**Data Journalism Final Project Proposal**

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For my final data project, I would like to focus on the relationships between certain political issues, political parties, laws, and donations. There are many decent datasets that outline individual, corporate, and union donations to political parties in Canada. While it is an extensively explored subject, I believe there can be some interesting patterns that can be found by looking at the data. For example, [National Post](https://special.nationalpost.com/follow-the-money/donors#bc) analyzed the top ten political party donors 12 of Canada’s provinces and territories. While some patters are relatively predictable, such as the fact that four of the top ten corporate donors in Alberta were oil and gas companies, others are more peculiar. For Example, the ATCO Group contributed to the Progressive conservatives, the Liberals, and the Wildrose Party in Alberta in recent years. Investigating the reasons for why they contributed to three different parties could make for an interesting story.

There are several relationships I am looking to explore through donations data. One of them is the relationship between donations and the campaign main issues of focus. If a political party’s campaign focuses on a certain issue above others are certain donors more or less likely to support them? To put it in perspective, if a party in Alberta choses to focus heavily on renewable energy, its highly unlikely that it will be financially supported by oil and gas companies, but is there certain patterns in the data that may suggest otherwise? The aforementioned example is not great because the likelihood of there being an odd pattern in this specific category is highly unlikely. I am simply using it to describe the general direction for my project.

Another question I am looking to explore through analyzing through this data project is what kind of loopholes (if any) are donors using to sidestep regulations for political donations. Are there ways to manipulate regulatory laws in order to gain political influence with certain parties and has it worked? Furthermore, are political parties susceptible to certain donor influences through financial ties? These are the kind of important questions that can help us unravel unethical practices that exist as the result of the relationship between money and politics. Without the ability to analyze the data available to the public, evaluating these relationships would be extremely difficult if not impossible, keeping unethical practices of political parties in the shadows. The [Justin Trudeau and SNC-Lavalin affair](https://www.thestar.com/politics/pmo-scandal.html) is a good example of how political representatives can fall victim to outside influences of corporations, individuals, or organizations.

I believe that in light of the general election on October 21st, this is an important topic to look into. Even though, our project is due on the same date, I believe it is up to us as active citizens to use the information we receive as a tool to pressure our representatives to make decisions that benefit us. For my project, I am planning to use the donations data from 2009 to see how the relationships between political parties and donors has changed over recent years and for what reasons. Once I have analyzed the data, I will find a specific patter that my project will investigate. While working with data is quite a complex endeavour, I believe that the topic of my proposal is one where interesting patterns can always be found.

If you have any questions or concerns about my proposal, please let me know and I will make the necessary changes accordingly.

Sources:

<https://special.nationalpost.com/follow-the-money/donors#bc>

<https://www.thestar.com/politics/pmo-scandal.html>

Datasets:

<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=fin&dir=oda&document=index&lang=e>