



# THE CANADIAN ELECTION STUDIES

Assessing Four Decades of Influence

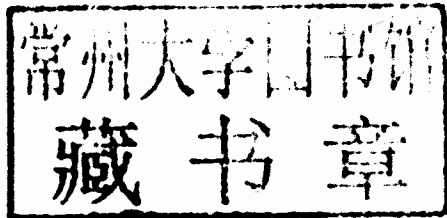
---

**EDITED BY** Mebs Kanji, Antoine Bilodeau,  
and Thomas J. Scotto

# THE CANADIAN ELECTION STUDIES

## Assessing Four Decades of Influence

Edited by Mebs Kanji, Antoine Bilodeau,  
and Thomas J. Scotto



UBC Press · Vancouver · Toronto

© UBC Press 2012

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without prior written permission of the publisher, or, in Canada, in the case of photocopying or other reprographic copying, a licence from Access Copyright, [www.accesscopyright.ca](http://www.accesscopyright.ca).

21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12      5 4 3 2 1

Printed in Canada on FSC-certified ancient-forest-free paper  
(100% post-consumer recycled) that is processed chlorine- and acid-free.

---

**Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication**

The Canadian election studies : assessing four decades of influence /  
edited by Mebs Kanji, Antoine Bilodeau, and Thomas J. Scotto.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Issued also in electronic formats.

ISBN 978-0-7748-1911-4

1. Elections – Research – Canada. 2. Voting research – Canada. 3. Elections – Canada – History. 4. Voting – Canada – History. I. Kanji, Mebs, 1969- II. Bilodeau, Antoine, 1976- III. Scotto, Thomas J.

JL193.C3579 2012

324.97106

C2012-901114-2

---

Canada

UBC Press gratefully acknowledges the financial support for our publishing program of the Government of Canada (through the Canada Book Fund), the Canada Council for the Arts, and the British Columbia Arts Council.

This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, through the Aid to Scholarly Publications Program, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

UBC Press  
The University of British Columbia  
2029 West Mall  
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2  
[www.ubcpress.ca](http://www.ubcpress.ca)

# THE CANADIAN ELECTION STUDIES

*We respectfully dedicate this volume to John Meisel,  
the pioneer of the Canadian Election Studies*

## Acknowledgments

---

This volume has benefited enormously from the efforts of many, all of whom deserve to be properly acknowledged. The Canadian Political Science Association and especially Lisa Young in her role as program chairperson were among the first to throw the wind behind our sails. Lisa enthusiastically championed our idea to host a workshop on the Canadian Election Studies during the 2007 Annual Conference of the Canadian Political Science Association, held in Saskatoon between 30 May and 1 June.

Then came all those who agreed that this was an important intellectual exercise and walked the talk by taking us up on our offer to participate, either in the workshop and/or by contributing a paper to this volume. Without the support of John Courtney, Mildred A. Schwartz, Allan Kornberg, Harold D. Clarke, William Cross, Barry Kay, Elisabeth Gidengil, Joanna Everitt, Kenneth Carty, Richard Johnston, Brenda O'Neill, André Blais, Gisèle Yasmeen, Alain Pelletier, John Meisel, Lawrence LeDuc, Andrea M.L. Perrella, Richard Nadeau, Éric Bélanger, and Jon H. Pammett, this project would simply lack substance. We particularly express our deepest appreciation to our contributors for their outstanding co-operation and the incredible patience that they have exhibited from start to finish.

Lastly, there have been a number of extremely capable people who have played a significant role behind the scenes in advancing this volume along the way. Research assistants such as Soheyla Salari, Nicki Doyle, Julie Stephens, Nada Fadol, Alain Deschamps, Meaghen Annett, and Dennis

Molina Tapia have worked tirelessly on compiling references and shaping components so that they conform to the appropriate standards. Four anonymous reviewers provided us with excellent feedback and suggestions for improvement. And without the superb professionalism and experienced advice provided by Emily Andrew from UBC Press – well, let's not even go there!

