, however, more short letters that appeared in the *Toronto Star* which accounts for the lower average word count. On average news articles appearing in the *Toronto Star* were longer than the *Globe and Mail*.

In choosing the parameters of the research I chose to focus on mining operations by Canadian companies in developing countries, instead of focusing on all operations abroad in general or including domestic operations. This narrowed the focus of the

analysis to concentrate on the media depiction of the global neoliberal economic framework, as related to developing countries. Furthermore, these parameters were chosen because the mining industry and pro-mining advocates argue that Canada has high standards of responsible mining, as exemplified by its domestic and international operations. However, as was mentioned previously, while doing this research there were a substantial number of newspaper articles focusing on the need for increased responsibility and accountability of Canadian mining companies operating in Canada (*The Dominion* Iss.55; Lukacs 2009). This evidence led me to conclude that if Canadian mining companies operating in Canada were not complying with responsible mining standards that they attested to uphold, within their own borders, there could be discrepancies in their operations abroad. Furthermore, the mining industry and pro-mining advocates argue that it is the responsibility of host governments to regulate companies operating within their borders and that any attempts by the Canadian government to regulate Canadian mining companies operating abroad would be a breach of sovereignty.

Yet, Grayson (2006) explained that in other situations when Canadian interests have been at risk the government has stepped in, breaching sovereignty laws, therefore, making this argument moot. Furthermore, as Seck (2007) points out, it is not that legislation could not be created but instead it is the unwillingness of the Canadian government to regulate companies, which accounts for their inaction. So in choosing these parameters I hoped to determine whether the media supported these claims to justify operations abroad in countries with potentially weak institutional frameworks.

### **(iii) Analysis of Media Coverage**

As Huckin suggests, the first step in conducting a CDA is to read through the text as an ordinary, uncritical reader, which is precisely what I did when analyzing the 87 articles of my sample of the media coverage. From this perspective most of the news articles appear balanced, providing various sources, perspectives and information, however, upon a closer, more critical, inspection it becomes evident that most of the articles had a particular slant or stance that they were taking. Yet, to the uncritical reader many of these idiosyncrasies would not be evident. Many of these points are synonymous with Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, therefore, the analyses' are integrated within the same section. After reading the articles the first time as an uncritical reader, I then re-read them using Huckin's delineation to determine the particular stance that the article takes. However, prior to discussing the specific elements of the CDA I will provide a preliminary analysis on a number of thematic areas that deserve mention.

#### *Corporate Social Responsibility*

First of all, during this period of time the term "corporate social responsibility (CSR)" was used regularly when discussing issues of Canadian mining company's operations. Since the premise of Bill C-300 and the perceived opposition to these mining activities hinged on the need for responsible mining practices, CSR became the benchmark for resolving such issues. Before 2007, the term was used only in the articles falling within the business section of the *Globe and Mail* (Hoffman 2006; Stueck 2005). In the articles in the sample, the term was not used in the *Toronto Star* until 2007, and the first time it was used was by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, expressing his support for Canadian mining company Barrick Gold Inc., after visiting their office in Chile. Barrick

Gold Inc. at the time was engaged in a controversial project in the Andes. Harper stated, “Barrick follows Canadian standards of corporate social responsibility...referring to ethical guidelines for companies operating abroad” (Woods 2007). Until this time terms like “corporate philanthropy” or “sustainable development” were used, equating them with the same expression, or phrases like “ethical guidelines”, or “standards of conduct” were used to refer to a regulatory framework of responsibility (Stewart & Hoffman 2007; Goar 2007). During 2007, CSR was only used in three articles but was alluded to by stating such phrases as “Canadian companies can be better held to account for their actions abroad”, or “ethical guidelines for mining companies with overseas operations”, (Westhead 2007; Goar 2007) and then was not mentioned again until 2009.

Between 2009 and 2010 CSR was discussed in 40 articles, almost 50% of the sample, mostly in combination with or in reference to Bill C-300. This increase corresponds to a deliberate lobbying campaign by the mining industry to persuade government officials to defeat the bill as well as an increase in the use of the term for public relations of the mining industry. To this end, the media served an important function to provide the industry with a platform to push their PR campaigns.

As Zhang and Swanson (2006) explain, the use of the term CSR in the media usually falls into one of the following six categories: 1) as minimizing or eliminating harmful effects and maximizing beneficial impacts, 2) as an endorsement of corporate achievement, 3) as community and social expectation, 4) as a specialty or profession, 5) as a utilitarian business function, or 6) as spin to polish the corporate image. Each of these was present, sometimes including more than one use at a time, in the articles that were analyzed. For example, number 1, 2, and 6 are exhibited in four articles in 2007, that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* applauding Frank Giustra, a mining magnate, for

initiating a philanthropic effort for the mining industry to “combat poverty in the developing world” with the establishment of the Clinton Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative (Stewart & Hoffman 2007; Hume 2007; Lewis-Watts 2007; Armstrong 2007). The articles explained that after becoming so rich from the industry Giustra wanted to now find “a way to give some of this money back” as an effort in “corporate philanthropy” for “sustainable development” (Stewart & Hoffman).

Additionally, articles between 2009 and 2010 that gave prominence to the mining industry’s perspective used the term CSR in one of four ways: as minimizing or eliminating harmful effects and maximizing beneficial impacts; as an endorsement of corporate achievement; as a utilitarian business function; or as spin to polish the corporate image. Frequently, companies professed to do “everything possible to ensure that [their] business practices meet the highest standards of ethical behaviour and corporate social responsibility” (Poplewell 2009b).

Additionally, in an effort to support the mining industry to maximize their beneficial impacts and minimize their harmful effects, the Canadian government, in 2010, under the umbrella of CSR launched a \$20 million fund “to help companies develop economically and socially acceptable projects abroad” (Whittington 2010a). As a utilitarian function of their business, in response to reports of abuses at their Porgera mine in Papua New Guinea, one article quoted Barrick Gold Inc. saying “it operates on a code of corporate social responsibility” (Whittington 2010b). Furthermore, on the eve of the final vote on Bill C-300 an article expressed that “the industry says Canadian mining companies are committed to improving corporate social responsibility and make important economic and social contributions where they operate” (Whittington 2010d). Finally, there were also articles that argued that CSR “ethical guidelines are already in



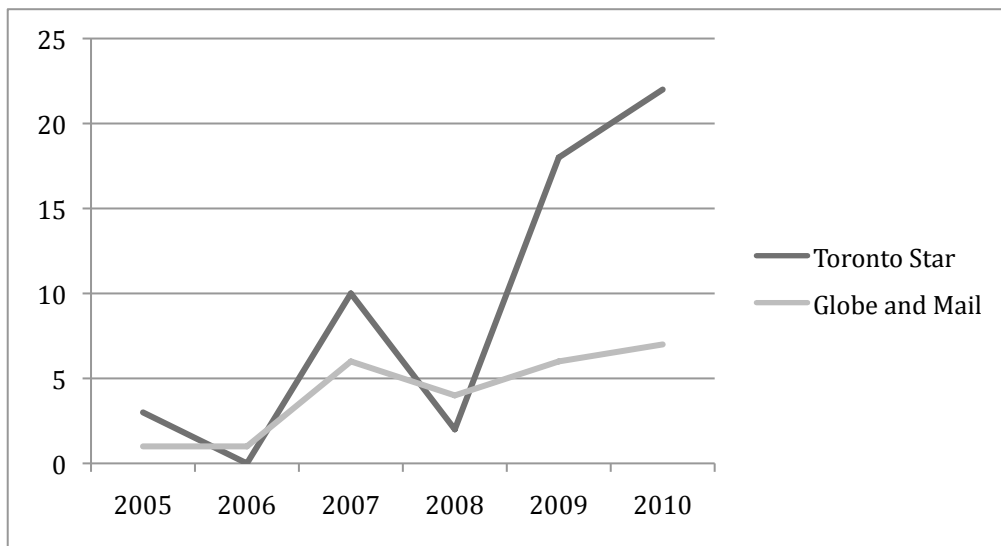
place” (Curry 2010). As this demonstrates, the Conservative government’s close relationship with the industry and confidence in self-regulation or voluntary regulation were consistently portrayed in the media.

In addition, there were various articles that legitimated mining operations and the rights of the corporation whereby the writers presumed that mining companies had the right to mine, in some instances, even supported by the host governments and local people. These ideas support the findings of a CDA of the public relations campaign of Crystallex’s Las Cristinas mine in Venezuela whereby the company used PR to legitimate its operations through legal discourse (with an emphasis on the legality of the company’s contract), government partnership discourse (with an emphasis on the company’s relationship to the government) and social discourse (with an emphasis on the company’s social investment or on the needs and concerns of surrounding communities) (Penaloza de Brooks & Waymer, 2008). It does not seem like a coincidence that the legitimization strategy that this study promotes was the exact path taken by the mining industry to gain the public’s confidence. Actually, a *Canadian Dimension* article exposes this by expressing that “the world of corporate public relations is appropriating the term for their own benefit” (Laplane & Nolin 2010).

In the small number of articles that gave prominence to the perspective of the opposition, CSR was used as minimizing or eliminating harmful effects and maximizing beneficial impacts, as community and social expectation or as a utilitarian business function. For example, “foreign pension funds have signaled they will not invest in Canadian mining companies unless they adopt firm corporate responsibility rules abroad” (Poppewell 2009b). It was for the most part the letters that stressed the importance of implementing legislation for CSR. One such letter stated, “Getting an official Ottawa

stamp of approval would certify that a firm is doing its best to manage inevitable social and environmental risks” (Anonymous 2009). Another letter expressed, “Canadian laws, with an ombudsman and legal repercussions, are what’s needed to keep these corporations socially and economically responsible abroad” (Subramanieapillai 2009).

The chart below outlines the number of uses of the term CSR in the sample of articles and it clearly demonstrates that the *Toronto Star* was a platform to push this concept by PR campaigns, government officials and, since the majority of letters were from this paper, it is evident that the public was calling for CSR.



**Fig. 4 – Breakdown of the number of uses of the term CSR in the Toronto Star and Globe and Mail in articles that covered Canadian mining companies in developing countries between 2005 and 2010.**

Reputational damage was deemed the ultimate form of punishment for Canadians who would be judged by the shameful abuses of the Canadian mining industry, whereas, the mining industry would be battered by false accusations that would affect their reputations and profits. This form of soft criticism never seemed to take into consideration the horrific human rights violations and how others would be affected by the actions of Canadian mining companies. As Grayson (2006) explained earlier,

reputational damage for the mining industry is almost never enough to ensure accountability.

Part and parcel of the use of the term CSR was the assumption by the mining industry and industry supporters, including the Conservative Government, of the achievement of responsible mining through voluntary guidelines or self-regulation. For example, in 2009, after the death of an activist in Mexico and accusations that Blackfire, a Canadian company, was involved, Peter Kent, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs stated “in many cases our companies are held up and recognized as virtual models of corporate social responsibility” (Jarry-Shore 2009c). Only a handful of times did either paper actually publish any perspective that problematized the idea of responsible mining as an oxymoron or as contradictory to mining practices, instead most articles supported responsible mining (McCarthy 2010; McKay 2010a). Further to this, the mining industry and industry supporters constantly emphasized that there were voluntary guidelines in place, some implemented by the Conservative government, that were adequate to address responsible mining practices (Curry 2010). Additionally, industry consistently maintained their commitment to responsible mining practices and promised to self-regulate in order to preserve high industry standards and their reputations. Yet, when industry purported that current standards were adequate the article did not provide an opinion to the contrary or any type of analysis of what was considered high standards of responsible mining.

Throughout the articles most writers referred to Bill C-300 as the “responsible mining bill” or “ethical mining bill”, however, this qualifier was never used by the mining industry and to the contrary, the mining industry and supporters began to refer to those in support of Bill C-300 as having an “anti-mining bias” or even, in one instance, as an

“anti-Canadian mining bill” (Whittington 2009c; Whittington 2010c; Whittington 2010d; Grace 2010).

Upon further analysis, I discovered there were only three articles that attempted to describe the current voluntary regulations in place or where the terms of Bill C-300 were actually explained (Whittington 2009a; Popplewell 2009a; Albin-Lackey 2010). In fact, the media mentioned details of flaws in the Bill or presented it in piecemeal fashion with chosen fragments highlighted. There was only one occasion where the procedural breakdown was provided and this was done through an op ed by Chris Albin-Lackey from MiningWatch Canada, a mining watchdog organization (2010). The alternative independent media also provided a more in depth analysis on some of the flaws of Bill C-300 that were never mentioned in the mainstream media, for instance, that Bill C-300 would only affect publicly-traded mining companies and not private ones and that it did not make provisions for reparation for damages as well as that Bill C-300 was perhaps “most valuable in its exposure of the Canadian government’s support for its mining industry abroad” (Jarry-Shore 2010; North 2010; Saunders 2010). This support was best exemplified not only by Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s visits to Barrick Gold Inc. in Chile and Tanzania and his stated confidence in the industry to uphold CSR standards but in an article that stated “some [Liberal] MPs have joined with the Conservatives and the mining sector to argue that the bill will be impossible to apply in practice and will subject the industry to unsubstantiated allegations around the world” (Woods 2007; Freeman 2007; Whittington 2010d). Additionally, Canada’s Trade Minister Stockwell Day consistently supported the mining industry explaining “there’s no need to compel multinationals to live up to high environmental and human rights standards” and that

“most multinational mining operations help foreign communities where they do business” (Whittington 2010a).

Also there were very few articles, aside from the alternative independent media, which explained that responsible mining could not or was not enough to address the destructive nature of the industry and that a structural change was actually what was needed. Moreover, there were no articles, except in the alternative independent media, which admitted the flaws with Bill C-300 in its inability to place criminal sanctions on those in violation of the standards (Saunders 2010). Yet, most of the criticisms over the bill came from the mining industry and consistently purported that the bill would damage their competitive advantage, subject its members to unfair accusations and create legal vulnerability (Whittington 2009c; Whittington 2010e). These are some of the arguments that Grayson (2006) outlined are used by the corporate sector in an attempt to diminish the necessity for regulation and to instead promote self-regulation.

### *Opposition Demonized*

The presentation of opposition to Canadian mining companies operating abroad transformed throughout the period of the sample from a small selection of uncivilized local people or radical protesters opposed to development to non-governmental organizations and social activists and supporters of Bill C-300 with an anti-mining bias. There was a polarization of the issue into those who supported the mining industry and those who were against the mining industry. Those in support of Bill C-300 were compartmentalized as opposed to mining and labeled “NGOs and social activists” or “anti-mining” (Whittington 2010c; Whittington 2010d). For example, in July 2007, a spokesperson for Barrick Gold stated “the protest was organized by a small group of

radicals opposed to development” and went on to say that much of the opposition was “a result of professional activism that, unfortunately, opposes any kind of development” (Woods 2007). In an article in 2008, Gabriel Resources contends that they are up against “a reactionary Goliath of anti-mining activism” (Potter 2008). Furthermore, when a former Argentine environment minister testified of personal threats by Barrick Gold Corp., Vincent Borg, a spokesperson for the company, responded by calling her allegations “mindboggling”, “inconceivable” and “nonsense” (Whittington & Popplewell, 2009). This created a homogenous grouping that placed anyone who supported responsible mining and those who brought forward reports of abuses by the industry in the same group, even though there was a broad range of perspectives and groups that deviated from these labels. Because there was such an emphasis on portraying the mining industry as such a ‘Canadian sector’ it was seen as unpatriotic to call for responsible mining because it was an attack on the Canadian economy. Consistently, the mining industry threatened that if the Bill passed it would affect their ability to operate in Canada resulting in their exodus and with them the loss of jobs and revenue. For example, some statements became commonplace, such as “this heavy-handed approach could result in Canadian-headquartered companies leaving for greener pastures” and “critics of the legislation warn it is overkill and will have adverse affect on Canada and its mining companies, possibly forcing some to move out of Canada” (Anonymous 2010a; Whittington 2009b).

Therefore, most representations dichotomized the issue into what van Dijk (1998) explained as ‘us’ and ‘them’ categories in order to reinforce the corporate elite’s position of dominance within society. However, in this instance it also pitted those who were considered to have the best interest of Canadians at heart (mining industry) and those who

were considered to be more concerned about people outside of Canada (NGOs and social activists) against each other. The Propaganda Model supports this as it describes that when mobilizing the populace against a threat, a dichotomized world will be presented in the media wherein the public will be faced with choosing sides in an ‘us’ vs ‘them’ structure whereby ‘our side’ will be favoured which corresponds to the interests of power (Herman and Chomsky 2002, p.30).

