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The Evolution of the Canadian Party System: From Brokerage to Marketing-Oriented Politics

STEVE PATTEN

WHILE POLITICAL SCIENTISTS ARE IN AGREEMENT that the patterns of competition and interrelationships between political parties are central to what we mean by the notion of a party system (Epstein 1975, 234), scholars of Canadian politics argue that focusing too narrowly on the number of parties, party competition, and the associated alignment of voters in support of those parties ignores much of what is interesting and revealing regarding the character of a party system (Carty, Cross, and Young 2000, 4). There is, in Canada, a tradition of embracing a more detailed conception of the party system and also a richer approach to studying the system's historical evolution (Koop and Bittner 2013, 310). In this chapter, the party system is understood as defined by a range of organizational, legal, ideological, and political features, all of which are significant to the nature of party competition and the historical evolution of that system.

The distinctive features of Canada's party system include the organizational structure and operational character of political parties—including, among other things, their method of leadership selection and policy development—and the legal framework of rules governing matters such as the franchise, the conduct of elections, party financing, and the operations of parliamentary politics. The party system is also characterized by accepted norms and practices regarding styles of leadership, campaign behaviour, and media relations. At the ideological level, the party system is defined by a set of ideas—a discursive framework—that delimits the boundaries of political debate by offering up a particular conception of Canada and the core issues, interests, and identities that should animate partisan competition. Finally, as a system of political representation that is central to the nature of governance, the party system is defined by, first, its relations to other representative systems—such as interest groups and social movements—and, second, by the unique relationship that exists between governing, partisanship, and campaigning. Incorporating all these elements into one's understanding of the party system and looking beyond the changing patterns of party competition is essential to a fruitful examination of the historical evolution of a party system (Ladd 1990).

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While some degree of party system change is ever-present, ods of more dramatic transformations, as well as periods when stability sets in, and the party system takes on characteristics widely accepted and normalized as a unique historical config Canadian party system. It was election studies scholars who f alized party system change in this way, arguing that periodic election" realigns the distribution of party support and inau "electoral era" (Blake 1979, 263–64). But, for those embracing ception of the party system, it was David Smith's (1985) expl history of party-government in Canada and Ken Carty's (198 tion of the historical development of national politics that fo collective minds on the notion that there have been a ser cal epochs in which the characteristics of Canadian party p and form distinct systems of partisan politics. By the 1990s accepted that since 1867 four identifiable historical conjunct associated with four distinct Canadian party systems—know second, third, and fourth party systems (se. Table 1.1; Bicke and Smith 1999; Carty et al. 2000; MacIvor 2006).

To understand the processes of party system change one n that each new party system does not always follow on the he vious system. Not all aspects of the party system change at or rate and, if we are true to our richer conception of the pa avoid fixating on critical elections and changes in party com exclusion of other features of the party system, it is difficult precise beginning and end of each party system. In fact, there between party systems when change itself is the order of th are groping toward a new, yet to congeal, system of party poli also always be aspects of the party system that seem out of ste with a previous (or future) party system than with the curr such, it is useful to think of Canada's party systems as having a period of emergence followed by the system's heyday—

Table 1.1 Canadian Party Systems in History

Party System	Period of Emergence	Heyday	Period
First	1867–1887	1896–1911	1
Second	1918–1921	1935–1957	1
Third	1963–1967	1968–1984	1
Fourth	1988–1993	1995–2003	2
Fifth	2006–2013	2015–	

and character are most evident—and, finally, a period when the old system unravels, change accelerates, and transition to a new party system begins. In this chapter I argue that the lead up to the 2015 general election marked the beginning of the heyday of Canada's fifth party system (Koop and Bittner 2013; Walchuk 2012). The remainder of this chapter will examine some of the core characteristics and evolution of Canada's five party systems. This examination will demonstrate that the adage that "Canadian politics is brokerage politics" must be re-examined in light of the marketing orientation that dominates in Canada's fifth party system (Carty, Cross, and Young 2013; Marland and Giasson in this volume).