Mebs Kanji,  
Antoine Bilodeau, and  
Thomas J. Scotto

# THE CANADIAN ELECTION STUDIES



Printed and bound in Canada by Friesens

Set in Futura Condensed and Warnock  
by Artegraphica Design Co. Ltd.

Copy editor: Stacy Belden

Proofreader: Lara Kordic

Indexer: Cheryl Lemmens



#### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

UBC Press saved the following resources by printing the pages of this book on chlorine free paper made with 100% post-consumer waste.

TREES	WATER	ENERGY	SOLID WASTE	GREENHOUSE GASES
6	2,665	2	169	591
FULLY GROWN	GALLONS	MILLION BTUS	POUNDS	POUNDS



Environmental impact estimates were made using the Environmental Paper Network Paper Calculator. For more information visit [www.papercalculator.org](http://www.papercalculator.org).

# Contents

---

List of Illustrations / ix

Acknowledgments / xi

Introduction: Four Decades of Canadian Election  
Studies / 1

MEBS KANJI, ANTOINE BILODEAU, AND THOMAS J. SCOTTO

## Part 1: The Narrative

**1** Point of Departure, 1965 / 19

JOHN MEISEL

**2** Theoretical Perspectives in the Canadian Election  
Studies / 29

MILDRED A. SCHWARTZ

**3** To Ann Arbor ... and Back: A Comparative Perspective  
on Election Studies / 44

LAWRENCE LEDUC

**4** Advancements in Methodology: A Recurring Process / 69

THOMAS J. SCOTTO, MEBS KANJI, AND ANTOINE BILODEAU

**5 The Relevance and Future of the Canadian Election Studies / 88**

RICHARD JOHNSTON AND ANDRÉ BLAIS

**Part 2: Taking Stock**

**6 An Overview of the Social Dimension of Vote Choice / 101**

ELISABETH GIDENGIL

**7 Eclipse of Class: A Review of Demographic Variables, 1974-2006 / 121**

BARRY J. KAY AND ANDREA M.L. PERRELLA

**8 Quebec versus the Rest of Canada, 1965-2006 / 136**

RICHARD NADEAU AND ÉRIC BÉLANGER

**9 The Structural Bases of Canadian Party Preference: Evolution and Cross-National Comparison / 154**

RICHARD JOHNSTON

**10 The Valence Politics Model of Electoral Choice / 180**

HAROLD D. CLARKE AND ALLAN KORNBERG

**11 Voting Turnout in a System of Multi-Level Governance / 193**

JON H. PAMMETT

**Part 3: Conclusion**

**12 The Future of the Canadian Election Studies / 209**

ANTOINE BILODEAU, THOMAS J. SCOTTO, AND MEBS KANJI

**Appendix: Four Decades of Publications Based on the Canadian Election Studies / 215**

ANTOINE BILODEAU, THOMAS J. SCOTTO, AND MEBS KANJI

**List of Contributors / 251**

**Index / 254**

# Illustrations

---

## Figures

- 5.1 Publications from the Canadian Election Studies / 92
- 9.1 Religious cleavages outside Quebec / 164
- 9.2 Ethno-linguistic cleavages outside Quebec / 166
- 9.3 Economic cleavages outside Quebec / 167
- 9.4 Geographic cleavages outside Quebec / 168
- 9.5 Linguistic and economic cleavages in Quebec / 172
- 10.1 Dynamics of party identification / 185
- 10.2 Mover and stayer chains / 186
- 10.3 Most important issues in 2006 Election Studies / 188
- 10.4 Factors affecting probability of voting Conservative in the 2006 federal election / 189
- 11.1 Percentage of federal non-voters reporting non-voting / 197
- A.1 Short- and long-term influences on electoral choice / 216
- A.2 Long-term influences on electoral choice (themes in decline) / 217

- A.3 Long-term influences on electoral choice (themes on the rise) / 218
- A.4 Short-term influences on electoral choice / 219
- A.5 Participation, parties, political support, and referendums / 220