The opposition outside of Canada was represented as ‘the other’ in negative or derogatory terms. These findings are consistent of those of Oktar (2001) in a CDA of the media, based on the work of Van Dijk (1998) which verifies that ‘the other’ is consistently portrayed as exotic or as inferior and that “these discourses have shaped public opinion and led to broadly shared social representations” in order to confirm group dominance and maintain power imbalances (van Dijk, 1998 p. 13). For example, in an article from 2005, a mining official from Metallica Resources said, in response to allegations of involvement in a murder in Mexico, “We’re civilized people. We’re talking about a mine. You don’t kill people over a mine”, which is perhaps an insinuation about the level of civility of the local people (Ross, O. 2005). Within the same article a mining analyst stated, “Some people oppose abortion... And some people oppose mines – or, anyway, this mine” and attempt to polarize the issue and equate it with another controversial topic that pits conservatives against progressives (Ross, O. 2005). Furthermore, in another article a Barrick spokesperson stated, “That’s just part of today’s society... There’s a small, very vocal minority, a lot of it promoted by anti-globalization NGOs” (Woods 2007). Supportive of the Propaganda Model, Oktar (2001) confirms, as does this CDA, the presence of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation in the media. My findings support those of van Dijk (1998) where ‘the other’ is depicted

as deviating from or violating the dominant norms and values that the dominant group finds important, including institutional values, and they are therefore marginalized to maintain important power relations and hegemonic ideologies.

Moreover, in the articles that were analyzed, locals who opposed mining operations in their communities became subject to questioning of their ability to recognize or accept development and assistance in the form of altruistic or benevolent corporations bringing jobs and modern technology to their remote ‘uncivilized’ communities. For example, as I mentioned earlier, a Barrick spokesperson stated that opposition to their project in Chile was a result of “professional activism that, unfortunately opposes any type of development” and then went on to say that they “are positive that [the project] will result in a number of benefits to the community” (Woods 2007). Anyone who attempted to receive fair compensation for their land was portrayed as deceitful, ungrateful, greedy or opportunistic trying to take advantage of the mining company. For example, when a local man was tricked into driving ten hours into the city and selling his land for \$20, a Barrick lawyer explained that he “made the trip because he eyed a much larger payday” since they were now caught up in a legal battle with him to receive compensation (Westhead 2007). This ‘Othering’ in the media is consistent with Said’s (1978) work on Orientalism whereby discourse constructs ‘the other’ to produce an unquestioned Western supremacy that seeks to reinforce and justify dominance of an inferior group (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia 2002). As such, hegemonic ideologies provide a platform for the continuation of neo-imperialism, which as mentioned previously, is intrinsically linked to neoliberalism.

In December 2008 and January 2009, a series of articles were published covering the hostage taking of a Canadian diplomat in Niger (Mamane, Callimachi, Maccharles &



Smith 2008; Clarfield 2008; Smith 2009). Over the course of the three articles those deemed responsible for the kidnapping went from being described as “rebels” to “armed bandits” to “terrorists” who resorted to violence, in order to receive a share of the wealth from mining resources in the country. For example, one article states “Missing Canadian diplomat Robert Fowler appears to have been plunged into a bitter, long-standing struggle involving the government of Niger, nomadic rebel groups and uranium mining companies” (Mamane et al 2008). Another article explained, “Canadians should recognize that Niger and the other states of the Sahel are one extended battleground between northerners and southerners. In Niger, Mali, Chad and Sudan, one must take great care not to get caught in the crossfire between these two opposing historical forces” (Clarfield 2008). In the last article the president of Niger exclaimed, “the possible suspects in the kidnapping included ethnic Tuareg rebel groups who have been trying to overthrow the government and claim Nigeriens are not receiving their fair share of royalties from foreign uranium mining companies. ‘These armed bandits are nothing more than terrorist groups mixed up in the trafficking of drugs, arms and human beings’” (Smith 2009).

### *Mining Industry in the Spotlight*

Another significant component of this analysis is that throughout the discussion of Bill C-300 in the media there was essentially a complete omission of the oil and gas industry, instead focusing its spotlight on the mining industry, despite the fact that Bill C-300 included all of the extractive industries: mining, oil and gas. This oversight, deliberate or otherwise, limited the discussion of the risks and impacts of Canadian oil and gas companies operating abroad which, although not part of the concentration of this

analysis, brings up questions of why the media coverage omitted such an important element of the debate. That is to say that, although when Bill C-300 was described it included the oil and gas industry as being part of the legislation, the media did not include sources or experts from the oil or gas industries or reports of abuses from host communities which would lead the reader to assume that there was no cause to regulate these industries as there was no record of wrongdoings to report in the media. Interestingly enough, this issue seemed to also be excluded from the alternative independent media as well.

### *Genre and framing*

In general, there were four genres of writing within this media sample: news reporting, commentary writing, feature writing, editorial writing and columnist writing. Yet, the majority of the articles fell into the first two genres. As was mentioned earlier, the majority of the articles fell into the category of the news. Basic news reporting consisted of a typical, straightforward journalistic formula that was used in the international, national, provincial, and business news sections as well as the religious and focus sections of the newspapers. News reporting is supposed to present the information in an objective or balanced and unbiased fashion. It should use neutral language while presenting a diversity of opinions, voices, and perspectives. At first glance this appeared to be true, however, upon closer inspection I found that the language was not neutral, at times using very loaded terms to describe sources, events or issues, thereby attaching a particular angle or agenda. The sources, although providing a diversity of views, were presented in very different ways to manipulate the reader into favouring one perspective over another.

News reporting should also quote knowledgeable sources and research relies mostly on interviewing as opposed to written sources. For example, the sources that were used from the mining industry were presented as ‘experts’ and the locals were presented as ‘backward’. One example is an article about gold exploration in Haiti whereby a geologist takes samples of deposits and says “these are the best results I’ve ever seen” (Lindsay 2007). The same article continues that residents want the officials “to sit down with everyone together to let us know what decision they’ve made for the area” and that residents “are unaware of the environmental catastrophes and social upheaval sometimes associated with gold mining in other poor countries” and are relying on the officials to provide them with this information (Lindsay 2007).

Furthermore, news articles generally follow an inverted pyramid structure for conveying information whereby the first sentences of the article give the most important facts and the following paragraphs present the details in descending order of importance. This being the case, the articles in the sample usually gave prominence to the views and interests of the mining industry. For example, an article about pro-Tibetan protesters disrupting a mining convention gave prominence to the disruptive nature of the small group of “seven pro-Tibetan activists” who “posed as delegates” and “chanted” while “two others lay motionless on the floor...in what they called a ‘mock die-in’” (Edwards 2009). The article then quoted the mining company spokesperson as saying “We respect everyone’s right to make statements” and it was not until the end of the article that the issues being protested were cited by the Canadian-Tibetan Joint Action Committee president as “It’s unconscionable for a Canadian company to be operating inside Tibet when Tibetans are facing brutal military clampdown and the most repressive conditions in three decades” (Edwards 2009). In another example, an article headlined “Mining

companies deny abuses; Unproven allegations causing undue harm to Canadian industry, spokesman says”, the entire article relies on industry officials or Conservative Government support to explain that the allegations are “the result of false claims by people opposed to their business” and it is not until the very last sentence that there is any attempt to defend this type of victim-blaming, when an Opposition MP disputes “the contention the bill has an anti-mining theme” (Whittington 2009c). She continues “I don’t think anyone around this table is against the mining industry. On the contrary, what I’m against is impunity” (Whittington 2009c). Unfortunately, even though this statement is very important and powerful it was given the least amount of prominence in the article and therefore, not seen as important to the argument.

The second highest category of articles published was commentary writing, which includes letters to the editor, and op eds. These present the writer’s opinion on a current topic, usually, in the case of letters to the editor, in reaction to an article that previously appeared in the newspaper, and may be based on personal experience, expertise or on research. These were written by outside sources and appeared in the editorial or comment section of the newspaper. However, they are allocated much less space and are usually much more brief and therefore, sharply focused. Furthermore, the editor has the power to choose and edit the letters and op eds that are published, therefore, deciding how a topic is presented and the types of perspectives that make it to print. Most of these appeared in the *Toronto Star*. These articles were mostly calling on the government to regulate mining companies through responsible mining and Bill C-300.

Feature writing mainly occurred in the World & Comment and Life sections of the newspaper and only appeared in the *Toronto Star*. The majority of the authors of these articles were free-lance journalists and presented the information in a narrative format.

They were, in some cases, longer than news articles and began with a ‘hook’ meant to catch the reader’s attention. They, for the most part, still followed the inverted pyramid structure and provided personal interviews.

Finally, the last genre of writing was editorials, which represent the opinion of management of the newspaper, and columnist reporting by a regular columnist. There was only one article from each of these genres in the sample and the editorial appeared in the *Globe and Mail* and the column appeared in the *Toronto Star*. As was previously mentioned, editorials are written by the editor and reflect the opinions and positions of the newspaper management. It is to the editor’s discretion whether they decide to comment on a particular issue or not and most of the editor’s decisions are influenced by the corporate ownership of that particular media outlet. This reinforces what George Orwell called the “prevailing orthodoxy” or what Winter calls “Media Think” (2002, p.xviii). This term, “Media Think”, explains the “media owners, managers and workers’ way of thinking, of seeing and representing events in the world around us” that supports the current dominant ideology (2002, p. xxvii).

Interestingly, the one editorial in my sample, appearing in the *Globe and Mail* and headlined, “Canada’s double standard”, criticizes the Canadian government as “acting irresponsibly” for their active attempts to allow the export of asbestos to developing countries without first informing them of the hazards associated with it yet has banned the use of it in Canada (Editorial, 2008). The editorial also says that the Rotterdam Convention “would not ban its export from mining operations in Quebec” but would allow importing nations “to give their ‘prior informed consent’ to future imports of listed materials, and are entitled to withhold consent or grant conditional consent” (Editorial, 2008). This seems like a rather progressive view on mining issues, calling for a more

equal process of trade decisions, but it still places the blame of such unethical business practices on the government and not on the companies that continue to profit off hazardous materials. At no point in this editorial is there a question of why we are still mining asbestos at all, considering the risks, and the health hazards for the Canadian miners who continue to work in this industry.

Regular columnists also write opinions that reflect upon the newspaper as the editor has the power to edit, change or omit particular comments in columns as well. Goar's column in the *Toronto Star* in 2007 headlined "Reconciling ethics and mining" sets up the polarization of the issue pitting human rights activists against the mining industry saying, "To say that human rights activists and the Canadian mining industry have been at odds for years would be a polite understatement" and that "their clashes have been toxic" (2007). Yet the column praises the efforts of both parties "to draft a set of ethical guidelines" through the cross-country roundtables held in 2006 (Goar, 2007). The article goes on to show a lack of confidence in the government saying, "it is now up to the government to implement these recommendations" and that "although the government convened the 10-month roundtable, it did not control the results. Nor has it endorsed them" but "to become federal policy, the panel's recommendations need Ottawa's seal of approval" (Goar, 2007). The column goes on to explain the difficult position of journalists in attempting to cover such stories explaining:

Any journalist who wrote about the industry got caught in the crossfire. An accurate story about a Canadian mining company's humanitarian work in one African village was sure to elicit an itemized list of all its bad practices, past and present. A passing reference to a mining company's imperfect human rights record was sure to produce an indignant letter from its head offices. (Goar, 2007).

This quote exemplifies the way the media are influenced by various actors involved in the issue being reported but it also reflects the position they have taken and that instead of playing the role of watchdog, ensuring the public receives a diversity of views on an important issue, the media may choose not to cover it at all.

Framing is a key aspect of Huckin's delineation of CDA as it refers to the angle or slant the writer is taking. The frame that is most commonly used in news reporting is the good vs. bad frame, which was also the most prevalent throughout this sample. In the earlier news articles between 2005 and 2008 the victimized mining companies who were bringing modernity and development to the remote developing countries were usually pitted against the 'backward' locals who opposed the blessing of development (Mackenzie 2005; Ross, O. 2005; Ross, J. 2005; Westhead 2007; Freeman 2007). In one article a spokesperson for Barrick Gold Corp., Vincent Borg, calls a local man's case against the mining company a "nuisance suit" and the article explains that the "contentious court decision, which the company is appealing, now threatens to at least delay Barrick's efforts to tap one of the largest undeveloped deposits of gold, silver and copper" (Westhead 2007). In later articles, 2009 and 2010, this frame continued, however, it grouped together those in favour of responsible mining (environmentalists, social activists, locals, NGOs and John McKay and supporters of Bill C-300) and pitted them against the mining industry and the Conservative Government which opposed responsible mining and instead favoured voluntary regulations. For example, in a 2009 article the second sentence in response to allegations of abuse from locals reads "the companies say they have done nothing wrong – mining copper, gold and other metals brings only prosperity to these poor regions" (Poplewell 2009b). The article goes on to quote Trade Minister Stockwell Day as saying "They [critics] need to get a real look at

what is going on. They need to see the high quality of work that Canadian companies do and how they respect host governments and local communities” (Poplewell 2009b).

The agent-patient relations of this frame presented mining companies as victimized/innocent and being attacked. Once this agent-patient relation was established as a frame, journalists would provide quotes in the articles from a variety of industry sources that had scathing comments towards those in support of responsible mining, while those very groups were excluded, paraphrased or quoted with mild comments that did little to counter or respond to accusations coming from the mining industry. One example was an article by Les Whittington in November 2009 in which a mining industry lawyer, Michel Bourassa accused NGOs of creating false stories of abuse in order to receive funding without any rebuttal by the NGO community to defend these disparaging remarks (2009c). Bourassa contends, “I think the vast majority of [allegations] are completely unfounded” and then goes on to say “some of the NGOs could be [making false allegations] to create sort of a story for funding” (Whittington 2009c). In another article the writer explains, “Many in the Canadian mining industry accuse some NGOs of harbouring an anti-mining bias that has led to exaggerated and unsubstantiated allegations against Canada’s companies operating in developing countries” (Whittington 2010c) and in yet another article companies say “they are the victims of an anti-mining bias among some non-governmental organizations and social activists” (Whittington 2010d). Finally, after the defeat of Bill C-300 an article explained, “Mining firms called the allegations disturbing lies and ‘hogwash’” (Curry 2010). There was not one article where NGOs or people who were accused by the mining industry as spreading lies were given the opportunity to counter these statements.



Another common frame throughout the sample was that mining brings development and benefits to communities where they are operating. Initial articles were more narrative based, painting a fairy tale picture of the benefits of mining for communities and the contributions to development whereas later articles, in light of Bill C-300, suggested that Canadian mining companies were more upstanding and providing more than other countries and that mining was an extension of Canadian benevolence. For example, in a 2005 article about a moratorium on mining licenses in Guatemala amid questions about the consultation of communities, a local man employed by the Canadian company says “it’s sad to see the mountain transformed this way, but in impoverished San Marcos state, he’s happy to have the job and the training that went with it” (Mackenzie 2005). Emphasis was continually placed on Canadian companies and their CEOs as “civilized” and bringing “such modern technology” (Ross, O. 2005; Mackenzie 2005). Finally, in another article Conservative MP Deepak Obhrai “questioned why Canada’s companies should be forced to meet higher standards when a country like China is expanding its mining without such hindrances” (Whittington 2009c) and yet another explained, “an army of Canadian companies are in the forefront of Africa’s push to develop its vast mineral resources” and “mining is very important to bring wealth into the country” (McCarthy 2010).

This frame maintained the neo-imperialist vision of developed countries assisting less developed countries, somehow suggesting that the West knows best. These articles also omitted any discussion of the unequal power relations, global economic framework of domination and exploitation of resource rich countries that are still in positions of subjugation by the West. Furthermore, it pulls on the heartstrings of the Canadian public as the media elicit images of improved lives for the impoverished communities in far

away lands as, Rist (2007) and Cornwall (2007) elaborated, and Canadian mining companies were depicted as the saviours or the heroes. In an article entitled “Controversy over mining overshadows health initiative” the writer explains “The goal was to leave the image of a benevolent Canada investing in the health of poor Africans, but in the end it was another Canada, that of its globe-hopping mining companies, that stole the day” (Freeman 2007). The article goes on to say that “Thanks in large part to Barrick’s three gold mines, Canada has emerged as Tanzania’s largest foreign investor, prompting a resource boom that has helped Tanzania record a 6.2-per-cent growth rate last year” and a Barrick spokesperson, Vincent Borg said, “the company has been ‘generating substantial economic and social benefits for thousands of Tanzanians” (Freeman 2007). In another related article, “Harper reminded reporters, ‘Canada has contributed a billion dollars in aid to Tanzania since 1961...and Canadian mining companies are the largest investors in Tanzania” (Brennan 2007). This depiction not only provides additional support for mining companies for benevolence, it reinforces the paternalistic relationship that Canada has with developing countries. However, as Rist (2007) explains, this veil of false illusions obfuscates the reality of the development situation in these countries, which is readily discussed in the alternative independent media (Gordon 2010; Campbell 2010; Russell 2010). For example, a *Briarpatch* article explains, “it’s important to grasp the significant transformations Canadian capitalism has undergone over the last 20 years of neo-liberal entrenchment. Canada, we must finally recognize, is an imperialist power; members of its ruling class think and act like imperialists” (Gordon 2010). Furthermore, in the mainstream media, communities with different ideas of development are either omitted or described in condescending tones of absurdity and backwardness. The idea that they might be responsible for their own development is completely ridiculed or

unheard of in the mainstream media. In one example the writer explains, that one of the locals thinks the “remedy for the region’s unemployment woes is a combination of small-scale farming....together with agro-tourism, and perhaps a cottage industry in Rosia Montana handcrafts....But such notions seem somewhat far-fetched, considering the scars left by many centuries of prior mining in the area” (Potter 2008).

