

Canadian Politics

Edited by

James P. Bickerton

& Alain-G. Gagnon

2

Canadian Politics

Canadian Politics

second edition

edited by
James P. Bickerton
& Alain-G Gagnon

broadview press
1994

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Canadian Politics

2nd Edition

includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 1-55111-023-7

1. Canada - Politics and government. I. Bickerton, James
II. Gagnon, Alain-G. (Alain-Gustave), 1954-

JL65 1990.C35 1994 320.971 C94-931362-9

©1994 broadview press Ltd.

Broadview Press

Post Office Box 1243, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, K9J 7H5

in the United States of America

3576 California Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127

in the United Kingdom

c/o Drake Marketing, Saint Fagan's Road, Fairwater, Cardiff, CF53AE

Broadview Press gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council,
the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Publishing Centre,
and the Ministry of National Heritage.

PRINTED IN CANADA

5 4 3 2 1 94 95 96

Contents

Introduction

- 1 JAMES BICKERTON & ALAIN-G. GAGNON
The Study of Canadian Politics 9

Part One: Canadian Politics: Approaches, Perspectives and Ideas

- 2 LESLIE A. PAL
From Society to State: Evolving Approaches to the
Study of Politics 39
- 3 JANE JENSON
Understanding Politics: Contested Concepts of Identity in
Political Science 54
- 4 IAN STEWART
All the King's Horses: The Study of Canadian Political Culture 75
- 5 RAYMOND BAZOWSKI
Canadian Political Thought 93

Part Two: Political Processes

- 6 A. BRIAN TANGUAY
The Transformation of Canada's Party System in the 1990s 113
- 7 MUNROE EAGLES
Elections 141
- 8 CHANTAL MAILLÉ
Women and Political Representation 156
- 9 A. PAUL PROSS
The Pressure Group Conundrum 173
- 10 SUSAN D. PHILLIPS
New Social Movements in Canadian Politics: On Fighting and
Starting Fires 188

- 11 SANDRA BURT
The Momen's Movement: Working to Transform Public Life 207
- 12 J. ANTHONY LONG & KATHARINE CHISTE
Aboriginal Self-Government 224
- 13 YASMEEN ABU-LABAN
The Politics of Race and Ethnicity: Multiculturalism as a
Contested Arena 242

Part Three: The Structures of Governance

- ✓ 14 PETER AUCOIN
Prime Minister and Cabinet 267
- 15 PAUL B. THOMAS
Central Agencies: Making a Mesh of Things 288
- ✓ 16 STEPHEN BROOKS
Bureaucracy 307
- ✓ 17 LOUIS MASSICOTTE
Parliament:
The Show Goes On, But The Public Seems Bored 328
- 18 PETER H. RUSSELL
The Three Dimensions of Charter Politics 344
- ✓ 19 IAN ROBINSON AND RICHARD SIMEON
The Dynamics of Canadian Federalism 366
- ✓ 20 JOAN PRICE BOASE
Constitutional Change as a Political Issue 389

Part Four: Regions & Regionalism

- ✓ 21 JANINE BRODIE
Regions and Regionalism 409
- 22 JAMES BICKERTON
Atlantic Canada: Regime Change in a Dependent Region 426

- 23 ALAIN-G. GAGNON
Quebec: Variations on a Theme 450
- 24 RODNEY HADDOW
Ontario Politics: 'Plus Ça Change . . .'? 469
- 25 NELSON WISEMAN
Reading Prairie Politics 491
- 26 PATRICK J. SMITH
British Columbia:
Public Policy and Perceptions of Governance 506
- 27 PETER CLANCY
The North: A Region of Permeable Boundaries 527

Part Five: The Canadian State in a Global Context

- 28 DANIEL DRACHE
The Post-National State 549
- 29 WARREN MAGNUSSON
De-centring the State 567
- APPENDIX
The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms 587
- Notes on Contributors 594
- Index 599