Canada's First Party System

It took two to three decades following Confederation for Canada's first party system to take shape. Initially, parties were little more than loose coalitions that took their form more from the institutions of Parliament than electoral competition. As party labels lacked nationwide relevance and party organization played only a minor role in bringing coherence to electoral competition, elections were "conceived as a series of discrete constituency contests" (Carty 2001, 17). In the first three general elections as many as a quarter of all Members of Parliament (MPs) were acclaimed to office and so many candidates were "loose fish"—individuals who sought office without being clear about which partisan grouping they supported—that following the 1872 election, the Toronto *Globe* and the Montreal *Gazette* disputed the party affiliation of fully 35 of the 200 newly elected MPs (Reid 2001, 13). The MPs who sat as members of Sir John A. Macdonald's nominally Conservative coalition actually ran under a variety of labels, ranging from Conservative to Liberal-Conservative, Nationalist Conservative, Independent Conservative, and, in one case, Conservative Labour. But Macdonald was skilled at using power, patronage, and the perks of government in support of building the Conservative Party into a coherent national institution, which advantaged him over the Liberals, who were initially little more than an alliance of regionally based rivals of Macdonald's governing coalition. It wasn't until the years after 1887, when Wilfrid Laurier became Liberal leader, that the Liberals and Conservatives could both be said to exist as truly national parties, unified and politically relevant in all regions (Reid 2001, 14; Underhill 1999, 79). But even as the Conservative–Liberal rivalry defined the core of partisan competition in the heyday of Canada's first party system (1896 to 1911), the partisan landscape was complicated by the election of a small number of Labour, Nationalist, McCarthyite, and Patrons of Industry MPs.[1]

To appreciate the nature of party politics we must reme
of the first party system was, by modern standards, pre-c
1874 there was no guarantee of secret ballots, and the gov
staggered election dates to create a sense of momentum in
election. The right to vote was restricted to a limited cla
economically privileged men. Women lacked political rigl
late 1890s many men were prohibited from voting by prop
qualifications and restrictions that excluded those who w
and foreign-born (Eagles 1996). Even when the franchise v
something approximating universal manhood suffrage, mos
ans lacked political rights. The organization and financing
ties also fell short of modern democratic standards. Parties
of Parliament, existing to facilitate the functioning of a W
Parliament in which the government of the day faced an
sition in parliamentary debate. There were no extra-parli
organizations or organized constituency associations. Outsid
the parties were no more than private networks of supporte
backers. But the major newspapers were highly partisan—su
the Conservatives or the Liberals—and this ensured the partie
local political life. Still, without an organized base of party n
leaders were simply the leaders of their parliamentary caucuse
were selected by their caucus colleagues in closed-door ca
(Blake, Carty, and Erickson 1996, 214).

Party leaders were responsible for raising money to en
election and supplement the funds raised by the party's ca
was difficult for a party out of power, but the government p
Conservatives, then the Liberals) received generous contri
larger corporations, particularly the railways and the banks. Of
the extra-parliamentary parties did not formally exist, this fu
unregulated and no official records were kept. Beginning ir
were legal requirements for candidates to disclose their campai
and between 1908 and 1930 there were restrictions on candi
ing corporate or union donations. But these regulations were
enforced, and they ignored the fundraising activities of the part
leaders (Carty et al. 2000, 131–32). In essence, political parties
ered private associations rather than public institutions and, th
were not recognized (or regulated) in law.

In terms of the discursive framework and public policy pre
of the first party system, political debate revolved around what
be called the "National Policy," which was a package of polici
to facilitate the development of the Canadian economy and the

of an economically independent Canadian nation with strong cultural and governing ties to Britain. These policies included a system of protective tariffs instituted to foster investment and protect domestic industry, railway construction, Western land settlement schemes, and the 1876 Indian Act, among others (Brodie 1990). Macdonald's nation-building vision, which was initially opposed by nineteenth-century Liberals, allowed the Conservatives to organize and behave as a brokerage party—a party with a strong leader who articulates a unifying national vision that supposedly accommodates social divisions sufficiently well to appeal to (nearly) the entire electorate (Carty et al. 2013). But after Macdonald's death in 1891, intraparty conflicts revealed that the Conservatives were no longer fully accommodating of Roman Catholics, while the Laurier-led Liberals were making peace with the National Policy and articulating a political vision that appealed to corporate backers and spanned religious and linguistic divides sufficiently well to ensure their electoral success throughout the heyday of the first party system (1896 to 1911).