Ideology, therefore, reinforces the legitimization process of mining operations in the name of development. These findings support Levy’s (2002) research of CDA examining the use of free trade ideology by the World Trade Organization (WTO). The sample consisted of twenty articles from WTO online news archives that related to “development”, since free trade is seen as a precursor to economic development. This study illustrated that the discourse of free trade works as an ideology to preserve the dominance of the world by some and the exploitation and alienation of others. For example, the WTO, in Levy’s study, explains, “our core business is trade, which is so important, to development targets. By liberalizing trade, we can make a huge contribution to alleviating poverty” (Levy 2002, p.101). Furthermore, such discourses as a product of language serve to reify notions of power and powerlessness, as those in positions of dominance control the production, consumption and legitimization of discourse. This mirrors the findings of my analysis as it highlights the way in which institutions and corporations, which hold a particular degree of authority and power, are able to produce and disseminate particular ideologies that benefit them at the expense of others. Furthermore, it is important to note the connotation and use of the term ‘development’ as a justification for neoliberalism. For example, in an article entitled “Canada’s key role in Americas” the writer states, “Its economic growth and stable democracy – Canadian firms also have sizable investments in Chile, notably in mining – have led Mr. Harper to

portray Chile as a leading partner for Canada's strategy in Latin America, as a like-minded, free-trading country and a 'bastion of democracy'" (Campbell 2008).

The agent-patient relations of this frame established mining companies as actively attempting to bring good to the passive poor locals in developing countries. The majority of the initial articles used this agent-patient relation to justify the actions of mining companies even though they were interfering with the local ways of life. For example, "The Clinton-Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative...aims to marshal the forces of the mining industry to bring clean water, schools, health care and sustainable economies to developing countries worldwide" (Hume 2007). This relationship precluded any discussion on whether the locals should decide what they wanted in their communities and what they considered as "development". Therefore, it reinforced the neo-colonial attitudes that western intervention is justifiable because the local people do not know what is best for themselves or how to use their resources for their development. In an article entitled "Canadians leading the way in Mongolia's development: Miners see enormous payoffs – along with big risks – in this emerging democracy" it is stated that "Mining is set to transform the country's economy...What's needed is transportation" and then local people are mocked when it states, "Mongolians want jobs as well as taxes and royalties, in a country where unskilled labourers in the city make as little as \$3 a day" (Brophy-Down 2010). Furthermore, there was no discussion about how these countries remain impoverished due to the exploitation of the countries with less power for the capitalist mode of production and neoliberal global economic system. Nkrumah (2004) expressed this very well in *Neo-colonialism: The last stage of imperialism* when he wrote, "Africa is a paradox which illustrates and highlights neo-colonialism. Her earth is rich, yet the products that come from above and below her soil continue to enrich not Africans

predominantly, but groups and individuals who operate to Africa's impoverishment".

Furthermore, he continues:

The result of neo-colonialism is that foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world. Investment under neo-colonialism increases rather than decreases the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world. (Nkrumah, 2004 p.x)

As articulated by Nkrumah above, although many of the countries, as some articles explained, have vast resources, they remain impoverished, a concept very different from poor, as impoverishment is usually linked to systems of inequities and these countries are actually rich in natural resources but are exploited. Chomsky (2002) elaborates on this global system of exploitation as follows:

Remember, we're the global power, so we have to make sure that all the various parts of the world continue serving their assigned functions in our global system. And the assigned functions of Third World countries are to be markets for American business, sources of resources for American business, to provide cheap labor for American business, and so on. (in Mitchell & Schoeffel, 2002 p.64)

Although this quote refers to the United States, this holds true for Canada as well, especially in the mining sector where we dominate the world market.

Finally, upon examination of the reporters who covered the stories, I noticed there were a few who covered articles more frequently. For the *Toronto Star*, Les Whittington and Brett Popplewell covered 11 and 7 articles respectively and for the *Globe and Mail*, Andy Hoffman and Geoffrey York covered 5 and 4 articles respectively. This leads me to believe that there would have been more research or background done over the course of the number of articles covered leading to more familiarity of the topic and an increase in discussion of the issue as well as the fact that they should have been developing their expertise and specialization in the subject. However, this did not seem to happen, with

Les Whittington actually recycling quite a few of the same sources and quotes repeatedly in different articles. Furthermore, Brett Popplewell received a fellowship awarded by the Canadian Newspaper Association funded by CIDA for him to travel to Ecuador to produce articles that were published in November 2009. This is distressing considering the possibility of funding affecting the objectivity of the reporter, especially considering that the funding came from the government of Canada through CIDA. Additionally, this should suggest that with the added funding there would have been more resources to do research. Yet he maintained the status quo in his style of writing. Finally, the *Globe and Mail* has a mining reporter, who at first was Wendy Stueck in 2005 and then Andy Hoffman from 2008 on, dedicated to reporting on mining issues, leading me to believe that they should have the ability to dedicate more time and resources to the topic. However, mining reporters focused articles on business-related issues, giving prominence to stocks, mergers and acquisitions and completely omitting any discussion on social or environmental abuses.

Coverage of the issues varied by other reporters as well. Free-lance writers like Dominique Jarry-Shore, Jen Ross, and Reed Lindsay usually provided more background information and wrote longer feature articles, sometimes presented the issues more progressively. Of the reporters for the *Globe and Mail*, Geoffrey York took on more controversial mining issues, including reporting on mining in Africa (South Africa and the DRC) and Tibet. His reporting style evolved over the years and seemed to become more progressive in later articles, providing more local perspectives and background information but still reinforced negative stereotypes and backgrounded the opposition's perspective and deeper structural issues.

*Foregrounding and backgrounding (including omission)*

The perspective of the Canadian mining industry was often foregrounded in the articles throughout the years in both newspapers. Whether discussing the mining industry as benevolent or innocent, or as the victim, or describing how Bill C-300 was negatively hurting the industry's reputation, or impacting business, the mining industry's perspective was given prominence in the articles. Many of these examples have been cited already, however, important to remember is the place they are given within the article and consistently their perspective was placed in the first couple of sentences. Additionally, Conservative Government support for the mining industry was also foregrounded. Usually industry and political spokespeople were foregrounded with their comments on the issue, while quotes from opposition would follow later in the article. In some articles, at first glance it seemed as though there was an equal representation of sources by giving a local person prominence, however, upon closer analysis the local was actually supporting industry's perspective. An example of the clear bias of giving prominence to one side was in "Mining companies deny abuses; Unproven allegations causing undue harm to Canadian industry, spokesman says" by Les Whittington in November 2009. All sources were official government and industry sources that supported the industry except for one in the very last sentence that appears to provide a different perspective but could also be regarded as industry support. It read "Opposition MPs disputed the contention the bill has an anti-mining theme. 'I don't think anyone around this table is against the mining industry. On the contrary, what I'm against is impunity,' said Bloc MP Johanne Deschamps" (Whittington 2009c). Furthermore, the entire article dismisses all reports of abuses as "false and unsubstantiated allegations from individuals anywhere in the world" (Whittington 2009c). There was no opportunity within this article and others which made

defamatory remarks about NGOs, social activists or local people who were making these ‘false claims’ to give a rebuttal, respond or defend themselves against the remarks within the article, yet, articles always provided some comment from industry supporters to defend any accusations against them.

The perspectives of local people, environmentalists, protesters, and supporters of Bill C-300 were most often backgrounded. Although it seemed as though their issues were placed in the forefront, the author subtly pushed any discussion from their point of view to the end and instead used others to frame the issue. Usually, the negative impacts of mining and evidence of Canadian mining companies implicated in abuses was either backgrounded or omitted, which as the alternative independent media have demonstrated is not for lack of examples. For example, in an article headlined, “Canadian miners go on buying spree”, the writer backgrounds the information of an industry survey that reported that:

just a quarter of the Canadian companies provided detailed disclosure of environmental provisions, social and community activities and health and safety standards and goals. That compares with 100 percent in Australia, 86 percent in the United States and 50 percent in South Africa. (Hoffman 2006)

The majority of this article focused on the acquisition of assets and mergers and the disclosure of the above-mentioned information was relegated to only one small section at the end of the article.

As Huckin explains, the ultimate form of backgrounding is omission. Throughout the time period of the chosen articles there were a number of important events that were not covered by the mainstream media. For example, over a seven month period in 2009, there were six anti-mining activists killed in Central America (1 in Mexico, 2 in Guatemala and 3 in El Salvador) with the mainstream media only covering the one



example from Mexico, even though all of them were opposing Canadian mining projects and all were murdered under suspicious circumstances (Jarry-Shore 2010). Furthermore, in March 2009 there was a cyanide spill at the Yamana Gold site in Honduras, one among many other human rights and environmental abuses that was never reported in the mainstream media (Russell 2010). It was clear that in any apparent instance of overt abuse on behalf of the Canadian mining industry there was no coverage in the mainstream media, perhaps suggesting that they did not want to anger the mining industry.

Often agents were deleted entirely, completely excluding major supporters of Bill C-300 including human rights and environmental lawyers, academics, and a substantial number of ordinary Canadian citizens. For example, there was a handful of NGOs in support of responsible mining who were mentioned in the mainstream media coverage, including CCIC, Human Rights Watch, Halifax Initiative, Amnesty International and MiningWatch (Tuck 2006; Albin-Lackey 2010; Ward 2007; Whittington 2010b; Whittington 2010a) whereas in the alternative independent media there were numerous examples of organizations in support of Bill C-300 including those listed above as well as KAIROS, Breaking the Silence, ProtestBarrick and Corporate Watch to name a few (Ling 2011; Croft 2010a; Croft 2010b; Saunders 2010; Jarry-Shore 2010). The extent of support for this Bill was never included in articles, instead choosing to lump support into the categories of NGOs and social activists with an anti-mining bias which gives the public the impression that the support for the Bill was minimal and relegated to a small group of radicals with an agenda or locals who did not know what was best for them. For example, one article stated “Companies also say they are the victims of an anti-mining bias among some non-governmental organizations and social activists” (Whittington 2010d). The public reaction to Bill C-300, through letters, in the *Toronto Star* especially, exemplified

the number of people who supported the Bill and who were outraged when it was defeated. One *Rabble* article explained that “half a million Canadians have written to the Prime Minister calling for measures to ensure that Canadian companies are held accountable in Canada for its overseas operations” (Billings 2010). One very vocal supporter of Bill C-300 was KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, which unites Canadian churches and religious organizations in social justice initiatives. In 2009, CIDA rejected their \$7 million grant to KAIROS and through a freedom of information request it was discovered that the department memo responding to the organization’s funding proposal read “RECOMMENDATION—That you sign below to indicate you (not) approve a contribution of \$7,098,758 over four years” (Ling 2011). The word ‘not’ was hand written above the signed document, which Bev Oda, then Minister of CIDA, later confessed that she had written. (Ling 2011).

According to the genre of the articles, reporters could have provided a diversity of voices on behalf of industry and government, those opposing Bill C-300 and supporters of Bill C-300 as well as subdivisions within these groups. In terms of the divisions between the political parties on their support or opposition to Bill C-300 this was accomplished as the Conservatives were consistently presented as being opposed and the Opposition parties were for the most part in support. Unfortunately, most of the groups were presented as homogenous, when in fact there was a major division between those in support of Bill C-300, between those who believed the Bill was adequate to address the issues and those who felt it would have been a small step forward but that it did not go nearly far enough. Furthermore, there were many who were completely opposed to mining operations within communities feeling that the regulations would never provide enough security for the prevention of their negative impact, that the power imbalance

subjected locals to unequal decision-making capabilities and that community members should be responsible for their own self-determination for development. The complexity of the issue and a lot of contextual information was omitted from most of the articles, especially any question of the global economic system of mining and any alternative to it, however, the alternative independent media consistently discussed these issues (Gordon 2010; Campbell 2010; CD Editorial 2010).

*Presuppositions, insinuations, register, connotations and modality*

In the coverage that I analyzed, there were several underlying ideas or statements taken for granted, or presumed to be truth with no alternative. First and foremost, were the ideas that supported neoliberal ideology including its inevitability as a global economic system and the concept of TINA (There Is No Alternative). Additional elements of this included an aversion to government and resistance to their interference in business as well as the superiority of and confidence in the private sector to solve problems, especially their own. Furthermore, many articles defended a company's right to mine, endorsed business-as-usual principles amidst growing opposition and abuses, and legitimized profit over people, particularly the success of the Canadian mining industry over communities and individuals affected by mining issues in developing countries. For example, one article explains that NDP MP Paul Dewar travelled to the DRC "to talk about a mining industry that has helped to finance a vicious war that has left about seven million people dead since 1998" and that Canadians "would not like to live without" the coltan that is used in their electronics and "whereas campaigns against blood diamonds have pushed many of the world's biggest miners into more ethical practices, the notion of

blood tantalum so far has had not such effect”, unless it could be used as a “marketing strategy” (Marlow & El Akkad 2010).

A number of articles supported the notion that a bill that would hold company’s responsible for their actions abroad would also jeopardize the Canadian economy, one article read that “Canada’s Trade Minister, Peter Van Loan, warned the bill would put thousands of Canadian jobs at risk” (Curry 2010). A letter headlined “Settling the bill” said, “analysts at CIBC World Market concluded that ‘if passed, Bill C-300 will have damaging effects to all stakeholders in the resources industry and Canadians as a whole’” (Grace 2010). Peter Munk of Barrick Gold wrote in a letter, “Had the bill passed, the mining industry of Canada – one of our main job generators and wealth creators – would have been driven out of our country step-by-step” (Munk 2010). In another example, one letter showed continued support for the industry as a whole and the assumption that there are only a few ‘bad apples’ that could be avoided when he wrote, “The guilty firms should have been listed in the article so the public can avoid them when buying stocks” (Evans 2010). My interpretation of this letter was that the writer felt that if they knew the few companies who were behaving badly they would be able to merely avoid investing in them but that the industry as a whole was not doing anything wrong and therefore could continue to receive support. An op ed, in the *Toronto Star* in 2007, about the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP)’s efforts to advocate for responsible mining said, “Christian activists contend that this is not a case of ‘a few bad apples’ Canadian mining firms, they assert, have been involved in human rights abuses and environmental disasters in more than 30 countries”, debunking this assumption and the way in which the issue was being framed (Scharper 2007). Additionally, despite opposition from locals to projects in Ecuador, one article reported that, “With its new

constitution and new mining law now passed Ecuador wants to let the industry know it is open for business” (Hoffman 2009).

Exceptions were most noted in the letters genre, in particular after the defeat of Bill C-300 one wrote “The billionaire Canadian mining executives may be celebrating, but the countless numbers of destitute Salvadorans and Guatemalans affected by the staggeringly destructive and criminal behaviour of our mining firms certainly are not” (Rankin 2010). Additionally, Liberal MP John McKay responded to comments that Peter Munk, founder of Barrick Gold Inc., made about the importance of mining to the Canadian economy saying “True. Apparently as long as it is generating wealth for Canada, abuse of basic human rights, degradation of the host country’s environment, and criminal code offences are okay” (McKay 2010b). In response to Munk’s comments that if Canadian companies withdraw from their operations because of Bill C-300 other firms with lower CSR standards will replace them, McKay went on to say “it’s a dubious moral proposition to argue that if I am doing something bad it’s okay because another firm will do something worse” (McKay 2010b).