Acknowledgements

The editors would like to express their gratitude to the contributors to the second edition. Their enthusiasm for the project, the high quality of their work and their prompt observance of publication deadlines has made this book possible. It is hoped that the result of these diverse efforts will prove to be of value to students and teachers of Canadian politics. This second edition significantly differs from the first in response to the comments and suggestions of colleagues and students, and to reflect recent developments in Canadian politics. The editors also would like to acknowledge financial assistance provided by the Quebec Studies Program at McGill University and the University Council for Research at St. Francis Xavier University. Finally, we would like to thank Theresa MacNeil and Louiselle Levesque for their support and forbearance during the preparation of this volume.

Introduction: The Study of Canadian Politics

JAMES BICKERTON & ALAIN-G. GAGNON

Political Science is a hybrid discipline, with nineteenth-century roots in constitutional law and classical political economy. The study of Canadian politics, however, as opposed to the study of British parliamentary institutions or the general laws of economy, is essentially a twentieth-century phenomenon. Inquiry into uniquely Canadian circumstances and institutions was prompted by the impact on Canada of global changes and crises, such as the first two world wars and decolonization, as well as domestic challenges, such as the Depression in the 1930s and the need to accommodate economic classes and ethnic groups who had organized to defend and promote their interests.

Research and writing on the development of the discipline of political science in Canada has not been prolific. The short list of works would include Doug Owram's *The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State 1900-1945* (1986), Stephen Brooks and Alain Gagnon's *Social Scientists and Politics in Canada: Between Clerisy and Vanguard* (1988), and Michel Leclerc's *La science politique au Québec: essai sur le développement institutionnel 1920-1980* (1982). While bouts of such introspection, then, have been relatively rare, a sustained debate amongst the discipline's practitioners did break out in the 1970s, when concerns about the extent of American influence on the teaching of politics in Canada prompted a series of interventions on one side or the other of the issue. Nationalists on the Left saw the influx into Canadian universities of American-trained academics and the spread of American approaches (particularly early behaviourism with its near fetish for measurement, quantification, and statistical analysis and its rejection of ideas, values, and normative philosophy) as yet another manifestation of American cultural and economic imperialism (see for example, Wood and Wood, 1970). Others rejected this reading of the situation, arguing instead that the Canadian discipline was simply undergoing a process of 'modernization', not 'Americanization' (Kornberg and Tharp, 1972).

In Quebec, there were several interventions along these same lines. This was further complicated, however, by the national question. Americanization of the social sciences in Quebec was similarly decried by intellectuals in that province who observed its profound influence on the development of the social sciences. In particular, there was a reaction against the spread of "posi-

tivism”: an approach to political and social issues which eschewed normative analysis (Brooks and Gagnon, 1988: chapter 1). Contrary to the situation in English Canada, the nationalist tradition came to constitute the mainstream approach to the study of politics. This can be related to the fact that Quebec intellectuals have been more central than their English-Canadian counterparts in the construction of a national identity and more successful in using the state (the Quebec state) to translate their efforts into institutions and public policies. The Quiet Revolution and its aftermath gave Quebec intellectuals the opportunity to re-define the nature of political science. With Quebec in the throes of fundamental social and political transformation, political scientists recognized the necessity of stressing normative issues and developing a focus on Quebec’s specificity (Leclerc, 1980: 188-221; Rocher, 1973; Belanger, 1973).

The debate amongst Canadian political scientists subsequently became a more serious examination and critique of the inadequacies and shortcomings of the study of Canadian politics. C.B. Macpherson (1974) characterized the whole discipline of political science at that point in time as somewhat underdeveloped and ‘backward’ in terms of the extent of work that had been accomplished. He also bemoaned the earlier separation of political science from economics. This split, which led to the creation of the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* in 1968, was justified on both sides by the assumption that each had to have its own unique subject matter (which for political science was properly thought to be ‘the state’). But Macpherson and others criticized it for raising an artificial barrier between economics and politics, succeeding only in heightening the inability of each discipline to develop a sustained critique of the power structure.