By 1911, however, Prime Minister Laurier abandoned the National Policy in favour of free trade with the United States. This and other issues—including the contentious Naval Service Bill—were fuelling regional, linguistic, and class divisions and testing the capacity of either national party to represent all sections of the nation. These tensions ultimately precipitated the unravelling of the National Policy, the system of partisan competition, and other features of the first party system (Thorburn 2001, 3–4).

Canada's Second Party System

Important changes occurred within the Canadian party system in the years following World War I. In 1918 Canada took another step closer to universal adult suffrage by granting women the right to vote and run in federal elections, but continued restrictions on the voting rights of foreign-born citizens, the Inuit, and Status Indians meant that Canada's modern liberal democracy remained incomplete. In 1919 Wilfrid Laurier passed away and the Liberals held Canada's first leadership convention, selecting Mackenzie King to lead their party. Also that year. Thomas Crerar, Robert Borden's minister of agriculture, resigned to lead the new Progressive Party, a party of agrarian protest that challenged the very foundations of the first party system by contesting the privilege of Canada's two established parties, opposing the tariff and rail policies of the National Policy, decrying government patronage, and criticizing the influence of large industrial and financial interests in party politics (Carty 2001, 21; Morton 1950). The Progressives' success in the 1921 election—winning the second-most parliamentary seats—dealt

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a fatal blow to Canada's two-party system and opened the d
in which third parties would ensure new voices were heard i
arena (Azoulay 1999a, 161). Of course, we must be cautious abo
third party influence. Traditional parties, particularly the Liber
to dominate national politics, and third parties had only limit
the discursive and policy content of Canadian politics throughou
party system (Brodie and Jenson 1988).

In terms of partisan electoral competition, the second party s
era of Liberal political hegemony. Other than a few months of
government in 1926, the Liberal Party was out of power for j
(1930 to 1935). Even with the rise of third parties, the Liberals n
below 40 per cent popular support in an election, and in the sys
(1935 to 1957) the party won five consecutive majority g
The Conservatives were transformed into a party of perpetua
status, often trailing the Liberals by 10 or more percentage poin
elections. The Liberals emerged as Canada's "natural governin
a true brokerage party capable of controlling the political ager
the maturing Canadian nation, and limiting the possibility of o
voices being electorally successful (Whitaker 1977). Strong le
and then Louis St. Laurent—shaped the party, but its organizatio
was more stratarchical than hierarchical,[2] thus allowing for powe
ministers, local organizational independence, and the brokering o
interests within the cabinet and party caucus (Carty et al. 2013
leader of a minority government after the 1921 election, Mac
rejected any suggestion of forming a coalition and moved inste
the less-experienced and less-disciplined Progressive MPs to cr
with minor changes to tariff and freight rate policies and, f
opportunity to sit at the cabinet table.

Those Progressives who adhered to group and interest repr
strategies that were incompatible with Liberal brokerage politic
joined forces with a small bloc of United Farmer and Labour M
the Ginger Group, a parliamentary coalition that, in 1932, help
the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) as one of
tant third parties of the second party system. As a coalition of s
farm and union activists, the CCF—which later transformed in
Democratic Party (NDP)—articulated a progressive critique o
and the dominant governing paradigm, but never managed to r
than 15 per cent of the popular vote and at its peak in 1945
28 MPs. The other significant third party to emerge in this
Social Credit Party, a right-wing Alberta-based grouping of pop
and independent entrepreneurs. While Social Credit managed to

number of seats in Saskatchewan and British Columbia, the party was really an Alberta phenomenon, and most of the 10 to 17 seats it won in each election in this era were located in that province.