None of the articles challenged the current global economic system as problematic due to power inequalities or as one that provides transnational corporations with more rights than citizens, especially those of impoverished countries (Clark 2003; Gordon & Webber, 2008; Nkrumah 2004). No mention of an alternative economic system occurred throughout the articles, however, there were many letters published which recommended that there should be a regulatory system in place for the mining industry operating in developing countries. For example, “C-300 would bring Canada into step with countries, including the United States, that have accepted that they have a responsibility to take an interest in the way their companies behave overseas” (Albin-Lackey 2010). Some

headlines of letters also read “Mining Abroad Needs Control”, “Bill may help restore our bad rep”, “Mining firms need to be held accountable” (McCarthy 2010; Muldoon 2009; Malcolm et al. 2009).

Additionally, a few articles cited higher officials calling for a mandatory regulatory framework. For example Senator Ben Cardin stated “Like the transparency measures we passed this year in the United States, Bill C-300 reminds the world that we can and will do our part to protect human rights and our planet – regulating our own companies so they cannot act without consequences in less developed countries...The fact is, voluntary standards are not enough” (Curry 2010). One letter quoted Supreme Court Justice Ian Binnie saying “you cannot have a functioning global economy with a dysfunctional global legal system, there has to be somewhere, somehow, that people who feel that their rights have been trampled on can attempt redress” (McKay 2010a). Many of these letters expressed their disappointment in the defeat of the bill, such as in “Mining bill’s defeat a disgrace”, in which the writer states “Parliament’s shameful failure to pass Bill C-300, legislation that would take steps to curb the disgraceful conduct of Canadian mining companies around the world, is another black eye for our country” (Rankin 2010).

Moreover, as was discussed previously, mining was also assumed to be inevitable and beneficial with a complete lack of discussion or debate on the need for mining to fuel capitalist economies through the accumulation of wealth, technological advancements and the culture of consumption. With the inevitability of the sector was the presumption that due to the size of the industry it was inevitable for there to be reports of abuse and that this was normal especially considering the nature of the industry. For example, one article quoted a mining official saying “Canadians tend to come up more in mining controversies because Canada is the industry, more or less” (Potter 2008). One article quoted a mining

official saying “Our industry is often confronted with false allegations of misconduct in countries in which we operate” (Whittington 2009c). Another article read: “The proportion of incidents globally that involve Canadian corporations is very large...It said the high incidence of involvement of Canadian companies is in line with the Canadian industry’s dominant position in global mining and exploration”, however, it goes on to say “this does not make the individual or corporate violations any more ethically acceptable” (Whittington 2010c). In the same article the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) director said, “the incidents involving Canadian companies work out to only six a year”, downplaying the severity of even one incident (Whittington 2010c). An op ed from Human Rights Watch read:

Canadian oil, mining and gas companies are no less responsible than their peers from other countries – but they are also not much better. And because Canada is home to so many of the biggest players, Canadian companies’ shortcomings leave a bigger collective footprint than anyone else’s. (Albin-Lackey 2010).

Finally, only three articles suggested that a regulatory framework was not sufficient due to the inherent destruction associated with the mining industry and there were no articles that discussed that mining companies should scale down their operations or should be stopped. One article quoted Jamie Kneen from MiningWatch Canada commenting on the voluntary programs and support to the mining companies from the federal government saying “It’s a useful effort but it’s wholly insufficient to deal with the scope of the problem....We’ve seen, over and over again, that even when there are rules in place, there are companies that are willing to break the rules” (Whittington 2010a). Another letter said “The private member’s bill (C-300) does not even come close to keeping Canadian mining corporations accountable. Canadian laws, with an ombudsman and legal repercussions, are what’s needed to keep these corporations socially and

economically responsible abroad” (Subramanieapillai 2009). Finally, another article read: “If anything, the bill is too timid” and goes on to say “At Human Rights Watch, we believe that C-300 doesn’t go far enough. We believe that Canada’s government should regulate – not just monitor – the conduct of its companies operating overseas” (Albin-Lackey 2010).

Furthermore, neoliberalism’s negative assumptions of government prevailed as the Canadian government was regularly presented as inactive, incompetent or divided on the direction to take regarding allegations of abuse and recommendations for a regulatory framework, the Conservative party placing its utmost confidence in the self-regulation of the mining industry. In addition, governments of developing countries were presumed to be rampant with corruption resulting in mismanagement of mining profits and the lack of development in communities with mining operations. For example, in one article a mining company spokesperson said the false allegations “stem from poorly run or corrupt governments where mines are located” and in the same article Gordon Peeling of the Mining Association of Canada said “The biggest challenge out there is the lack of governance capacity in developing countries” (Poplewell 2009a). In more than one earlier article, companies said they should not have to take on the presumed government responsibilities such as the provision of infrastructure and community development yet in later articles they embraced this role in the name of corporate social responsibility and community development. For example, Louise Leger of Foreign Affairs Canada’s Trade Commissioner Service said “In many countries, when foreign investors arrive, ...local, even national governments will wash their hands of these regions...all of a sudden [the corporation] becomes responsible for building schools, roads, setting up health-care services, and providing basic services that all governments must ensure their citizens”



(Popplewell 2009a). Another article stated “The industry says Canadian mining companies are committed to improving corporate social responsibility and make important economic and social contributions where they operate” (Whittington 2010d). Host governments were also presumed to be weak or incompetent in earlier articles, unable to adequately regulate foreign corporations operating within their boundaries. In one of these articles, Peeling of MAC says that “If (countries) had the capacity to protect civil rights and live up (to) their international obligations with appropriate justice systems, etc. we wouldn’t have much to talk about” (Popplewell 2009a). Yet, in later articles, during the debate of Bill C-300, coverage went to great lengths to demonstrate that host governments were indeed capable of regulating companies and that Bill C-300 would undermine their jurisdiction and would be a breach of sovereignty. For example, the mining industry contended that the bill would “constitute an attempt to enforce Canadian policy in sovereign nations” (Whittington 2010c; Whittington 2010e). This was a contradiction to usual portrayals of government for neoliberalism that was necessary to further the cause of self-regulation and the defeat of Bill C-300. There was, however, no discussion, throughout the articles, on the unequal trade relations and power inequalities that exist on the international stage whereby pressure is placed on host governments to accept foreign investment at whatever cost, especially with the coupling of trade and aid.

Along similar lines, neocolonial/neo-imperial ideas were presumed throughout the articles, deducing that the developed western countries knew best how to exploit the resources of developing countries, especially considering the Canadian mining industry’s experience and knowledge of mining and command over and access to modern technology. For example, in “Mining for buried treasure” the article discusses the importance of mining for Africa’s development stating “mining is very important to bring

wealth” and that it is “key to Burkina Faso’s – and indeed, Africa’s – future” and that Canada is at the forefront saying “in mining, Canada is the quiet powerhouse” and “the strong Canadian presence is the result of the country’s traditional mining prowess and the financial clout of the Toronto Stock Exchange which is the world’s largest capital market for the mining sector” (McCarthy 2010). Additionally, another article that attempts to create a picture of a nice, down-to-earth, and determined Canadian mining company emphatically stresses the “state-of-the-art Canadian milling and distilling” and explains that “The Canadian proposal promises a 100-fold increase in efficiency over the money-losing Communist-era operation it is designed to replace” and goes on to explain the modern technological process that is “pure Northern Ontario hard-rock mining, where bulk tonnage pays the bills” (Potter 2008). To this end, it was also assumed that it was the duty of the western developed countries to intervene in their development and that poor countries needed assistance.

A very generic conception of “development” was accepted in the media with no article questioning what this was, automatically assuming it meant economic development and ignoring that the local people’s understanding of development might possibly be different or more relevant. Instead local people were regularly presented as irrational, unreasonable or backward in their thinking as was discussed earlier. An additional example from an article in the *Toronto Star* in 2005 said, “Clarity, alas, is not a principal virtue of this story – a contradictory chronicle in which one person’s harmless little goldmine is someone else’s worst vision of the Apocalypse” (Ross, O. 2005). The article goes on to read “This is Mexico, after all, where violent deaths regularly occur without ever being convincingly explained, leaving people to conjure suspicions of their own” (Ross, O. 2005). This is the same article that quoted Richard Hall, president and

CEO of Metallica Resources as saying “We’re civilized people. We’re talking about a mine. You don’t kill people over a mine.” (Ross, O. 2005).

In particular mining as beneficial for development was quite heavily presented in the articles regularly representing mining companies as well intentioned and altruistic in their attempts to develop the local communities. For example, after being accused of not following proper procedures for community consultation and the imposition of a moratorium on mining licenses in Guatemala, Glamis Gold stressed that “the government never introduced legislation on how it would carry out consultation. So, [it] carried out a series of its own local meetings” (MacKenzie 2005). They went on to say that they were “pretty confident that the process was fulfilled”, adding, “by golly, we thought we did the right thing here” twice in the article (MacKenzie 2005).

The myth of Canadian values was regularly touted in the media. The belief that Canadians are good people with high ethics who do the right thing was pervasive and is what Canadians treasure as a national pride. Although Canadians are diverse in various ways, this system of values has developed our sense of national unity.

Nationalism is conceptualized as an ideological trope that transcends all particular interests. The nation itself stands above particularity yet masks the conditions under which it exists, such as class rule, class struggle, the artificiality of the traditions, customs and institutions through which it is identified as well as the mythological status of its official history. (Salter & Weltman, 2009 p.1)

Salter and Weltman (2009) explain, “Nationalism is partially sustained through media institutions and discourses” and “mainstream media remain crucial supports for national identity, national frames of reference remain strong, and the perspective of the home state continues to be shared by national and international news media” (p.1-2). This manifests in the construction of nationally-based “them” and “us”, “particularly in reporting sport,

war, race and immigration” (Salter & Weltman, 2009 p.2). Winter (2002) contends, “The reason for doing this is simple: it reduces matters to the Manichaeian, ‘black and white’ terms which are an essential element of propaganda and manipulation” (p.xxv).

This understanding that has been constructed and reinforced for years lead to another assumption that prevailed throughout the articles, that Canadians are upstanding global citizens with good reputations. For example, Michael Ignatieff stated in a letter “Canadian businesses are active players in the global economy and the vast majority enjoy strong reputations and operate responsibly around the world. Where foreign transgressions occur, Canadians and Canadian business people have genuine concerns” (Ignatieff 2010).

By extension it was presumed that Canadian companies abide by a code of moral conduct when operating businesses and that the Canadian mining industry is upholding high standards regardless of whether there are mandatory regulations. For example, many articles reinforced “industry officials said ethical guidelines are already in place”, that Canadian mining companies “operate(s) on a code of corporate social responsibility” and that “Canadian mining companies are committed to improving corporate social responsibility and make important economic and social contributions where they operate” and that “there’s no need to compel multinationals to live up to high environmental and human rights standards” (Curry 2010; Whittington 2010b; Whittington 2010d; Whittington 2010a). Another article stated, “The industry countered with an intense campaign to convince parliamentarians that mining firms don’t need scrutiny by Ottawa because they are committed to improving corporate social responsibility in their overseas activities” (Whittington 2010f). PM Harper and the Conservative Government continuously placed their trust and confidence in the industry. International Trade

Minister Stockwell Day consistently stated such comments as, “there will be no legislative action because it would not work, and the companies do not need it” (Popplewell 2009a).

Additionally, our wonderful Canadian reputations that reflect our values were regularly touted as being at stake due to the Canadian mining industry, downgrading the environmental and human rights violations. For example, one article headlined “One man’s defence of a national reputation” explained that “The word ‘Canada’ is so reviled in some places that travelling Canadians mask their citizenship by wearing American flags on their caps and backpacks” (Popplewell 2009a). In the same article Liberal MP John McKay continues, “Not only is there a behavioural risk to an individual company, but there is also a risk to our national reputation” (Popplewell 2009a). One letter read “As a citizen I care deeply about our reputation. It is becoming so tarnished that I hesitate to mention my country of origin” (Morgan 2009).

Any exceptions to the rule were considered aberrations or ‘bad apples’ or even foreigners who registered their companies in Canada. For example one letter read, “It makes me wonder whether it’s actually foreign investors using Canadian corporations to protect themselves from prosecution for their alleged actions in other countries” (Malcolm 2009). Furthermore, all articles presumed that Canadian companies which were acting badly only do so outside of Canada completely disregarding the large number of domestic incidences of wrongdoing. This presupposition was demonstrated by articles with headlines such as “Mining abroad needs control” or by comments such as “alleged actions in other countries” or “proposal to toughen scrutiny of the operations of Canadian mining and resource companies overseas” (McCarthy 2010; Malcolm 2009; Whittington 2009b).

The register of the coverage was usually a formal, professional, journalistic tone that simplified concepts and language in order to appeal to the wider public. The articles rarely used technical terms although scientific or technical explanations should have been provided to explain the severity of ecological damage by mining on many ecosystems. At times, when technical jargon was introduced, these issues were presented with condescension to delegitimize the accusations from locals and protesters. In an article by Brett Popplewell in 2009 he writes “members of the community...say they felt a mine here would jeopardize their way of life and endanger the unique biodiversity of their cloud forest” (2009a). Additionally, a glaciologist and consultant for Barrick Gold in Chile condescendingly compares the process of moving a glacier to that of clearing ice and snow from roads in northern climates with shovels saying, “the movement of ice is something that people do in northern climates all the time” (Ross, J. 2005). Yet another article explained that the mining company “damaged a mountain that is considered sacred to the community”, a seemingly progressive statement but in the context of the article and the framing of the argument it could be perceived as condescending (York, 2007).

Furthermore, scientific information concerning the methods of extraction used by companies as well as the impacts on the land and the rate at which reclaimed sites were rehabilitated following mining activities was lacking. Actual proven cases where evidence was provided to demonstrate the malfeasance of companies was not regularly provided, and if it was, it was presented in such a way as to either discredit the information or to create doubt about its legitimacy (Ross, J 2005). One such example, entitled “Government warned about risk of mining accidents overseas” explained that, “The warning was issued about five years after a series of accidents involving Canadian-owned mines operating in the developing world. The highest profile of those was a

tailings dam collapse at Cambior Inc.'s Omai gold mine in Guyana in 1995" (Tuck 2006). The article went on to say that "Residents of western Guyana later launched a \$2 billion (U.S.) lawsuit...Montreal-based Cambior said the suit had no merit and argued that the spill occurred in the Omai Creek...and that cyanide never built up to dangerous quantities" (Tuck 2006). Scientific information about the ecosystems or how mining was affecting the region was usually neglected. One exception was a discussion that was provided in an article in 2005 by Jen Ross entitled "Moving heaven, earth and glaciers; Barrick Gold wants to relocate glaciers to make way for a gold mine in Chile but the Toronto company's plan worries the region's farmers" about Barrick Gold Inc's plan to displace tons of glacier ice formations along the Chile-Argentina border to reach the minerals under it. However, this information was presented with condescension and patronizing language. Especially condescending were the comments "The movement of ice is something that people do in northern climates all the time...They take ice, move it in shovels to pick up snow from the roads and they pick it up and move it", since they are referring to moving a glacier (Ross J. 2005). A professor of biology and ecology responds that "Barrick is treating the glaciers like 'piles of ice' rather than an essential part of a fragile desert ecosystem...You can't just pick up a glacier, move it, and then tell the rain to fall elsewhere" (Ross J. 2005). This is an omission that may go unnoticed by most readers, however, it is significant as there have been countless research studies and reports produced outlining the environmental impact of mining, regardless of whether it is responsible or not, and the low rates of land-use following mining operations. Groups opposed to mining or in support of responsible mining often cited these reports, perhaps providing the reason why they were not given consideration in the mainstream media. The way in which any information concerning abuses was presented was very ambiguous.

Ironically, the week prior to the final vote for Bill C-300 there was an article that exposed a PDAC report that provided evidence that mining companies were in fact among the worst abusers. The PDAC later responded by saying that the report was inconclusive and required further research, the very reason it was not made public (Whittington 2010c; Andrews 2010). The reader was left to assume that the mining industry and the majority of the government felt that mining operations abroad were responsible based on the word of the company and that those who came forward with “allegations” had unsubstantiated claims with no scientific evidence to prove otherwise. In an article by Brett Popplewell in 2009 headlined “Copper Mesa sued for alleged assault; Company says it has done everything possible to ensure the highest standards of ethical behaviour” about a group of Ecuadorians suing Copper Mesa and the TSX, the words ‘allegations’ or ‘alleged’ were used continuously to qualify the reports of abuse and to create doubt (2009a). Furthermore, the severity of the human rights violations was also delegitimized with the use of patronizing tones and accusatory language to suggest that reports of abuses were unjustified or untrue. One article quoted Barrick Gold Inc.’s spokesperson Vince Borg calling allegations of gang rape by security officials at a Papua New Guinean mining site an “extraordinary and extremely serious accusation” that they had no knowledge about and that “such actions would have been the subject of a full investigation” (Whittington, 2009b). Another article, in response to threats by Barrick Gold Inc. to a former Argentine government official, Vince Borg stated “It’s a sad day when activists parade before a committee of our Parliament making such false and damaging allegations” (Whittington, 2009b). The article went on to quote Borg saying:

If there was any truth to that, I would assume that she would have reported such nonsense to be investigated by police authorities in Argentina. To my knowledge that has not been the case. It should have been investigated. It



was her responsibility to bring that to the attention of the authorities if in fact anything of that sort had occurred. (Whittington, 2009 Nov 25).