Donald Smiley (1974) expanded the debate by arguing that a Canadian political science which assumed the form of a “miniature replica” of its American counterpart was a formula for “inadequate scholarship.” This was because of a number of insurmountable differences between the two academic communities, such as size, financing, and the degree of insularity of the American discipline (in part because of its large size). Smiley argued for a re-invigoration of earlier Canadian traditions of inquiry, in particular the political economy and institutionalist perspectives.

Alan Cairns addressed the Americanization issue in the most comprehensive fashion, noting that American dominance of the social sciences at that time was world-wide. Like Smiley and Macpherson, Cairns regretted the divorce that had occurred within the discipline between politics and economic factors and worried about the dangers of inappropriate borrowing of foreign models designed to fit other societies. He argued that attention to Canadian history and Canadian society was necessary if social or political theories were to be adapted to Canada or developed in Canada. At the same time, he wished for “a more meaningful cosmopolitanism” whereby political

scientists would make comparisons with countries with which Canada had something in common: other parliamentary democracies, other multilingual societies, other vast federations, other societies suffering regional inequalities, and other examples of small power–big power relationships similar to the Canada-U.S. situation (Cairns, 1975).

By the end of the 1970s, the concerns about Canadian political science voiced in the early years of the decade were less evident. The perceived threat to the Canadian discipline posed by the American-based behavioural revolution had receded with the declining dominance of the behaviourist paradigm. Reg Whitaker (while undertaking his own wide-ranging critique of behaviourism) could write of the future of Canadian political science with some optimism, describing the state of the discipline as akin to “letting a thousand flowers bloom,” with expanding research activity in (by his count) no fewer than fifteen areas of study (Whitaker, 1979).

The number of subject areas mentioned below will be fewer but more encompassing in their reach. Thus, without claims of being comprehensive, academic research on Canadian Government and Politics can usefully be divided into six main subject areas: political institutions, political ideas, political economy, political sociology, regionalism and provincial politics, and public policy.

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

The study of political institutions has always been the mainstay of the discipline in Canada. Early political science texts on Canada focused almost exclusively on Parliament and the formal executive. In English Canada, the study of Canadian politics was initially structured around the works of J.A. Corry (*The Growth of Government Activities*, 1939; *Democratic Government and Politics*, 1946), Alexander Brady (*Democracy in the Dominions*, 1947), and MacGregor Dawson (*The Government of Canada*, 1947), all of whom made significant contributions to the study of Canadian government and politics. Their contribution was especially important as it encouraged the development of political science as an academic discipline in its own right, independent of economics, law or philosophy.

In the contemporary period, the study of Canadian politics is much less institution-centred than were these early texts, but to a surprising degree political institutions still hold the interest of Canadian political scientists, and of Canadians more generally. One indication of this is the continuous and increasingly voluminous output of scholarly analyses of our institutions. In particular, studies of the Constitution, intergovernmental relations and the process of constitutional reform, the political and juridical impact of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the relationship between law and poli-

tics more generally, have become important fields of study and research within Canadian politics.

Early texts on Canadian federalism were J.P. Meekison's *Federalism: Myth or Reality* (1968, 1971) and Donald Smiley's *Canada in Question* (1972, 1980), later followed by Garth Stevenson's *Unfulfilled Union* (1979, 1989). Perhaps the first detailed study of intergovernmental relations was Richard Simeon's *Federal-Provincial Diplomacy* (1972). A more recent book in this vein, though a more general study, is David Milne's *Tug of War* (1986). An annual series on federal-provincial relations is the Queen's Institute of Intergovernmental Relations' *Canada: The State of the Federation*. Milne's *The Canadian Constitution* is a good general introduction to the Canadian constitution.