Liberal and Conservative party organizations developed considerably during the second party system. Local associations and national extra-parliamentary organizations were established, and party offices were set up. But, particularly in the case of the Liberals, the parliamentary leadership continued to play a central role (Azoulay 1999b, 30). Powerful regional cabinet ministers coordinated political organizing, raised funds, identified potential candidates, and brokered competing political interests. In power, the Liberals continued to use the perks of government to attract corporate donations, even relying on a "contract levy system" linking financial support to government business (Whitaker 1977, 403–5). Where possible, the opposition Conservatives followed the Liberal example, establishing a formal extra-parliamentary organization and opting to select their leaders at leadership conventions. But in many ways these organizational advances were hindered by the continued control exercised by the parties' parliamentary leadership. Party organizations served the leaders' wishes, and leadership conventions were "managed" and "uncompetitive" affairs (Blake et al. 1996, 218–19). Still, conventions were open enough to allow provincial politicians like John Bracken and George Drew to jump from provincial politics to lead the national Conservative Party, but the outgoing leader and the party establishment never really relinquished control of the process. Moreover, for all the advances in organization and leadership selection, the question of how to remove a leader from office was never addressed, leaving the issue of when to leave office in the hands of the leader and, to a certain extent, his caucus colleagues. Interestingly, it was the selection of Bracken, the former Progressive premier of Manitoba, that led the Conservatives, in 1942, to change their name to the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada.

By the dawn of the second party system, the policy orientation and priorities that had shaped the model of governance since the 1870s were under challenge, and not only by the Progressives and other opposition politicians. King hinted at an expanded role for government in social welfare during his 1919 campaign for the Liberal leadership, but during the 1920s changes in this direction were limited (Guest 1985). Even when the Great Depression hit, Conservative Prime Minister R.B. Bennett was hesitant to abandon time-worn policies of limited spending and a traditional economic policy framework, including selective tariff increases to protect Canadian industry and jobs. However, the experience of economic depression eventually altered views and, in 1935, Bennett went on radio to pronounce the failure of laissez-faire capitalism and traditional models of social and economic

policy and to propose a New Deal of social welfare and ma
tion, including national unemployment insurance.

When the Conservatives lost the 1935 election Benne
was abandoned, but there was clear momentum toward a ne
digm. The Liberals established a national system of unemp
ance in 1941, and in 1943 the Marsh Report on social sec
family allowances, paid maternity leave, and a national sy
insurance. Progress toward a new national governing para
but by the 1950s the governing Liberals, the CCF, and ev
servatives were moving toward a new consensus that ensure
innovations, and the interventionist economic policies c
Keynesianism would alter the discursive framework of pa
underpin a welfare state governing paradigm for much of
system (Bradford 1998).

Canada's Third Party System

The emergence of the third party system marked import
the structure of partisan competition, particularly in Queb
Canada. The Liberals had dominated Quebec politics since
the party. Between 1896 and 1957 Liberal candidates won,
per cent of the vote in Quebec. Over the next three elec
Liberal dominance in Quebec was challenged—first by the I
Progressive Conservatives (PCs) in 1958, then by an unprece
in support for Quebec-based Social Credit candidates in 196
the contours of the third party system were solidifying in the
Liberal Party regained its dominant position in Quebec, but I
the Social Credit (known as the *Ralliement des créditistes* in the
elections) demonstrated the electoral potential of more con
within the province. In the West, the Liberals dominated Ma
katchewan, placed a respectable second place to the Social C
and competed almost equally with the PCs and CCF in Br
throughout the second party system. But in 1958 Diefenba
all but five Western seats—those being won by the CCF. T
Social Credit were devastated, and the stage was set for the P
prairie politics and compete strongly in British Columbia
third party system. Although the Liberals were dominant du
of the third party system (1968 to 1984), they were a reduc
larly forming minority governments and relying heavily on
party's base of French-speaking and Catholic voters to mask
decline (Bickerton et al. 1999; Johnston 2013).