Yet another article quoted a mining industry lawyer, Michel Bourassa saying in response to the allegations against Canadian mining companies “I think the vast majority of them are completely unfounded” and goes on to say “these allegations should not be allowed to stand unless they can be substantiated” (Whittington, 2009c). Finally, an article in the *Globe and Mail* by Andy Hoffman in 2009, headlined “The mayor, the model and the mining company” downplayed the murder of a Mexican activist by three men with connections to Blackfire Exploration Ltd., a Canadian mining company that the activist publicly opposed, as well as allegations of company bribery to a Mexican mayor by equating the situation to a Mexican soap opera or telenovela (2009). It explained:

A slain Mexican activist, a Canadian mining company, allegations of extortion and demands for a ‘sexual evening’ with an actress and Playboy model. The murder mystery involving the death of a Mexican protester who led opposition to a mine owned by Blackfire Exploration Ltd. has taken a bizarre turn. (Hoffman 2009)

Additionally, the language used when quoting sources directly or indirectly played a role in the register of the article. Most sources in support of mining were quoted directly and very professionally with the use of expert formal language whereas those in opposition to mining or in support of Bill C-300 were usually quoted indirectly with informal colloquial language serving to depict locals as irrational or less intelligent. Also, as the Propaganda Model predicts, most sources were government or corporate officials or ‘experts’, which corresponds with the mainstream media’s attempt to provide credibility as well as to reduce their investigative expenses, but these sources also served to reinforce support for the mining industry and silence dissidents (Herman & Chomsky, 2002 p.19, 23).

The coverage in both newspapers regularly insinuated that Canada is a leader in responsible resource development and that Bill C-300 would solidify this position, although there were certainly a large number of organizations and citizens, both Canadian and foreign, who felt otherwise. It was continuously suggested that the opposition to the mining industry was quite small and that they were radicals, opportunists or liars who were attacking the mining industry unfairly. For example, one article stated, “Mining firms called the allegations disturbing lies and ‘hogwash’” (Curry 2010). Another explained, “The industry said the problems in its mining operations in the developing world have been exaggerated by non-governmental organizations and social activists” (Whittington 2010f). Additional insinuations included the close relationship between the Canadian Conservative Government and the mining industry as well as the lack of merit of allegations of abuses through a lack of investigation and action (Woods 2007; Brennan 2007; Whittington 2009a; Whittington 2009b). For example, International Trade Minister Stockwell Day routinely made statements such as “there will be no legislative action because it would not work, and the companies do not need it” (Popplewell 2009a). These statements could have been included to mislead the reader into believing that the allegations coming from the international community did not warrant action and to maintain confidence in the mining industry as upholding standards. One interesting comment by Liberal MP John McKay explained “The Conservatives have vowed to kill [the bill] and McKay says some Liberals are weary of attaching themselves to a bill opposed by some of the richest companies in the country. ‘The mining industry in Canada is too powerful a lobby’” (Popplewell 2009a).

### Connotations

The connotations used in the articles supported ideas, as previously mentioned, by attaching very strong meanings and associations to words and phrases. Throughout the articles any situation concerning mining was constantly described as ‘controversial’, which denotes the issue as being contentious and a sensitive topic to be tackled carefully as it arouses debate and is divisive. There was a strong connotation throughout the articles that there was a war between the mining industry and their supporters and their supposed opposition (Bill C-300 supporters, NGOs, environmentalists, social activists, local communities). This connotation and the deliberate attempt to simplify and polarize the issue, was demonstrated in metaphors and words used in the media coverage that denoted conflict between two or more sides as appropriate and common. Some of these included “battle”, “environmental adversaries”, (Westhead 2007), “clashes have been toxic”, journalists “caught in the crossfire” (Goar 2007), “green war” (Potter 2008), “hotbed of revolt”, “backlash against mining companies” (York 2009), “fighting Canadian gold mining companies” (Cohen 2009), “violent clashes with anti-mining activists” (Anonymous 2009), “an intense political battle pitting the mining industry and their supporters against an array of activists and social groups” (Whittington 2010d), and “intense two-year political battle” (Whittington 2010e).

Furthermore, within this debate companies were always painted as the victim or as having been treated unfairly, for example, “David against a reactionary Goliath of anti-mining activism, unfairly targeted” (Potter 2008), “bill lacks guarantees for even a minimum level of procedural fairness for the companies accused of wrongdoing” (Whittington 2009b), “Bill C-300 has become a magnet for false and unsubstantiated allegations from individuals anywhere in the world and do nothing but unduly harm the

Canadian mining industry” (Whittington 2009c), “This isn’t bribery. We [Blackfire] were taken advantage of.” (Hoffman 2009), “unfair accusations” (Whittington 2010c), “victims of an anti-mining bias” (Whittington 2010d), “problems in its mining operations in the developing world have been exaggerated by non-governmental organizations and social activists” (Whittington 2010f), and “anti-mining bill” (Grace 2010). These connotations are also examples of what Winter (1992) calls “crisis management” whereby companies attempt to downplay or misdirect malfeasance through public relations campaigns in the media (p.79). These culminate in damage control tactics or complete omission of details in order to manage public opinion, as damage to public opinion is actually more destructive than any legal repercussions (p.79-80).

This also corresponds with the Propaganda Model’s discussion of “worthy and unworthy victims” whereby “reports of the abuses of worthy victim not only pass through the filters; they may also become the basis of sustained propaganda campaigns. If the government or corporate community and the media feel that a story is useful as well as dramatic, they focus on it intensively and use it to enlighten the public” (Herman & Chomsky, 2002 p. 32). Evidently, the mining company was considered a “worthy victim” and received ample coverage of their persecution. By contrast, the communities affected by mining were considered unworthy victims and to this end, “propaganda campaigns will not be mobilized where victimization, even though massive, sustained, and dramatic, fails to meet the test of utility to elite interests” (Herman & Chomsky, 2002 p. 33).

Finally, the opposition was consistently represented as standing in the way of development or as liars creating false statements to damage the mining industry’s credibility and reputation. For example, some such connotations included, “enemies of progress” (Ross, O. 2005), “small group of radicals opposed to development”, “a result of

professional activism that, unfortunately, opposes any kind of development” (Woods 2007), “allegations disturbing lies and ‘hogwash’” (Curry 2010) and “some of the NGOs could be doing it to create sort of a story for funding” (Whittington 2009c).

The tone of statements, prominence and the use of particular verbs or phrases can convey a particular level of certainty or uncertainty as well as the creation of doubt, authority or deference. Modality throughout the articles as was mentioned previously portrays the abuses by Canadian mining companies as ‘allegations’ or with statements asserting they are without proof or merit casting doubt on the accusations and reports as well as the credibility of the accusers. For example, in “Mining companies deny abuses; Unproven allegations causing undue harm to Canadian industry, spokesman says”, the article says “Years of allegations of human rights and other abuses against Canada’s giant multinational mining corporations are the result of false claims by people opposed to their business, the mining industry is telling members of Parliament” and went on to call accusations “unsubstantiated” and “false allegations” (Whittington 2009c). It also explains that, “Bill C-300 has become a magnet for false and unsubstantiated allegations from individuals anywhere in the world and do nothing but unduly harm the Canadian mining industry”, that “the vast majority of [allegations] are completely unfounded” and that “these allegations should not be allowed to stand unless they can be substantiated” (Whittington 2009c).

#### **(iv) Summary of Analysis**

The media representations of Canadian mining companies and their activities in developing countries throughout the time frame of the sample indeed followed the Propaganda Model in favouring corporate interests and the dominant ideology of

neoliberalism. This was accomplished, as the CDA indicated, by their framing of ideas, foregrounding of dominant opinions, use of presuppositions that created no alternatives to the status quo as well as insinuations and connotations that reinforced stereotypes and dominant agent-patient relations. This was also accomplished by the use of sources, the creation of worthy and unworthy victims and the marginalization of dissidents.

To this end, terms like CSR were appropriated by corporations and used as public relations tactics to push for voluntary regulations instead of the support of Bill C-300. Additionally, government was presented as divided on the issue, with the Conservative government supportive of the mining industry and the Opposition parties in support of responsible mining. Usually, government was presented as incapable of regulating corporations and ultimately their lack of unity and leadership was presented as responsible for the defeat of Bill C-300. Other terms such as development were also used to garner support for the mining industry and reinforced neo-imperialism and Canadian altruism. Mining companies were presented as victims and given more opportunities to defend themselves against accusations than their accusers. Discussions about Bill C-300 were given prominence, initially presented as an opportunity for Canada to take a leadership role in responsible mining but over time drew doubt about its passing with a lack of Conservative government support and the possibility of affecting jobs and the Canadian economy.

Although there were some progressive articles and statements, when evaluated as a whole, they represented a small minority and would have been viewed as such by the Canadian public. The *Toronto Star* provided more coverage and discussion on the issue, especially in the form of letters, where most exceptions to the status quo occurred, whereas, the coverage in the *Globe and Mail* was sparse with many articles occurring in

the business section. Both papers tended to give prominence to the mining industry or industry supporters as well as government officials; voices of dissidents were usually marginalized or omitted. Although there were reporters who regularly covered these stories they did not seem well researched, most often relied on official sources and did not provide background information about specific infractions from the mining companies to back up the accusations from dissidents.

The analysis confirmed that the media indeed followed a political economy of communication framework and the Propaganda Model, reinforcing established power relations and dominant ideologies, especially neoliberalism, and acting as a hegemonic tool as well as maintaining their position as part of the corporate elite in Canada. Neither paper seemed to want to upset the interests of the mining industry by presenting a balanced view of the issue, instead they reinforced neoliberal ideas and a discourse of no alternatives. To this end, the *Globe and Mail* lived up to its reputation as representing the interests of the business community in Canada by not providing a platform for discussion of the issues, whereas the *Toronto Star* provided coverage that seemed to create a forum for discussion but ended up serving the interests of the corporate elite and not the ordinary people.

## CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

### (i) Defeat of Responsible Mining in the Media

Although attempts to hold accountable Canadian mining companies operating in developing countries have existed for decades, discussion of this issue in the wider Canadian public sphere intensified over the course of the six years included in this analysis due to increased coverage in the mainstream corporate media and our increasingly globalized world that connects people, communities and organizations. The climax of this period of time was the introduction, debate and eventual defeat of Bill C-300, legislation to introduce regulation of the Canadian extractive industries operating abroad, however weak. Although Bill C-300 was debated and ultimately defeated in parliament, the two most relevant corporate mainstream media outlets, the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail*, were integral in the dissemination and presentation of information pertaining to this issue to the wider Canadian public, intrinsically shaping the way in which the public understood and garnered support or praxis, or lack thereof, for the Bill. Since the corporate mainstream media are so pervasive and influence public discourse on important issues, the real battle for support for the Bill was waged in the media, with corporate interests coming out on top.

From the CDA of the media coverage over these six years, it became clear that coverage of Canadian mining companies operating in developing countries and the Canadian government's attempts to regulate their activities followed Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, especially that of the fifth filter, the dominant ideology of neoliberalism. Neoliberal values such as neo-imperialism, neo-colonialism, free trade, superiority of the private sector and the devaluation of the public sector were both overtly and subtly promoted throughout the coverage by framing, foregrounding and presenting



information in a more favourable view for the interests of industry. This is not surprising, as the corporate mainstream media are part of the corporate elite and consistently represent the interests and perspectives of the dominant power in society, thereby, representing the dominant ideology.

Recurrent themes that reinforced neoliberalism included the ability of the private sector to regulate themselves, high standards of corporate conduct and government confidence in the sector. CSR was used to validate this in a voluntary self-regulatory framework with one reason being that the Canadian government was not capable of or did not have the power to regulate the sector. Although Bill C-300 was supposed to provide for this lack of government power, the Conservative Government consistently demonstrated their confidence in the industry to self-regulate, effectively reinforcing the neoliberal theme that there should be a lack of government intervention in the private sector, making them irrelevant in matters of corporate enforcement.

CSR was used, mostly by the public's comments in the letters section, to call for responsible mining and accountability and regulation by the Canadian government, however, most of these were dismissed by the majority of articles written about the ability of corporations to regulate themselves. CSR could have been very useful for furthering the movement for regulated mining, if it had been framed in this regard in articles, however, instead it was co-opted by industry or Canadian government officials in support of voluntary self-regulation.

Aside from the various elements of newsworthy stories, as outlined in the Propaganda Model, the media regularly cover stories that are sensational in order to gain attention, produce sales and to meet the entertainment desires of the public. This proved true for this issue as well since many of the stories were framed in a sensational or

entertaining frame and made light of many of the very serious issues. In order to compete for coverage news stories media must align with the interests of the advertisers and the public and unfortunately, neither want to read about Canadian mining companies kidnapping, poisoning and destroying the lives of poor people or the environment. In the times of consumer culture these types of stories put a damper on buying precious gems and jewelry and accumulating wealth.

Canadian values were also framed as being at risk. This sophisticated tactic of manipulating the Canadian public based on long-established understandings of their high moral and ethical codes became an important frame. Soft criticisms such as reputational damage influenced understandings of the degree of severity of violations by the mining industry and framed the problem as one of national shame. Although, this may have been effective for garnering support from some Canadians, by focusing on this instead of the systemic and structural problems of our legal, political and economic systems, it makes the issue seem less complex, less severe and personal from an intangible standpoint. This ensured that the public did not understand the significance and urgent nature of the problem and the need for a re-evaluation of our current system that would call for a criminal code to hold corporations operating outside of Canada accountable with more than financial or consular sanctions. Canadian values and reputational damage were also co-opted by industry whereby they claimed they upheld a strict code of ethics and that allegations would affect their reputations.

By reframing the issue as a threat to the Canadian economy, the media were able to redirect attention away from issues of human and environmental rights and instead focus on the loss of jobs and revenue to Canadians, effectively creating an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ paradigm. Contextually, it is important to remember that the timeframe in question

also fell within one of the hardest economic downturns in history making this argument very real and very valid for most Canadians. In times of such economic crisis many people will choose the preservation of themselves and the immediate impact in lieu of recognizing the hardships and detrimental impacts on others, especially if those others are halfway around the world living in seemingly un-relatable situations. This also served as a diversionary tactic to divert attention away from the government cuts and bailouts to corporations that were causing more damage to the Canadian economy.

Furthermore, this coverage also followed the Propaganda Model's framework with regard to dissidents, whereby, those in opposition to mining or who supported regulation of mining operations were represented, in negative terms or omitted. This created a vacuum whereby corporate interests promoting neoliberal values became reinforced and normalized gaining support for the defeat of Bill C-300 and celebrating the mantra of voluntary self-regulation which went against the desires of a very high number of Canadians. This also led to a lack of action on the part of the wider public to pressure their MPs to support the Bill, calling into question the ability for a healthy democracy with a corporate mainstream media.

Finally, it seemed that the cohesive network of corporate power and interest affected the way in which the issue was covered. Industry rallied together to create an effective campaign to influence the media coverage of the issue to their advantage. Perhaps due to funding of PR campaigns and lobbyists as well as a more cohesive group that had clear goals to ensure the defeat of Bill C-300, their interests received more coverage in their favour in the mainstream media. Since those who opposed mining are often divided on a variety of issues it becomes difficult for media to clearly present all perspectives and therefore, their standpoints may not receive clear coverage. Additionally,

due to the funding constraints and differing opinions of the issues there was never a cohesive group that came together to fight for this issue, which is usually the case with many similar issues.