Canadian academics, it is sometimes said, have an obsession with Canada's constitution and proposals for its reform. A major reason for this, obviously, is the precarious balance that has existed in Canada since the 1960s between, on the one hand, the weight and inertia of the constitutional *status quo* and on the other, building political pressures—especially in the French-speaking province of Quebec—for constitutional reform and renewal. The national unity debate which ensued was reflected in political analyses that had a decidedly pessimistic tone: *Must Canada Fail?*, *Divided Loyalties*, *Canada in Question*, and *Unfulfilled Union* are four examples from the 1970s. Authors in succeeding years have hardly been lighter in tone, with the titles of more recently-penned volumes continuing to convey a bleak assessment of Canada's political prospects: *Divided We Fall*, *Disruptions*, and *A House Divided* are some examples of the ongoing theme of political crisis and division.

A new departure from this general theme is increasingly evident, however. Some political scientists have begun to contemplate radical alternatives to the Canadian federation as we have known it. This new mindset regarding the Quebec-Canada relationship has spawned a whole new genre of analyses: *A Meech Lake Post-Mortem: Is Quebec Sovereignty Inevitable?*, *Negotiating With a Sovereign Quebec*, *Toward a Quebec-Canada Union*, *De-Confederation: Canada Without Quebec*, and *Répliques aux détracteurs de la souveraineté du Québec* are a sampling of this new literature. One outcome of this ongoing tension over Canada's political institutions was the 1982 Constitution Act, which brought about patriation of the Canadian Constitution (it had previously been an Act of the British Parliament), agreement on an amending formula to enable further constitutional changes, and a Charter of Rights and Freedoms (see Keith Banting and Richard Simeon *And No One Cheered*, 1983). The latter quickly became a fundamental component of Canadian political identity and introduced a new language and dynamic into Canadian politics. The implications and import of this new development in Canadian politics has been ably argued in the work of Alan Cairns (see *Disruptions*, 1991). The Charter has become virtually a field of study unto itself, as evidenced by books such as

Mandel's *The Charter of Rights and the Legalization of Canadian Politics* (1989, 1992) and Knoff and Morton's *Charter Politics* (1992).

Important though the 1982 amendments were, however, they did not resolve the Canadian constitutional debate. Instead, the 1982 changes were the catalyst for a whole new round of negotiations—and academic studies—on the role and performance of national political institutions (e.g., the Senate, Supreme Court, the party and electoral system), the division of powers and responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments, and most important, the place within Canada of Quebec, a non-signatory to the 1982 Constitution. Indeed, Quebec nationalism and the continuing threat of Quebec independence lies at the heart of Canada's present institutional "insecurity," and the scholarly interest that this state of affairs provokes. This preoccupation reached new heights in the 1987-92 period when intensive negotiations produced two ill-fated constitutional agreements—the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords—and a veritable avalanche of scholarly and popular debate, studies, commissions, conferences and publications. A small sampling of these include Michael Behiels' *The Meech Lake Primer* (1989), Patrick Monahan's *Meech Lake: The Inside Story* (1991), Ronald Watts and Doug Brown's *Options for the Future* (1991), Alain Gagnon and Daniel Latouche's *Allaire, Belanger, Campeau et les autres* (1991), Peter Russell's *Constitutional Odyssey* (1992), McRoberts and Monahan's *The Charlottetown Referendum and the Future of Canada* (1993), and most recently Curtis Cook's *Constitutional Predicament: Canada After the Referendum of 1992* (1994) and Jeremy Webber's *Reimagining Canada: Language, Culture, Community and the Canadian Constitution* (1994).