## Tables

- I.1 Principal investigators of the Canadian Election Studies / 3
- I.2 Canadian Election Studies – events covered, survey types, and number of interviews completed / 5
- I.3 The scope of the Canadian Election Studies / 8
- I.4 Variety of study designs within the Canadian Election Studies / 10
- 7.1 Vote differentials for the Liberal party / 124
- 7.2 Vote differentials for the Progressive Conservative party / 125
- 7.3 Vote differentials for the New Democratic party / 126
- 9.1 The Canadian system in comparative context / 157
- 9.2 Structural foundations outside Quebec, 1965-88 / 159
- 9.3 Structural foundations outside Quebec, 1993-2000 / 160
- 9.4 Structural foundations outside Quebec, 2004-06 / 162
- 9.5 Structural foundations in Quebec, 1965-88 / 170
- 9.6 Structural foundations in Quebec, 1993-2006 / 171
- 10.1 Responses to the party identification question / 184
- 10.2 Rival models of electoral choice / 187
- 11.1 Reasons for not voting / 195
- 11.2 Voting/non-voting of age groups in 2004 / 199
- 11.3 Feelings of citizen duty and voting/non-voting in 2004 / 199
- 11.4 Feelings of guilt and voting/non-voting in 2004 / 200
- 11.5 Perceived seriousness of youth non-voting, by voting/non-voting in 2004 / 201
- 11.6 Selected predictors of federal and provincial voting/non-voting / 202
- 11.7 Participatory actions of voters/non-voters in 2004 / 203

# Introduction

## Four Decades of Canadian Election Studies

---

MEBS KANJI, ANTOINE BILODEAU,  
AND THOMAS J. SCOTTO

The Canadian Election Studies (CES) are an impressive body of survey data that have been gathered and analyzed for over four decades. The primary objective of this collection of surveys has been to investigate why Canadians vote the way they do. The CES are designed and administered by academics, and they have been paid for largely through public funding agencies such as the Canada Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. They are made freely available to the general public but are used most extensively by scholars and university students in the field of political science.

This volume brings together several researchers, most of whom have served as principal investigators on various CES research projects conducted over the past forty or so years to tackle three main objectives. The first is to document the evolution of these studies as there is much about the beginning, development, and current state of the CES that is not widely shared or understood. For example, how did the CES first come into being? Who were the key players? And what were the driving theoretical underpinnings? Also, how has the methodology of these studies advanced over time? Has the implementation of these surveys resulted in notable payoffs? And what are the most pressing challenges that lie ahead?

The second objective is to highlight some of the major findings and advances in thinking that have emerged from researching the CES. Forty years

is a considerable period of time in which to be repeatedly injecting significant amounts of public research dollars into a single set of projects without taking stock of how these investments have contributed to our understanding and the prospects for further study. What have we learned from the CES? Do we know any more about why Canadians vote the way they do than we did four decades ago? And do these surveys inspire new investigative opportunities?

The third objective of this volume is to project forward after taking a systematic and reflective look at the past. Here, our intentions are mainly twofold. The first is to attempt to synthesize what has been achieved as a result of conducting the CES over four decades. The second is to flag ways in which this research endeavour might be improved, based on what we have gathered from the various contributions to this book and the insights that we have developed along the way. Our hope is that this exercise can provide some added perspective to the ongoing debate about where to steer the CES in the years ahead.

The idea for this volume was conceived initially at a one-day workshop that was scheduled prior to the Annual Conference of the Canadian Political Science Association, held at the University of Saskatoon in June 2007. The workshop was entitled *Assessing the Canadian Election Studies' Contribution to Canadian Political Science*. The purpose of this workshop was to provide a formal occasion for dialogue between the principal investigators from the various CES research teams and others who were interested in examining and assessing the CES's contribution to Canadian political science.

The degree of interest and debate sparked by this workshop suggested that this project might be worth following up. As a result, we asked the principal investigators who attended, as well as others who were not able to attend, if they would be willing to participate as contributors to an edited volume on the subject. The reaction was very positive and encouraging. The road since has been long, but the end result of this collaborative undertaking is now complete and is laid out on the pages that follow.