## **(ii) Summary**

This case study indicates that while discussions of corporate accountability abroad and the concerns of environmental destruction and human rights' violations are becoming more of a mainstream issue, those affected by corporate malfeasance and those in opposition to corporate activities are often still marginalized in the mainstream media. The Propaganda Model was applicable in this case study to demonstrate the continued reinforcement of the dominant ideology in the media, in this case corporate interests and neoliberalism, that influences and obfuscates the information that the wider public receive on issues such as these. When those in opposition to corporate interests, specifically in opposition to the Canadian mining industry operating in developing countries without regulation or accountability, are presented in the media as liars, gold-diggers, and maliciously threatening the Canadian economy, it is easy to distort the opinion of the general public against them and their interests. As a Canadian reader not deeply involved in these issues it could easily appear that those opposing the Canadian mining industry were driven by greed or misled ideologies without any regard to the economic factors driving the mining industry or the threat to Canadians. Although, a number of organizations and citizens came together to lobby for Bill C-300, they were no match for the lobbying power of the mining industry and their lack of cohesion regarding the issue impacted the outcome. Furthermore, those outside of Canada as usual were relegated to 'the other' and treated as such. The majority of the efforts of supporters of Bill C-300 and

those directly affected by mining activities received minimal or negative coverage in the media, therefore, casting them in a particular light to the general public.

In a democratic society the media play an integral role in having an informed public for their participation in decision-making. Information and legislative decisions pertaining to the actions and regulations of Canadian mining companies in developing countries should be presented and discussed in an open forum. By treating accusations from individuals, communities and organizations who have experienced or witnessed environmental or human rights violations as radical or unreliable and by presenting legal frameworks to hold corporations accountable as unnecessary, a fair and equalizing platform for discussion is not possible. To this end, the media are actually an obstacle for any potential progress in this newly altered neoliberal society that requires a re-evaluation of current systems. The controversy and divisions on the debate over Bill C-300 and installation of a regulatory framework for corporate accountability in the extractive industries abroad required a more democratic media that would have presented the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders. If this had occurred, the public would have had a more informed and contextually based understanding of the issue and it potentially could have increased public participation in the decision-making process, one way or the other. Finally, even though the alternative media gave prominence to dissident voices and provided a more critical analysis of the issue, it also presented information in an unbalanced formula and did not reach enough of the population to have an effect on influencing on the outcome of the Bill. By occupying an alternative position the majority of Canadians are not exposed to these different media perspectives, further solidifying the success of the corporate elite in marginalizing opposition.

This study is yet another example that illustrates the ways in which the corporate mainstream media seek to preserve and reinforce the status quo and marginalize dissent in a form of hegemony. Unless progressive groups can unite, regardless of their differences, to present a cohesive perspective and until the media is not owned and influenced by the corporate elite we will continue to witness similar issues. Although media transformation and reform would be the ultimate goal, they should at least be required to have public editors in place that will push for a more democratic media. If it is not possible for the transformation of the mainstream media then groups with progressive viewpoints must learn how to garner support in the media in other ways by understanding and utilizing media coverage techniques.

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## APPENDIX A: LIST OF ARTICLES ANALYZED

In reverse chronological order:

- Goldblatt, M. (2010, December 6). Securing Coltan. *Globe and Mail*, p. A.14.
- Marlow, I & O. E. Akkad. (2010, December, 4). Bloodstains on our fingertips. *Globe and Mail*, p. F.1
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## APPENDIX C: SELECTED ARTICLES FROM CDA ANALYSIS

Find the full articles in chronological order below:

Tuck, S. (2006, July 10). Government warned about risk of mining accidents overseas. *Globe and Mail*, p.B3.

Hume, M. (2007, June 23). Seeing countries afar with the mine's eye. *Globe and Mail*, p.S1.

Freeman, A. (2007, November 27). Controversy over mining overshadows health initiative. *Globe and Mail*, p.A23.

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### **Government warned about risk of mining accidents overseas**

Tuck, Simon. The Globe and Mail [Toronto, Ont] 10 July 2006: B.3.

Ministry briefing highlighted danger, but prompted no changes in rules

Senior government officials were warned more than two years ago that Canadian mining companies with overseas operations could "seriously embarrass Canada" if they didn't take steps to reduce the risk of a major environmental accident.

The warning, contained in a June, 2004, briefing note to the top bureaucrat at the Department of Natural Resources, also includes a suggestion that the government prepare a communications plan to deal with the possibility of an overseas accident involving a Canadian mining company.

The warning, however, has not led to any real changes in legislation or to the rules that govern Canadian mining companies operating in developing countries.

"Under current circumstances, there is a continuing risk of an incident occurring at a Canadian mining operation in a developing country that would seriously embarrass Canada," says the government document, obtained by Ottawa researcher Ken Rubin through access to information legislation. "It is, therefore, necessary to prepare for the question of what Canada has done to reduce that risk."

The warning was issued about five years after a series of accidents involving Canadian-owned mines operating in the developing world. The highest-profile of those was a tailings dam collapse at Cambior Inc.'s Omai gold mine in Guyana in 1995.

A parliamentary committee looked into the issue and later recommended that Ottawa should abandon its voluntary code of conduct, in favour of a mandatory set of rules. The Liberal government issued what many groups viewed as an overly tepid response, including the launch of a series of round table discussions, and the Conservative government has yet to address the issue.

The first of four discussions took place last month in Vancouver, with the next one to be held in Toronto in September.

Critics say Canada needs to take responsibility for its companies' overseas activities and recognize that developing countries often don't have adequate safeguards to protect their own citizens.

Nadja Drost, a co-ordinator for the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, a coalition that fights global poverty and promotes social development, said the federal government provides an array of support for Canadian mining companies but yet insists on no control over their overseas actions. Ottawa should crack down with a new set of environmental and human rights rules, she added.

Dan Dugas, a spokesman for Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay, said the government will wait for the completion of the round tables before deciding what to do. "The government wants to see the process through."

The mining industry, however, says it realized a few years ago that it couldn't afford to wait. Pierre Gratton, spokesman for the Mining Association of Canada, said the industry has done its best to ensure there will be no more serious accidents, and that it will do a better job of dealing with a crisis if one occurs. "It's a serious issue."

Mr. Gratton said the industry did some "real soul-searching" following the flurry of accidents about six years ago.

The Cambior accident released 2.9 million cubic metres of cyanide-bearing waste into the Essequibo River.

Residents of western Guyana later launched a \$2-billion (U.S.) lawsuit for damages in connection with the incident. Although there were no human deaths, the plaintiffs claimed the spill led to health problems, tainted drinking water and contaminated fish. Montreal-based Cambior said the suit had no merit and argued that the spill occurred in the Omai Creek, a small tributary that flows into the Essequibo, and that cyanide never built up to dangerous quantities in either waterway.

Questions about overseas operations aren't the only big issue facing Canada's mining sector, as it's also going through what is expected to become a major corporate shakeup.

Two of the country's largest mining companies, Inco Ltd. and Falconbridge Ltd., have agreed to be acquired by Phoenix-based Phelps Dodge Corp. in a deal valued at about \$39.5-billion.

Like most major mining companies, Phelps Dodge has large overseas operations, including mines and processing facilities in South America and China.

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### **Seeing countries afar with the mine's eye.**

Mark Hume. (2007, June 23). The Globe and Mail, p. S.1.

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\$100-million donation part of Vancouver baron's vow to unite mining industry and help developing societies

Just back from New York, where he pledged Bill Clinton \$100-million to help fight global poverty, Frank Giustra said yesterday that his donation is only the start.

"There is no reason why this initiative over the years can't raise hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars. And perhaps if we do a really good job and we show measurable results, that perhaps, I hope, it could go into the billions," said Mr. Giustra, a mining financier who has used his business connections to launch an unprecedented social initiative by an industry sector.

The Clinton-Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative - which is also supported by a matching gift of

\$100-million from Mexican businessman Carlos Slim Helu - aims to marshal the forces of the mining industry to bring clean water, schools, health care and sustainable economies to developing countries worldwide.

Mr. Giustra said the mining sector has long been looking for ways to put its charitable money to good use - it just needed a solid business plan.

"There was a genuine desire by this industry to address the issue of social and economic development in the developing world, but there was never a really cohesive and global way to achieve this [before]."

"There was always the need, there was always the desire, but what I think we found today is a bridge between the two," said Mr. Giustra, who was joined by four industry executives in a boardroom overlooking Vancouver's Coal Harbour.

Taped behind him on a wall was a simple Mercator Map of the world, and just over his right shoulder was the Clinton-Giustra Initiative's first target: projects in impoverished Latin American countries.

Mr. Giustra said talks have already begun with Alvaro Uribe Velez, the Harvard-educated president of Colombia, where 65 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line.

Although Colombia may be a starting point, Mr. Giustra said the plan is to move quickly into other developing countries.

"The real reason I'm so excited is because we brought an entire industry together into a global effort of this nature - and I think it's the first of its kind," he said.

"Both President Clinton and I hope that over the next while, other business sectors will use this model to address other critical issues facing the world today," said Mr. Giustra, a trim, tanned, silver-haired man who, as he turns 50, has developed a passion for philanthropic giving.

"Philanthropy has become more and more important to me as the years go by," Mr. Giustra said. "You know one can just write a cheque, which is wonderful, and a lot of people should be writing cheques, but ... think about what else you can bring to an equation to solve a particular issue. I mean, not all of us can be former presidents. My tool was my influence in the mining industry."

Frank Holmes, CEO of U.S. Global Investors Inc., a company that manages about \$5-billion, and one of 20 that have signed on to the initiative, praised Mr. Giustra's efforts.

"Mining companies which we finance all over the world have the opportunity when they are exploring development to be on the ground floor. They are the people that actually see poverty and they have to deal with it. And to have an initiative to try to help those local communities in a very structured way ... is just a very significant move forward," he said.

Dave Parker, director of corporate affairs and sustainability, at Teck Cominco Ltd., said he was excited to see "the intellect, the influence and the energy of President Clinton behind the mining industry" as they work toward such positive goals.

### **Controversy over mining overshadows health initiative**

*Alan Freeman. The Globe and Mail. Toronto, Ont.: Nov 27, 2007. pg. A.23*

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PM announces \$105-million contribution, but Barrick is top concern of Tanzanians

The goal was to leave the image of a benevolent Canada investing in the health of poor Africans, but in the end it was another Canada, that of its globe-hopping mining companies, that stole the day.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper spent eight hours yesterday in this commercial centre on the Indian Ocean, visiting a school, lunching with Tanzania's President and announcing a \$105-million contribution to a new health-care initiative in Africa and Asia.

Yet it was a 45-minute meeting with officials from a dozen Canadian investors, led by mining giant Barrick Gold Corp., that dominated Mr. Harper's news conference with President Jakaya Kikwete.

Thanks in large part to Barrick's three gold mines, Canada has emerged as Tanzania's largest foreign investor, prompting a resource boom that helped Tanzania record a 6.2-per-cent growth rate last year.

Yet the mining success has prompted allegations that royalties are too low and that Tanzania's people, still among the world's poorest, are not sharing adequately in the bonanza.

Adding to this is a nasty labour dispute at Barrick's Bulyanhulu gold mine, where 1,000 of the 1,900 workers have been on what the company calls an illegal strike for the past month.

A court hearing scheduled for yesterday, at which the union hoped to obtain an injunction to stop Barrick from hiring replacement workers, was postponed to today for reasons that were unclear.

Mr. Harper would not comment on the strike other than to say that he expects Canadian companies to "act responsibly within the laws of the land" when they are abroad. He praised Tanzania for creating a stable political and business environment that encourages Canadian companies to invest.

Mr. Kikwete was also diplomatic when the subject turned to Canada's investment in the mining industry and in particular the work of a committee created to advise the Tanzanian government on whether to change the royalty regime.

"We are not blaming the mining companies," the President said, noting that the companies are living within Tanzanian law.

He added that the goal of the review is to achieve a "win-win situation" for the companies and the government.

"We'd like to see more and more Canadian investment," Mr. Kikwete said.

It was the second time in recent months that Mr. Harper had met Barrick officials during an international trip. In July, he stopped off at Barrick's offices in Santiago, Chile, where the company is developing the massive Pascua Lama mining project in the Andes, despite protests from environmentalists.

Joan Kuyek, the national co-ordinator of MiningWatch, a group that critiques what it sees as irresponsible mining practices around the world, says Barrick's Tanzanian operation displaced thousands of small-scale miners and gives little back to Tanzania.

"If Mr. Harper met only with people chosen to have him meet with and didn't meet with the small-scale miners, didn't meet with the people who have to deal with the social and economic and environmental price that these mines are racking up in Tanzania, and didn't meet with their representatives, well I think that's pretty shocking," Ms. Kuyek said.

But Vince Borg, vice-president of communications for Barrick, said the displacement occurred before Barrick took over the Tanzania operation and that the ombudsman for the World Bank has found that the numbers of displaced people have been exaggerated. And, Mr. Borg said, the company has been "generating substantial economic and social benefits for thousands of Tanzanians."

The scheduled highlight of Mr. Harper's visit, which came after the Prime Minister's participation in the Commonwealth leaders summit in neighbouring Uganda, was his announcement of a \$105-million Canadian contribution to a health-promotion program in Africa and Asia.

The goal of the Canadian-led program is to raise as much as \$500-million to support basic health services, including training for 40,000 health workers; measles and MMR inoculations; insecticide-treated bed nets to protect children and pregnant women from malaria; antibiotics to fight pneumonia and a range of other health projects.

Mr. Harper said Canada remains on track to double its international aid to Africa to \$2.1-billion in 2008-09 from a base of \$1.05-billion in 2003-04.

But non-governmental groups have expressed concern that Africa is no longer a foreign-policy priority for Mr. Harper, who has emphasized Canada's commitment to Afghanistan and a renewed interest in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mr. Harper was greeted earlier in the day at the airport by Mr. Kikwete, Tanzania's top general, a military band, a phalanx of traditional dancers, a unicyclist and a man on stilts. He was immediately whisked off to a nearby primary school where hundreds of enthusiastic pupils, dressed in white and blue uniforms, greeted him waving Canadian and Tanzanian flags and singing at the top of their lungs in Swahili, "Tanzania, We Love You, Tanzania."

Fighting off the 37-degree heat and his discomfort with crowds, a smiling Mr. Harper was ushered into a preschool class where children were being quizzed in Swahili and English on their knowledge of animal names.

Mr. Harper bantered with Mr. Kikwete but engaged only briefly with the children. Toward the end of the brief encounter, the President asked a child: "What's his name?"

"Har-per," responded the child, to which a grinning Prime Minister responded with a personal round of applause.

Mr. Harper is the first Canadian Prime Minister to visit Tanzania since Pierre Trudeau came here in 1978.

Credit: with a report from Gloria Galloway in Ottawa

Revision date: Saturday, December 01, 2007, page A2

CORRECTION: Prime Minister Stephen Harper was not the first Canadian prime minister to visit Tanzania since 1978 as The Globe reported on Tuesday. Prime minister Pierre Trudeau visited the country in 1981.

**Niger's leader suspects 'bandits' seized envoys**

*Joanna Smith.* Toronto [Star](#). Toronto, Ont.: [Jan 14, 2009](#). pg. A.12

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Terrorists are suspected of kidnapping two Canadian diplomats who disappeared in Niger last month, the president of the West African state said yesterday.

President Mamadou Tandja made the remarks in a meeting with the diplomatic corps in Niamey, Reuters reported.

It was the first public statement by Tandja on the disappearance of UN special envoy Robert Fowler, his Canadian assistant Louis Guay, and their Nigerien driver Soumana Mounkaila since their UN-marked vehicle was found empty about 45 kilometres northwest of Niamey Dec. 14.

Tandja made it clear he believed the possible suspects in the kidnapping included ethnic Tuareg rebel groups who have been trying to overthrow the government and claim Nigeriens are not receiving their fair share of royalties from foreign uranium mining companies.

"These armed bandits are nothing more than terrorist groups mixed up in the trafficking of drugs, arms and human beings," Tandja told the ambassadors, employing the term his government generally uses to describe the Tuareg insurgents.

The Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice (MNJ), the main Tuareg rebel group that briefly abducted uranium mining company workers from France and China, has denied any role in the disappearance and suggested the Niger government is behind it in order to discredit the rebels.

Another Tuareg rebel group called the Front des Forces de Redressement (FFR), which splintered from the MNJ, had claimed responsibility on its blog the week of the disappearance but denied that claim in another posting a few hours later.

Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon said last week Canada had not received any ransom demands and that "all resources" of the federal government, including the RCMP and the military, are focused on the search.

Foreign Affairs would not comment on Tandja's remarks yesterday.

Credit: Toronto Star

**Mining abuses abroad targeted; Liberal's bill aims to rein in Canadian firms in poor nations**  
Whittington, Les. *Toronto Star* [Toronto, Ont] 25 May 2009: A.4.

A four-year effort to clean up the operations of Canadian mining and resource companies in poor countries takes a step forward today when a private member's bill on corporate social responsibility goes before the Commons foreign affairs committee.