The landscape of third party politics began to change with the defeat of the entire slate of Social Credit candidates in 1958. Then, in 1961, the CCF formalized its relationship with organized labour and transformed into the New Democratic Party. Between 1963 and 1984 the NDP won between 17 and 32 seats, mostly in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. The Social Credit managed to win four to five seats in British Columbia and Alberta in the 1962, 1963, and 1965 elections but have been unsuccessful on the Prairies at the federal level since then. The most surprising, although short-lived, development in this period was the Social Credit bursting onto the Quebec political scene, winning 26 seats in 1962 and then between 6 and 15 seats in every election until 1979 (Pinard 1975).

In terms of the institutions and structures of party organization, the third party system witnessed an expansion of parties' extra-parliamentary wings and the development of more professional modern campaign organizations. While the PCs were in power (1957 to 1963), the National Liberal Federation and local Liberal constituency associations were strengthened, and the party's national headquarters was also enlarged (Wearing 1981). After regaining power, Liberal Prime Minister Lester Pearson continued building the extra-parliamentary wing of the party. By ordering his ministers to focus on parliamentary and executive responsibilities and spend less time on party affairs, Pearson hastened the end of the brokerage-style ministerialism that saw powerful regional ministers controlling central aspects of party organization and financing (Azoulay 1999b, 31). Under Pearson, and then Pierre Trudeau, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) was strengthened, both in terms of its executive power as a key central agency and with regard to the leader's power within the Liberal Party. Indeed, by the 1970s the upper echelons of the party bureaucracy were so closely tied to the PMO they formed a highly centralized and hierarchical political machine. The PCs developed in similar directions during this era. Out of power for all but nine months during the heyday of the third party system (1968 to 1984), they were less able to raise money to fund expansion of the party bureaucracy, and the Office of the Leader of the Opposition is typically less capable of centralizing power. But, relying on Ontario's Big Blue Machine, a small coterie of professional fundraisers and political managers with expertise in advertising and polling, the PCs built a sophisticated team of political operatives that rivalled Trudeau's Liberal team. This was an important development, with its roots in the trend toward seeking technical campaign advice from advertising professionals and public opinion pollsters beginning in the 1950s and 1960s. By the 1980s, parties were increasingly controlled by new political entourages of professional managers, consultants, and strategists (Noel 1996). This new power elite of party politics added significantly to the power of party leaders.

Professionalization was also evident in the campai
the leadership of Canada's major political parties. Th
marked the zenith of delegated leadership convention
conventions that selected Robert Stanfield as PC lead
Trudeau as Liberal leader (1968), the number of can
tiveness of the races, and the amount being spent on
significantly (Blake et al. 1996). Organizing to select de
became highly sophisticated, with campaigns running
employing refined delegate-tracking systems to influ
convention vote. By the early 1980s the cost of a succ
surpassed $2 million. Equally important were chang
party membership in calling a leader's reign to an en
party system the power to remove a leader remained w
a certain extent, with the parliamentary caucus, whic
on a leader to resign. But in 1966, despite Diefenbaker
on as PC leader, the party's president put forward a pro
convention before a meeting of the party's National
with 73 per cent support, marking the first time a leade
been forced when the position was not vacant (Perlin
decade the principle of "leadership review" was entren
parties' constitutions, giving the party membership sc
timing of future leadership conventions.

Important steps in the democratization of the lega
politics were taken during the third party system. By the
to electoral boundaries and amendments to the Elect
Inuit of Canada's North and Status Indians had full poli
entrenchment of the political right to vote in the 198
and Freedoms forced the removal of any remaining r
rights—including those that disenfranchised mentally
prisoners in correctional facilities (Eagles 1996). It wa
Expenses Act that had the greatest impact on the opera
however. After decades of virtually unregulated fundr
spending and ongoing evidence of patronage and kick
used to solicit contributions, Parliament acted to limit s
public oversight of fundraising (Stanbury 2001). Part
report to Elections Canada on their fundraising and
Limits were placed on the amounts national parties
could spend during campaigns, there were restriction
prime-time radio and TV advertising parties could purc
$100 or more were to be made public, and public fina
campaigns was instituted through tax credits on cont

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reimbursements of election expenses. The new regulations took Canada's political parties an important step closer to being quasi-public institutions, rather than merely private associations.