### **What Are the Canadian Election Studies?**

The place to begin is with a more elaborate description of the CES. These surveys have been randomly administered (mostly over the telephone) to eligible Canadian voters primarily during and/or after federal elections. As Table I.1 indicates, the studies were launched in the mid-1960s and have

TABLE I.1

**Principal investigators of the Canadian Election Studies, 1965-2006**

Year	Principal investigators	Specialization
1965	1. John Meisel (Queen's University)	Political Science
	2. Philip Converse (University of Michigan)	Political Science/ Sociology
	3. Maurice Pinard (McGill University)	Sociology
	4. Peter Regenstreif (University of Chicago)	Political Science
	5. Mildred Schwartz (University of Chicago)	Sociology
1968	1. John Meisel (Queen's University)	Political Science
1974,	1. Harold Clarke (University of Windsor)	Political Science
1979,	2. Jane Jenson (Carleton University)	Political Science
and	3. Lawrence LeDuc (University of Windsor)	Political Science
1980	4. Jon H. Pammett (Carleton University)	Political Science
1984	1. Ronald D. Lambert (University of Waterloo)	Sociology
	2. Steven D. Brown (Wilfrid Laurier University)	Political Science
	3. James E. Curtis (University of Waterloo)	Sociology
	4. Barry J. Kay (Wilfrid Laurier University)	Political Science
	5. John M. Wilson (University of Waterloo)	Political Science
1988	1. Richard Johnston (University of British Columbia)	Political Science
	2. André Blais (Université de Montréal)	Political Science
	3. Jean Crête (University of Laval)	Political Science
	4. Henry E. Brady (University of California, Berkeley)	Political Science
1992	1. Richard Johnston (University of British Columbia)	Political Science
	2. André Blais (Université de Montréal)	Political Science
1993	3. Henry E. Brady (University of California, Berkeley)	Political Science
	4. Elisabeth Gidengil (McGill University)	Political Science
	5. Neil Nevitte (University of Toronto)	Political Science
	6. Joseph Fletcher-1992 only (University of Toronto)	Political Science
1997	1. André Blais (Université de Montréal)	Political Science
and	2. Elisabeth Gidengil (McGill University)	Political Science
2000	3. Richard Nadeau (Université de Montréal)	Political Science
	4. Neil Nevitte (University of Toronto)	Political Science



◀ TABLE I.1

Year	Principal investigators	Specialization
2004	1. André Blais (Université de Montréal)	Political Science
and	2. Elisabeth Gidengil (McGill University)	Political Science
2006	3. Neil Nevitte (University of Toronto)	Political Science
	4. Patrick Fournier (Université de Montréal)	Political Science
	5. Joanna Everitt (University of New Brunswick)	Political Science

*Note:* Some of these researchers have since relocated to other universities.

been conducted several times since over a span of more than forty years. During this period, the CES were steered and implemented by eight different teams of researchers, most of which were made up of four to six political scientists, from different universities in Canada and occasionally from the United States.

The more exact breakdown reported in Table I.2 shows that a total of fourteen separate CES projects were administered between 1965 and 2006. Of these, twelve were conducted during federal elections and two during major referendums – the Quebec Referendum in 1980 and the Charlottetown Accord Referendum in 1992. Thus, the CES are not exclusive to covering just elections. With these data, it is possible to explore Canadians' survey responses across a variety of political and electoral contexts.

Note too that the total number of surveys conducted and available for study is even more extensive. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, the standard methodological approach for most CES research projects was to implement one cross-provincial post-election survey immediately after every federal electoral contest. The only exceptions to this rule came in 1972, the one federal election year during this period when no such election study was attempted,<sup>1</sup> and in 1980, when one additional provincial survey was administered more than three months after the 1980 federal election, during the time of the first Quebec Referendum. In total, there were seven surveys administered during this initial twenty-year period (see Table I.2).

Following the mid-1980s, however, the total number of surveys conducted almost quadrupled. The research team designated to study the 1988 federal election brought with it a more expansive research agenda, which included both the desire to study campaign dynamics and a variety of broader topics, not all of which dealt directly with voting and elections. In order to accommodate their research interests, the 1988 CES research team introduced a new three-wave survey methodology, which included a campaign