The legislation spearheaded by Toronto Liberal MP John McKay would force the companies to live up to human rights and environmental standards when operating mines and oil wells in developing countries.

It is rare for private MPs' legislation to reach fruition but Bill C-300 narrowly passed second reading in the Commons last month despite opposition from Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservatives.

The push for tougher rules arises from numerous reports in recent years accusing Canadian resource firms operating abroad of dumping toxic waste, environmental destruction, being a party to the forcible relocation of native people and rights abuses.

"There are examples of Canadian corporations behaving badly in places like the Philippines and Guyana and as many as 30 other countries," says McKay, who will field questions at the foreign affairs committee today.

While many Canadian firms conduct themselves well, any environmental or human rights malpractices are a black eye, he says.

Action has been a long time coming. The all-party Commons foreign affairs committee first called for improvements in corporate social responsibility in a 2005 report that said activities by Canadian mining and resource companies in developing countries have had "adverse effects on local communities."

Following on that report, a 2007 study urged Ottawa to establish tough social responsibility standards, appoint an ombudsman and set up a regulatory committee to review non-compliance by companies.

Two years later, International Trade Minister Stockwell Day responded with voluntary guidelines for corporate social responsibility and the creation of a federal counsellor to assist companies with these issues.

The counsellor has yet to be appointed. Social justice groups and opposition MPs say Day's initiative is inadequate.

Credit: Toronto Star

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**One man's defence of a national reputation; This idea ... that somehow I have become complicit with an agenda that the mining industry is driving is absolute nonsense**  
**Marketa Evans, Canada's corporate social responsibility counsellor**  
Poplewell, Brett. *Toronto Star* [Toronto, Ont] 22 Nov 2009: A.10.

Canadian mining companies are facing allegations of abuse and assault on local citizens in dozens of developing nations.

The companies say they have done nothing wrong - mining copper, gold and other metals brings only prosperity to these poor regions.

Yet locals in countries like Ecuador allege some companies have used armed guards to violently trample their opposition to mines that threaten rainforests and their way of life.

The word "Canada" is so reviled in some places that travelling Canadians mask their citizenship by wearing American flags on their caps and backpacks.

In Ottawa this week, at a House of Commons committee, MPs will continue debating a Liberal private member's bill designed to put controls on mining companies overseas.

The allegations are severe From Ecuador comes a lawsuit, filed in Ontario, alleging that in 2006 a Canadian company's armed security forces attacked unarmed locals with pepper spray first, then fired guns to dampen protest near a proposed mining site.

In El Salvador, allegations of violent attacks against anti-mining activists. In Mexico, allegations of human rights and environmental abuse that led a Mexican court to close a Canadian-owned mine.

While MPs in Canada consider controls, foreign pension funds have signalled they will not invest in Canadian mining companies unless they adopt firm corporate responsibility rules abroad.

International Trade Minister Stockwell Day says there will be no legislative action because it would not work, and the companies do not need it.

"As you know, one country doesn't develop laws that apply in another country," he said in an interview.

The allegations of human rights abuses come from at least 30 of the world's poorest countries and have named companies of all sizes, from giant corporations to junior mining companies.

Company spokesmen at some firms say they are the target of false allegations that stem from poorly run or corrupt governments where mines are located.

"The biggest challenge out there is a lack of governance capacity in developing countries," says Gordon Peeling, CEO of the Mining Association of Canada, which represents the interests of Canada's largest mining companies.

"If (countries) had the capacity to protect civil rights and live up (to) their international obligations with appropriate justice systems, etc. we wouldn't have much to talk about."

Forty-three per cent of the mining exploration around the world can be attributed to Canadian mining companies.

"In many countries, when foreign investors arrive, it happens too often that local, even national governments will wash their hands of these regions," says Louise Leger, director general of Foreign Affairs Canada's Trade Commissioner Service.



"In other words a company wants to invest, and all of a sudden it becomes responsible for building schools, roads, setting up health-care services, and providing basic services that all governments must ensure their citizens."

But watchdog groups like MiningWatch Canada and the Halifax Initiative, both based in Ottawa, allege some companies spend money buying guns, employing paramilitaries, bribing officials and forcefully relocating entire communities.

Allegations like these caused John McKay, Liberal MP for Scarborough-Guildwood, to introduce the private member's bill being debated in committee.

"Not only is there a behavioural risk to an individual company, but there is also a risk to our national reputation."

Mining companies are big business in Canada and, with about 200 active lobbyists, a powerful voice in Ottawa.

So powerful that McKay is cautious in talking about his bill outside of chambers.

"I have to watch what I say," he says.

"On specific (allegations) I would probably duck because I don't have parliamentary immunity with respect to anything that I might say to you."

Politicians have long squabbled over how best to deal with the accusations of abuse.

Debate kicked up in 2002 after a United Nations report called on the Canadian government to investigate the actions of seven Canadian companies accused of illegally exploiting resources from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been in a state of civil war since 1996.

The Canadian government didn't investigate.

Then in 2004 came reports of bloodshed.

From Africa Where the UN says 73 people were killed in Kilwa, a fishing town in the Congo. Killed, according to a UN report, by the Congolese military, which used vehicles, supplies, pilots and drivers from a Canadian-Australian mining company to transport them to the site of the massacre. The company, Anvil Mining, says its vehicles were confiscated by the military and that it had no choice but to comply under Congolese law.

To Southeast Asia Where 15 Canadian-employed mine workers were gunned down in a remote Philippine jungle strip, victims of a feud between Canada's TVI Pacific Inc. and the indigenous peoples of Mindanao.

In 2005, a foreign affairs committee looked at allegations that TVI Pacific was employing paramilitary forces to trample tribal grounds and abuse human rights.

The committee called for an investigation. The Liberal government at the time responded, saying it recognized "the difficulties Canadian companies can face when operating in foreign jurisdictions" and said the TVI case "highlights the complexities of evaluating company activities against standards that may be either unclear or inconsistent between governments."

Again, the government didn't investigate.

The company says it now has "complete support" from the community and that there have been no recent altercations.

By 2007 an independent foreign affairs committee was hosting roundtable sessions with watchdog groups, human rights organizations, academics and mining companies to review the lack of oversight. They put forward 27 recommendations to the government calling for the creation of a code of ethics for mining companies operating abroad and for an independent ombudsman to investigate alleged abuses. On March 26, 2009 - two years after the roundtable report - Day issued a press release announcing new initiatives to support responsible practices for Canadian businesses abroad.

Immediately, members of the roundtables (other than Peeling) began to ask what happened to the independent ombudsman. The Mining Association's Peeling was one of 17 signatories to the roundtables' 2007 recommendations.

He now says any legislation mandating companies adhere to a set of corporate social responsibilities would not be in keeping with those recommendations.

Peeling was recently named one of the most influential lobbyists in Ottawa by The Hill Times.

According to records kept by the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada, Peeling, along with two dozen other lobbyists for mining companies and associations, has been actively lobbying MPs over their responses to the roundtable report since its release.

The Liberal Party's McKay and others say the lobbyists have been successful in dissuading the government from creating an ombudsman.

MiningWatch Canada and the Halifax Initiative, both roundtable signatories, have criticized Day's response to the recommendations.

But Day says "They need to get a real look at what is going on. They need to see the high quality of work that Canadian companies do and how they respect host governments and local communities."

Richard Janda, a law professor at McGill University and co-author of Corporate Social Responsibility A Legal Analysis, says Day's initiatives are weak and disregard the severity of the allegations.

He also questions Day's appointment of Marketa Evans as Canada's first corporate social responsibility counsellor, a recently appointed bureaucrat who answers to Day and who is the

closest thing to an ombudsman the Harper government has produced.

He says Evans' position is "toothless" because, under the mandate given to her by Day, she requires consent from a mining company before she can review any allegations against that company.

He asks what kind of oversight the government expects from an appointee with no real investigative powers charged with enforcing a voluntary code of ethics with no legislation to back her up.

Evans, who took office last month, has no staff and has yet to begin putting together any process for reviewing complaints. But she stands up to her detractors.

Asked how she can be expected to investigate complaints against a company without the company's consent, Evans said "My hypothesis is that companies will want to participate in a review."

Others have taken their criticisms further, alleging Evans is too close to the mining industry.

Evans was the founding director of the University of Toronto's Munk Centre - named for and funded by Peter Munk, founder of Canada's Barrick Gold.

"This idea that's floating around somewhere in the ether that somehow I have become complicit with an agenda that the mining industry is driving is absolute nonsense," she says.

Bob Rae, Liberal MP and foreign affairs critic, says he doesn't take exception to Evans' background so much as her mandate.

"The roundtables talked about having an ombudsman who would hear complaints and deal with them in an independent fashion," he says. "Instead we have a counsellor who is right at the heart of government, has no legislated mandate and has no powers as defined by law.

Janda says a Liberal private member's bill, the one tabled by John McKay to regulate the industry, would better serve the 2007 roundtable recommendations. That bill gives the minister of foreign affairs and the minister of international trade the responsibility of holding corporations accountable for their practices by submitting annual reports to the House of Commons and the Senate for review. It also allows transgressors to be publicly lambasted and deprived of investment from the Canada Pension Plan and other government investments.

But as a private member's bill it is not able to create an ombudsman position that would spend taxpayer money to investigate allegations of Canadian-financed abuses in the developing world.

McKay recognizes his bill is flawed in its inability to create an ombudsman. He's also not convinced his bill will ever make it through the House.

The Conservatives have vowed to kill it and McKay says some Liberals are weary of attaching

themselves to a bill opposed by some of the richest companies in the country. "The mining industry in Canada is too powerful a lobby," McKay says.

But he won't say much else.

"I have to be extremely careful because the mining companies have made it very plain to me that, 'We will sue your ass off if, in fact, you make any allegation of our companies and cause reputational damage.'

"But I will say, if they think they can treat a Canadian MP this way, you can imagine what they say about Third World countries where they can walk in and say, 'How much to buy you?'" Controversy A private member's bill aims to impose controls on powerful Canadian mining companies that operate overseas

Credit: Toronto Star

### **Illustration**

Caption: Pawel Dwulit for the Toronto Star / John McKay, Liberal MP for Scarborough-Guildwood, has introduced a private member's bill designed to put controls on mining companies overseas. Conservatives have vowed to kill the bill, which is opposed by Canada's mining industry. MPs are debating it in a House of Commons committee this week.

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Word count: **1796**

### **Mining companies deny abuses; Unproven allegations causing undue harm to Canadian industry, spokesman says**

Whittington, Les. *Toronto Star* [Toronto, Ont] 27 Nov 2009: A.8.

Years of allegations of human rights and other abuses against Canada's giant multinational mining corporations are the result of false claims by people opposed to their business, the mining industry is telling members of Parliament.

In hearings on legislation to tighten scrutiny of Canadian mining in developing countries, the industry said the bill would only expose companies to more unsubstantiated accusations and could force them to pull their head offices out of this country.

"Our industry is often confronted with false allegations of misconduct in countries in which we operate," said Dina Aloj, Goldcorp Inc.'s vice-president of corporate social responsibility. "Regardless of merit, once made, allegations have lasting impact on our industry's reputation."

She was testifying before the Commons foreign affairs committee studying Liberal MP John McKay's private member's bill (C-300). The legislation is meant to respond to persistent allegations that Canadian mining companies were involved in human rights violations and environmental degradation in some of their overseas operations.

If passed, the bill would give Ottawa the power to investigate complaints that Canadian mining operations were not in compliance with international human rights and environmental standards. A company found not to be living up to those standards would be denied support from federal agencies funded by Canadian taxpayers.

The committee has heard testimony alleging that Canadian companies were involved in or responsible for various abuses, including using threats to force a senior Argentine official out of office and tolerating repeated instances of gang rape at a mine in Papua New Guinea. The allegations have been denied.

Barrick Gold Corp. spokesman Vince Borg told the committee Thursday the very testimony that it has unearthed demonstrates the risks to mining companies of an open-ended complaints-and-investigation process.

"The hearings have amply demonstrated how Bill C-300 has become a magnet for false and unsubstantiated allegations from individuals anywhere in the world and do nothing but unduly harm the Canadian mining industry," Borg said in a statement.

In an interview later, mining industry lawyer Michel Bourassa said of the allegations against Canadian mining companies "I think the vast majority of them are completely unfounded. These are allegations, they need to go through a process where the companies can present their positions."

Asked why non-government aid organizations (NGOs) would make false allegations, he said "Some of the NGOs could be doing it to create sort of a story for funding. I'm not saying these aren't horrible situations, but what are the facts? Who's responsible for them?" Bourassa, who handles mining affairs at Toronto law firm Fasken Martineau DuMoulin, said these allegations should not be allowed to stand unless they can be substantiated.

Conservative MP Deepak Obhrai questioned why Canada's companies should be forced to meet higher standards when a country like China is expanding its mining without such hindrances. "We all know what China is doing," said Obhrai (Calgary East). "China is all over Africa. Who is asking China to be social corporate responsible? Nobody."

The committee was told the threat of probes by Ottawa under McKay's legislation would add such risk to the operations of Canadian mining companies that some would consider moving their head offices elsewhere.

"If passed, Bill C-300 will undermine the competitive position of Canadian companies and could cause an exodus of mining companies from Canada and potentially render Canada a less attractive jurisdiction for mining investment," Bourassa testified.

Opposition MPs disputed the contention the bill has an anti-mining theme. "I don't think anyone around this table is against the mining industry. On the contrary, what I'm against is impunity," said Bloc MP Johanne Deschamps.

Credit: Toronto Star

### Illustration

Caption: A Star investigation earlier this month found widespread allegations of abuse related to Canadian-owned mines overseas.

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Word count: **613**

### The mayor, the model and the mining company

Hoffman, Andy. *The Globe and Mail* [Toronto, Ont] 12 Dec 2009: A.23.

Canadian firm Blackfire unearths more controversy by alleging politician sought cash bribe and 'sexual evening'

A slain Mexican activist, a Canadian mining company, allegations of extortion and demands for a "sexual evening" with an actress and Playboy model.

The murder mystery involving the death of a Mexican protester who led opposition to a mine owned by Blackfire Exploration Ltd. has taken a bizarre turn.

Calgary-based Blackfire was paying 10,000 pesos a month to the mayor of Chicomuselo, in the state of Chiapas, who also demanded that the company provide him with airline tickets and set up a liaison with a Latin soap-opera star and nude model named Niurka Marcos, according to legal documents obtained by The Globe and Mail.

In a complaint filed with the Congress of Chiapas and received on June 15, 2009, a Blackfire executive alleges "extortion" against the company by Julio Cesar Velazquez Calderon, the mayor of Chicomuselo, where Blackfire operates a barite mine.

Blackfire says in the complaint that it paid the mayor the money to prevent locals from vandalizing and protesting against its mine. It included documentation showing company funds totalling about 214,000 pesos, nearly \$17,700, ended up in the mayor's bank account.

"We have been extorted by the mayor of Chicomuselo, who since we began operations has asked us for the amount of 10,000 pesos per month to prevent the Mexican co-operative farm near where we mine from taking up arms," Blackfire alleges in a legal request to have the mayor impeached.

Blackfire has been embroiled in controversy since the Nov. 27 slaying of Mariano Abarca Roblero, a local activist who led opposition and protests against its mine.

Mr. Abarca's death has ignited debate about the conduct of Canadian mining companies in foreign countries and has been seized upon by advocates of Bill C-300, a private member's bill that would impose sanctions on Canadian mining companies that violate human rights and environmental standards overseas. Governor-General Michaëlle Jean encountered protesters chanting, "Canada get out," while visiting Chiapas this week. She called Mr. Abarca's killing "deplorable" and

"inexcusable."

Three men with links to Blackfire have been arrested by Mexican police in connection with the slaying. One of the men arrested is a Blackfire employee; the two others worked for the company in the past.

Blackfire has condemned Mr. Abarca's killing and denied any involvement. Its mine was shut down this week by Mexican authorities for alleged environmental violations.

Representatives of the Canadian mining industry concede the Blackfire case is threatening to tarnish its reputation at a sensitive time, as Parliament considers the proposed law.

"It could add fuel to the fire for those proponents of Bill C-300," said Tony Andrews, executive director of the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada, in an interview.

Blackfire's complaint against the Chicomuselo mayor depicts a company exasperated with what it called an "unscrupulous" government official whose demands had become increasingly brazen.

The documents show the mayor asked for airline tickets to Mexico City for his wife, children and a colleague and that Blackfire complied.

The demands became "absurd" however, when the mayor asked for 100,000 pesos for the village fair. The documents indicate that 75,000 pesos were to be deposited into the mayor's personal account at the Bancomer bank. As well, the mayor requested that Ms. Marcos, the TV star and nude model, perform at the Chicomuselo fair and spend a "sexual evening" with him.