The discursive framework and governing paradigm of the third party system built on the commitment to Keynesian economic and social welfare policies that began to emerge in the latter years of the second party system. By the late 1960s, Canada's Keynesian welfare state was defined by relative openness to foreign investment; social policy measures in the areas of income maintenance, health, education, and social services; and a commitment to macroeconomic demand management. Although social welfare and government intervention to shape and protect the Canadian economy and culture were contentious, they came to form the basis of a political consensus that animated partisan policy debates (Cameron 1989). There also emerged a national narrative rooted in Canada's colony-to-nation story. Under Liberal governments of the 1960s to early 1980s, the idea of Canada as a middle power peacekeeper and a multicultural and bilingual political community of rights-bearing citizens took hold in the public consciousness and the Canadian party system.

Canada's Fourth Party System

The third party system came under strain shortly after Brian Mulroney's 1984 landslide election victory. Particularly during the Mulroney PCs' second term in office (1988 to 1993), a combination of political tensions associated with constitutional politics, regionalism, intensified ideological debate, and public cynicism set in motion changes in the partisan landscape that became strikingly apparent in the general election of 1993. The governing PCs were reduced to just two seats, the NDP elected only nine MPs, the Liberals were returned to power, and the fledgling Bloc Québécois and Reform Party both won over 50 seats, establishing themselves, at least temporarily, as Canada's principal opposition parties.

The core features of electoral competition in the fourth party system were regionalization, multiparty electoral competition, and Liberal dominance. Of course, regionalism was not entirely new to Canadian party politics (see Bickerton, in this volume). Pan-Canadian electoral strategies aiming at national competitiveness defined partisan competition during the third party system (Carty 1988), but even the governing Liberals relied on historical support among Eastern Canadian Catholics and Quebec voters to maintain power (Bickerton et al. 1999; Bickerton and Gagnon 2004, 250). During the 1990s, however, the regionalized character of party competition intensified, clarifying the existence of regional party subsystems in Atlantic

Canada, Quebec, Ontario, and the West. The PCs were lar
tive in all regions other than Atlantic Canada; the NDP's pc
were in Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia; the Liberals had
several regions, but relied on winning almost every Onta
tain power; the Bloc dominated Quebec; and the Reform
the Canadian Alliance swept Alberta and was competitive
provinces. "Given this balkanization in party competition
effectively campaign on the same message in each part
(Carty, Cross, and Young 2002, 27). Even the governing Li
ada's party of regional accommodation and pan-Canadia
politics, abandoned pretenses of national competitiveness
chance of winning Albertan and British Columbian con
than a small number in Edmonton and Vancouver/Victori

The fourth party system also witnessed new develop
ship selection and the legal regulation of party financing
leadership selection, there were developments in two co
First, a new enthusiasm for grassroots democracy resulte
from traditional leadership conventions and the adoption
of universal membership vote (UMV), in which all party n
ticipate directly in the leader selection process (Carty et
Preyra 2001). While UMV serves the cause of democracy i
parliamentary parties, developments associated with in
and sophisticated leadership campaigns ran counter to m
and democratic leadership selection (Patten 2006). When
held its final traditional delegated leadership convention ir
fourth party system emerged, Jean Chrétien built an unpre
wide organization that allowed him to literally "capture" t
the leadership at delegate selection meetings rather than
trail or the convention floor (Carty et al. 2000, 78). In 200
als adopted procedures that blended a convention with a
rank-and-file members direct control over the outcome
Paul Martin adopted and extended Chrétien's strategy. His
$11 million and put such a lock on local Liberal associa
one potential rival bowed out of the race, ensuring a M
supported by over 90 per cent of member-controlled de
process was far from meaningfully open and democratic.