POLITICAL IDEAS

The realm of political ideas has not been an area of study that historically has received a great deal of attention from Canadian political scientists. It can be characterized as a somewhat underdeveloped field when compared to the American or British disciplines. One notable general text on the subject is H.D. Forbes edited collection of essays (1985). Canada, however, has not been devoid of notable works giving expression to and developing seminal political ideas. Such works can be found within the conservative, liberal, and democratic socialist traditions: George Grant's *Lament for a Nation* (1965); Pierre Trudeau's *Federalism and the French Canadians* (1968) and *Approaches to Politics* (1970); C.B. Macpherson's *Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval* (1973) and *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy* (1977); Kenneth McRae's *Consociational Democracy* (1974); Charles Taylor's *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition* (1992) and *Reconciling the Solitudes* (1993); and Reg Whitaker's *A Sovereign Idea: Essays on Canada as a Democratic Community* (1992).

One aspect of the realm of political ideas that has received its fair share of attention is the question of Canada's political culture. Political culture refers to those values and attitudes toward the political system that are widely shared by Canadians. Two main approaches have been used to investigate and explain Canadian political culture. Philosophical and historical analyses attempted to discern the origins of Canadian political culture and thereby to explain present-day values and attitudes in terms of a cultural inheritance that has shaped both institutional design and societal outlook. Representative of this approach are Kenneth McRae's contribution to Louis Hartz's *The Founding of New Societies* (1964) and Gad Horowitz's oft-cited essay on "Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism in Canada" in his book on *Canadian Labour in Politics* (1968). W. Christian and C. Campbell have incorporated this perspective into their study of *Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada* (1990). Behaviourist approaches to the subject have tended to remove the study of political culture from the realm of the history of ideas and subjected it to quantifying survey techniques and computer-driven multi-variate analysis in an attempt to concretely describe and measure the political attitudes and values held by individual Canadians. The most notable of the book-length studies of this sort done in Canada is David Elkins and Richard Simeon's *Small Worlds: Provinces and Parties in Canadian Political Life* (1980). A notable study which seeks to integrate the compendium of approaches to Canadian political culture into a comprehensive explanation is David Bell's *The Roots of Disunity: A Study of Canadian Political Culture* (1992).

The high-point of political culture studies was in the 1970s. In the 1980s, the study of political ideas in Canada was revitalized, and given new direction, by political, social, and institutional changes. One such change has been the rise to political prominence and influence of new social movements, particularly the women's, native, and environmental movements. Each of these poses challenges to established political ideas, proposing new ideals of community and equality, and suggesting a re-evaluation of the social, legal, and political relations between individual Canadians and between the Canadian state and its citizens. (See the section on social movements below for references.)

Perhaps the most important institutional change has been the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter's purpose was to entrench in law those political ideas and values considered most important to Canadian democracy. As such, it has produced a great deal of discussion on the meaning and interpretation of those rights and freedoms protected by the Charter. This now amounts to a "growth industry" within Canadian political science. Alan Cairns's *Charter versus Federalism* (1992) and Christopher Manfredi's *Judicial Power and the Charter: Canada and the Paradox of Liberal Constitutionalism* (1993) exemplify this debate, as does Charles Taylor's *Reconciling the Solitudes* (1993).