"We decided not to meet those requirements, and for this reason the mayor started a smear campaign, making allegations to the priest of the region against the company, and we know that this incited the people who violently took the facilities of our company on June 10, 2009," the complaint says.

In an interview, Blackfire president Brent Willis said the company thought the payments were being made to the town and to sponsor the annual fair, not to the mayor personally.

"As far as Blackfire is concerned, we were sponsoring the town of Chicomuselo, and we felt that the mayor was abusing and taking the money for his own personal needs, and that is why we reported him to congress to overturn his immunity so that we could press criminal charges against him," Mr. Willis said. "This isn't bribery. We were taken advantage of. We are fighting against it."

In a statement last night, Blackfire said it had donated 200,000 pesos to the Chicomuselo fair. Half was paid in instalments of 10,000 pesos a month. A second 100,000-peso payment was made to a "town official" with a 75,000-peso cheque and 25,000 pesos in cash, the statement said. A receipt was provided.

"All payments were made in compliance with the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of Canada," Blackfire said.

Blackfire's complaint against the mayor names three people who it alleges were involved in vandalizing its mine and inciting violence. One is identified as Mariano Perez Roblero, a name very similar to that of the slain activist.

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Word count: **820**

**No crackdown on mining; Ottawa creates website, fund for firms in wake of alleged abuses, but critics call effort 'insufficient'**

Whittington, Les. *Toronto Star* [Toronto, Ont] 14 Jan 2010: A.16.

Despite years of alleged abuses by Canadian mining companies operating abroad, Trade Minister Stockwell Day says there's no need to compel multinationals to live up to high environmental and human rights standards.

At a news conference, Day brushed aside the long litany of allegations of wrongdoing against Canadian extractive firms in the developing world, saying most multinational mining operations help foreign communities where they do business.

Partly as a result of a series of articles recently published in the *Toronto Star*, the federal government is under mounting pressure to take action to deal with alleged abuses by mining firms in the developing world.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government hopes to accomplish this through voluntary guidelines and assistance programs for the industry.

On Wednesday, Day announced the latest of these initiatives.

Under the umbrella of promoting corporate social responsibility, the government set up a \$20 million fund to help companies develop economically and socially acceptable projects abroad and launched a website with information on the topic.

But critics say the voluntary programs are half-measures that do little to ensure mining companies operating overseas are held accountable for their activities.

"It's a useful effort but it's wholly insufficient to deal with the scope of the problem," said Jamie Kneen, communications coordinator for MiningWatch Canada, which has been pressing for tighter controls on the extractive industry.

"We've seen, over and over again, that even when there are rules in place, there are companies that are willing to break the rules."

Liberal MP John McKay, who has brought forward private member's legislation to clamp down on mining abroad, said Day's announcement proves what industry critics have been saying all along - that "Canada has a serious corporate social responsibility problem."



"If we didn't have this problem," he said, "then we wouldn't need" the new website, which McKay called "Facebook for miners."

If passed, McKay's legislation, Bill C-300, would empower the government to investigate allegations against Canadian mining operations in the developing world.

While opposition parties generally support C-300, the Conservatives are adamantly opposed. The mining industry is fighting the legislation.

Day also said Canadian diplomats are helping Mexican authorities investigate the latest high-profile mining incident.

Anti-mining activist Mariano Abarca Roblero was shot and killed in November near the Guatemalan border.

Three people, all of whom had worked at one time for Calgary-based Blackfire Exploration Ltd., were arrested.

Blackfire has denied being connected with the death.

Credit: Toronto Star

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Word count: **405**

### **Canadian mining firms the worst abusers: Report: 'Unfortunate incidents in the developing world'**

Whittington, Les. *Toronto Star* [Toronto, Ont] 19 Oct 2010: A.1.

Canadian mining companies are far and away the worst offenders in environmental, human rights and other abuses around the world, according to a global study commissioned by an industry association, but never made public.

"Canadian companies have been the most significant group involved in unfortunate incidents in the developing world," the report obtained by the Toronto Star concludes.

"Canadian companies have played a much more major role than their peers from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States" in these incidents, says the Canadian Centre for the Study of Resource Conflict, an independent, non-profit think-tank.

The problems involving Canada's mining and exploration corporations go far beyond workplace issues.

"Canadian companies are more likely to be engaged in community conflict, environmental and

unethical behaviour, and are less likely to be involved in incidents related to occupational concerns," the report says.

The research surfaced as a long, fierce political battle over legislation to tighten federal government scrutiny of Canadian mining operations abroad comes to a head. Bill C-300, a private member's bill put forward by Toronto Liberal MP John McKay, will be voted on in the Commons next week.

The proportion of incidents globally that involve Canadian corporations is very large, according to the report. "Of the 171 companies identified in incidents involving mining and exploration companies over the past 10 years, 34 per cent are Canadian," the centre found.

It said the high incidence of involvement of Canadian companies is in line with the Canadian industry's dominant position in global mining and exploration.

But "this does not make the individual or corporate violations any more ethically acceptable, especially considering the efforts in recent years taken by industry and government to improve" the practices of the Canadian industry, the centre said.

The centre's research was paid for by the Toronto-based Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC). It was completed in October 2009 but was not publicly released.

The study said the leading causes of incidents involving Canadian mining companies were related to community conflict, including "significant negative cultural and economic disruption to a host community, as well as significant protests and physical violence".

The second most common cause of incidents involved environmental degradation, followed by unethical behaviour, which the centre defines as operating in a state that is under embargo or with careless disregard for human rights or local laws.

The report notes that the Canadian government and the industry have devoted considerable time and money to instilling principles of corporate social responsibility in the mining sector.

"However, when one examines the current empirical reality, the results reveal a less than ideal picture of corporate social responsibility in the Canadian extractive sector.

"Clearly, the Canadian mining and exploration community needs to shift its current strategy if it is to improve its relationships with communities, governments, civil society and risk mitigation."

Of the incidents reported, gold, copper and coal mining were most often involved. The four "hot spot" countries with the most incidents were India, Indonesia, the Philippines and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Regionally, however, Latin America had the most incidents, followed by sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.

The centre said the majority of incidents arose from reports by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Many in the Canadian mining industry accuse some NGOs of harbouring an anti-mining bias that has led to exaggerated and unsubstantiated allegations against Canada's companies

operating in developing countries.

Bernarda Elizalde, PDAC's director of sustainable development programs, said, "These are allegations and they aren't proven cases." She also noted that the incidents involving Canadian companies work out to only six a year.

The research, Elizalde said, did not provide any fresh information. "There's nothing new because we know there are some things we need to improve" in the industry's operations abroad, she said in an interview.

"So what we're trying to do is provide the tools to the companies to understand how they can start improving their relationship with communities and how they can be more inclusive and be respectful and it's an awareness that we're creating but it's a step-by-step process." Improvements will take time, she said.

The report was commissioned as part of the industry's research arising from consideration of Bill C-300, she said. But, once PDAC received the study, it was decided not to make it public because more research was needed, Elizalde said.

On Tuesday, supporters of McKay's legislation to tighten regulation of Canadian mining firms operating abroad will be on Parliament Hill to lobby for passage of the bill. First introduced in May 2009, the bill has made it further along in the legislative process than most private member's proposals. But the final vote on Oct. 27 is expected to be very close.

The mining industry has waged an all-out campaign against legislation it says would damage its commercial interests, subject it to unfair accusations and attempt to enforce Canadian policy in sovereign nations.

Credit: Les Whittington Toronto Star

### **Illustration**

Caption: Indian miners work open cast site. An unreleased industry report lists India as a hot spot for Canadian mining abuses of human rights, ecosystems. NOAH SEELAM/AFP/Getty Images/file

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Word count: **845**

### **Mining bill faces final vote: If passed, law will target alleged abuses abroad**

Whittington, Les. *Toronto Star* [Toronto, Ont] 26 Oct 2010: A.19.

A two-year effort by a lone Toronto MP to curb alleged abuses by Canadian mining companies abroad culminates in a vote in the Commons Wednesday.

The groundbreaking legislation has stirred international interest and sparked an intense political

battle pitting the mining industry and their supporters against an array of activists and social groups campaigning for tougher scrutiny of mining operations in the developing world.

Under Bill C-300, Canadian oil and gas companies judged to be bad corporate citizens abroad would be deprived of political and financial support by the federal government.

Most private members' bills go nowhere but Liberal MP John McKay's legislation passed second reading in the House of Commons in April 2009 by a vote of 137 to 133.

"It's nip and tuck," McKay said of Wednesday's final vote. "It could go either way."

He can expect the support of 36 New Democrats and 47 Bloc Quebecois members. But with most of the Conservatives' 143 MPs expected to stand against Bill C-300, McKay will need the vast majority of his 75 Liberal colleagues to vote with him.

Liberal support is unpredictable. Some fellow MPs have joined with the Conservatives and the mining sector to argue that the bill will be impossible to apply in practice and will subject the industry to unsubstantiated allegations around the world.

But support for the legislation from social activists, non-governmental organizations and groups in the developing world has surpassed McKay's wildest expectations. "The world is watching" to see what Canada does, he said in an interview.

The outpouring of hope around Bill C-300 reflects a long history of alleged human rights and environmental abuses by Canada's mining sector, which is the world's largest.

A recently unearthed report commissioned by the Toronto-based Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada said Canadian extractive companies operating abroad are far and away the worst offenders when it comes to community conflict, environmental problems and unethical behaviour.

During months of debate and discussion of McKay's bill on Parliament Hill, supporters have travelled from all over the world to urge Canadian legislators to tighten scrutiny of mining firms in developing nations.

One advocate of tougher legislation who visited Ottawa recently is Mexican activist Jose Luis Abarca Montejo. His father, Mariano Abarca Roblero, was the community leader who spoke out against Calgary-based mining company Blackfire Exploration but was gunned down in front of his home in Chiapas last year.

Abarca said Canadians should be aware that firms like Blackfire have an influence on how people in the rest of the world see this country.

"Blackfire carries with it the Canadian link; people know that Blackfire is a Canadian company," said Abarca, who holds the company responsible for his father's death.

Blackfire has adamantly denied any responsibility for Abarca Roblero's death and notes Mexican authorities have never linked the company to the killing.

For its part, the mining industry has mounted an intensive lobbying campaign against McKay's bill.

The industry says Canadian mining companies are committed to improving corporate social responsibility and make important economic and social contributions where they operate.

Companies also say they are the victims of an anti-mining bias among some non-governmental organizations and social activists.

In 2005, an all-party Commons committee called for tougher social responsibility standards for Canadian mining firms abroad. After additional lengthy study, the Conservatives announced voluntary guidelines in 2009 for corporate behaviour in the mining sector along with the creation of a federal counsellor to assist with these issues.

Credit: Les Whittington Toronto Star

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Word count: **581**

### **Ethical mining bill defeated after fierce lobbying**

Curry, Bill. *The Globe and Mail* [Toronto, Ont] 28 Oct 2010: A.6.

The House of Commons has defeated Liberal legislation aimed at encouraging Canadian mining firms to act ethically abroad after a fierce lobbying battle that pitted the industry against its international and domestic critics.

Human rights and environmental advocates had argued that the bill would help prevent corporate abuses abroad and recounted accusations of rape, corruption and violence against the industry during parliamentary hearings.

Mining firms called the allegations disturbing lies and "hogwash" when they presented their case against the bill. Industry officials said ethical guidelines are already in place and warned the measures would cost jobs and give their critics a forum for frivolous accusations.

The Corporate Accountability of Mining, Oil and Gas Corporations in Developing Countries Act, a private members bill, was defeated 140-134 on Wednesday evening because not enough opposition MPs showed up to support it.

The bill was put forward by Liberal MP John McKay in response to stories about conflict between Canadian mining companies abroad and local populations.

Even though it was sponsored by a Liberal, 13 of Mr. McKay's colleagues did not attend the vote. Four NDP MPs, primarily from mining-dependent ridings, were also absent.

The federal registry of lobbyists shows dozens of meetings took place over the past year as the Mining Association of Canada and individual mining firms knocked on doors of cabinet ministers, public servants and opposition MPs to express concern over the bill.

It was a large amount of lobbying for a bill from a backbench opposition MP.

"The lobbying from industry has been massive," said Mr. McKay, the Scarborough-Guildwood MP. "The amount of money they have been spending on killing this bill is extraordinary."

The legislation would have forced the government to create guidelines on corporate accountability standards for Canadian mining, oil or gas activities based on human rights, social, health and safety and environmental standards.

It would have also set up a system in which any individual could file a complaint with the Canadian government, which could dismiss it if it found it to be frivolous, or investigate and publish a written report. Mining companies had argued that the complaint process could tie up investment and time unnecessarily.

Mr. McKay said he was disappointed by the vote and does not expect the issue will be dealt with again in the current Parliament. The mining and prospectors industry praised the result and stressed that it already has strong rules for the overseas operations of Canadian-based mining companies.

Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff, who had said earlier in the day that the bill had problems, was among the 13 Liberals not in the House for the vote.

Canadian investment in mining and energy abroad is worth about \$80-billion a year and more than 75 per cent of the world's exploration and mining companies are headquartered in Canada.

Yet powerful forces also lined up to support the legislation.

Six hours before Wednesday's vote, Mr. McKay e-mailed all MPs in the House of Commons with a letter of support from U.S. Democratic Senator Ben Cardin, who said the bill is similar to new measures included in the Wall Street Financial Reform package approved this year by Congress.

"Like the transparency measures we passed this year in the United States, Bill C-300 reminds the world that we can and will do our part to protect human rights and our planet - regulating our own companies so they cannot act without consequences in less developed countries," wrote the Senator. "The fact is, voluntary standards are not enough."

Canada's Trade Minister, Peter Van Loan, warned the bill would put thousands of Canadian jobs at risk.

"Headquarters of companies will inevitably move to other countries where they don't face the same kind of difficulty or any kind of frivolous and vexatious complaint could tie up an investment effort or an effort to pursue a mine elsewhere," Mr. Van Loan told reporters in advance of the vote. "The fact is right now we already have good provisions in place."

The Conservative government announced a Corporate Social Responsibility strategy for Canada's mining sector last year that is based on international guidelines and voluntary reporting.

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Word count: **685**

### **Bill to rein in Canadian mines abroad defeated**

Whittington, Les. *Toronto Star* [Toronto, Ont] 28 Oct 2010: A.2.

A Toronto MP's bid to crack down on the conduct of Canadian mining giants in poor countries foundered Wednesday in a close House of Commons vote.

Liberal MP John McKay's hotly disputed private member's legislation to toughen scrutiny of mining, gas and oil companies overseas was narrowly defeated, 140-134.

"Legislatively, this has been put back to the next Parliament," a disappointed McKay said afterward.

He said pressure for tougher rules for mining corporations will continue, "but it's not happening anytime soon."

About a dozen Liberals, including party leader Michael Ignatieff, did not show up for the vote. And several NDP and Bloc Quebecois MPs were also absent.

McKay, the MP for Scarborough-Guildwood, acknowledged his Liberal colleagues could have put his bill over the top if more had stood in the Commons to support him.

He said the Conservatives had been told to vote against the legislation, while the Liberals followed the traditional practice of allowing MPs to vote without party discipline on a private member's bill.

"Bear in mind that as a private member, you have no ability to do anything other than try to persuade people," McKay said, noting that the Conservatives had mounted a fierce last-minute campaign against the legislation. Prime Minister Stephen Harper was present to vote no Wednesday night.

The bill, first introduced by McKay in early 2009, has attracted international attention and sparked an intense two-year political battle pitting McKay, social activists and non-governmental organizations against the Canadian mining industry, the world's largest.

Supporters of the legislation say Ottawa needs to step up monitoring of the activities of Canadian mining companies overseas to end a long history of alleged human rights and environmental abuses.

McKay's legislation would have empowered Ottawa to establish standards for human rights and environmental conduct by corporations operating in the developing world. Credible accusations against Canadian companies would have been investigated and, if substantiated, the company would be deprived of political sponsorship at Canadian embassies and lose federal financial support from the Export Development Corp.

But the industry waged an all-out campaign against legislation it says would damage its commercial interests, subject it to unfair accusations and constitute an attempt to enforce Canadian policy in sovereign nations.

Credit: Les Whittington Toronto Star

### **Illustration**

Caption: Liberal MP John McKay's private member's legislation sought to toughen scrutiny of mining, gas and oil companies in the developing world. NOAH SEELAM/AFP/Getty Images

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Word count: **397**



**VITA AUCTORIS**

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