POLITICAL ECONOMY

Another venerable tradition in the study of Canadian politics is that of political economy. Of considerable historic importance within the discipline in Canada, it fell into disfavour in the post-World War Two period, before undergoing a renaissance of sorts in the 1970s. Political economy is a focus of study and a theoretical approach that emphasizes the relationship between politics and the economy and the importance of economic forces to political life. Initially, Canadian political economy, influenced by the work of Harold Innis, focused on the role of “staples” – resource commodities exported abroad – in shaping Canadian economic development and Canadian political institutions. This provided the broad framework for a number of classic studies in Canadian political economy. Ironically, James Mallory, one of the strongest proponents of a strictly institutional approach to the study of Canadian politics (*The Structure of Canadian Government*, 1971) made his first important contribution to the discipline within the political economy tradition with his monograph for the “social credit series” sponsored by the Canadian Social Science Research Council. Mallory’s study, *Social Credit and the Federal Power in Canada* (1954), followed that of C.B. Macpherson, another notable Canadian political scientist who would become well-known for his work in a field other than political economy. Macpherson, who in succeeding years would become extolled internationally as a democratic theorist, published his political economy analysis of the Social Credit phenomenon, *Democracy in Alberta*, in 1953.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a “new political economy” emerged in Canada that updated the staples perspective and fused this with Marxist-inspired critiques of capitalism and/or theories of underdevelopment born of the experience of Third World countries. The new political economy was both nationalist and leftist, inspired by the works of Innis (*Essays in Canadian Economic History*, 1956), but also by sociologist John Porter’s analysis of social class and power in Canada (*The Vertical Mosaic*, 1965), philosopher George Grant’s nationalist polemic *Lament for a Nation* (1965), Stanley Ryerson’s marxist analysis of Quebec-Canada relations in *Unequal Union* (1968), and Kari Levitt’s *Silent Surrender* (1970), which condemned the debilitating effects of American corporate ownership of Canadian industry.

Perhaps the most important work that came out of the radical political economy school in the 1970s was Leo Panitch’s 1977 edited collection of essays *The Canadian State* (a subject Panitch and two former students, Greg Albo and David Langille, would return to in 1993 with *A Different Kind of State? Popular Power and Democratic Administration*). Other works utilizing a radical political economy approach followed: Garth Stevenson’s *Unfulfilled Union* (1979, 1989), John Richard’s and Larry Pratt’s *Prairie Capitalism* (1979), Janine Brodie and Jane Jenson’s *Crisis, Challenge and Change: Party*

and *Class in Canada* (1980, 1988), and Glen Williams' *Not For Export* (1983). More recently, Ian Robinson and Richard Simeon's *State, Society and the Development of Canadian Federalism* (1990) constitutes a blending of the political economy and neo-institutionalist perspectives.

Canadian political economy is a diverse and intellectually lively approach to the study of politics, important in redefining well-known problems and drawing attention to other problem areas which the academic separation of political science and economics has caused to be overlooked. It generates questions that go largely unasked and therefore unexplained within other approaches: the historical pattern of Canadian economic and industrial development, the place of Canada within the continental and world economies, the composition and character of the Canadian economic elite, the relationship between the distribution of economic and political power in Canada, the nature and role of the Canadian state as a capitalist state, and the impact of class conflict on Canadian politics. More recently, the emergence of non-traditional political cleavages have stimulated new directions for research and debate within Canadian political economy, in particular the claims of feminist theory and other new social movements.

POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

The dominance of the institutional approach to the study of Canadian politics was not only challenged by a re-emergent political economy tradition, it was also beset by what has come to be known as the behavioural revolution in the social sciences. In political science this approach was particularly evident in the study of voting behaviour, where it still holds sway. A series of national election studies have used this approach to good effect, resulting in such works as Clarke, Jenson, Leduc and Pammett's *Political Choice in Canada* (1979) and *Absent Mandate* (1990). Also in this tradition is *Letting the People Decide: Dynamics of a Canadian Election* (1992) by Johnston, Blais, Brady and Crête. In contrast, a more constituency-level, ecological approach to elections can be found in Donald Blake's *Two Political Worlds* (1985), and in Eagles, Bickerton, Gagnon and Smith's *The Almanac of Canadian Politics* (1990).

Political sociology, however, existed as an approach to the study of politics long before the introduction of the methods and techniques of behaviourism. Indeed, one of the first major texts on Canadian government and politics was a work of comparative political sociology (Brady's *Democracy in the Dominions*). But perhaps the very first work of political sociology in Canada was André Siegfried's seminal study *Les deux races: problèmes politiques contemporains* (1906; translated as *The Race Question in Canada*). The political dimension of ethno-linguistic relations examined by Siegfried has continued to preoccupy Canadian political scientists. Such works as Pierre Elliot