The ability of Paul Martin's strategists—many of whom
campaigners, pollsters, and media and government relation
take over the Liberal Party revealed the extent to which p
are, increasingly, hollow shells with little in the way of an ide
essence and little organic connection to civil society. Reg

argues Canadian parties have become "virtual parties" that have little political or ideological character beyond the leader's personal image and a related agenda that is arrived at based on polling analysis and media strategy. Of course, Canadian parties have a long history of strong leaders who shape their party's character and appeal. What is new is the extent to which, despite objectively democratic reforms like the UMV, both a party's grassroots and its parliamentary caucus are increasingly unimportant to the party's ideological and policy agenda. Even the Liberals, Canada's traditional party of brokerage politics, no longer serve as a vehicle for accommodating competing interests: the party is "neither the elite-run 'ministerialist' party of the King-St. Laurent era, nor the 'participatory' party of the Pearson-Trudeau era" (Whitaker 2001, 19). During the fourth party system the trend toward abandoning pan-Canadian strategies in favour of strategic electoral appeals to clusters of old and new supporters, the hollowness of the virtual party, and the exceptional capacity of new leaders to redefine their parties revealed a continued departure from the tradition of brokerage politics in the Canadian party system (Carty et al. 2013).

In early 2003, as the fourth party system was beginning to show signs of unravelling, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien seemed increasingly concerned that his legacy would be tainted by scandal. There were accusations that he had influenced government decisions that ensured he profited from a real estate deal and, perhaps more significantly, a 2002 report of the Auditor General had revealed widespread rule-breaking in the awarding of government advertising contracts (an affair now known as the sponsorship scandal). To cleanse himself of the growing impressions that corporations and money had too much influence in Liberal Party politics (LeDrew 2005), Chrétien introduced party and election financing legislation that placed significant new limitations on the sources and size of contributions. Under the new legal framework, individuals could give no more than $5,000 annually to any registered political party, candidate running in a federal election, local party constituency association, contestant seeking a local nomination, or leadership contestant. Moreover, corporations, trade unions, and associations were forbidden from contributing to national parties or leadership campaigns and were restricted to a maximum $1,000 contribution to local candidates, party constituency associations, or nomination contestants. To compensate for the loss of corporate and union contributions to national parties, the legislation instituted an annual public allowance set, for 2004, at $1.75 for each vote the party received in the last general election. While Chrétien's reforms turned out to be only the first step in a series of reforms that would be extended (and partially transformed) under Stephen Harper during the emergence of the fifth party system, they were significant for the way in which they

extended the logic of understanding parties as pub
definition, are legitimate targets of both public regul
cing. In fact, implicit in Chrétien's regulatory framew
that there is a public good associated with putting
more level playing field in terms of financing and spe

The emergence of the fourth party system was
ideological polarization and conflict (Koop and Bit
election played out as a virtual referendum on Briar
Canada–United States Free Trade Agreement. Over
while social movement organizations related to the e
and anti-racism were involved in unprecedented lev
and engagement with partisan politics, the Reform P
pion its unique blend of neoliberal challenges to the s
ment and socially conservative populist critiques of pr
(Laycock 2002). Reform also challenged the notion t
served by a governing paradigm that understands Can
eral, multicultural, and bilingual political community
reforms that focus on responding to the demands of
riginal nationalists (Patten 1999). In the 1993 electio
their agenda of free trade and aggressive reductions
(Rice and Prince 1993), the Liberals campaigned on
that raised doubts about Canada's entry into the Nort
Agreement (NAFTA), emphasized the stimulative p
promised infrastructure programs and public spendi
nomic growth and job creation (Liberal Party of Cana
next two years the Chrétien Liberals moved to embrac
tion and support the processes of continentalization w
son and Lachapelle 2006). Then, in February 1995, I
Martin shocked observers by introducing what was a
nomically conservative budget of the postwar era. Tha
the idea of attacking the federal deficit through stru
operation of government and implementing major c
to fund health, postsecondary education, and social
of Finance 1995). The Liberal government had em
revolution, and even Stephen Harper declared the Ch
be "more conservative on most issues than the previ
servative government" of Brian Mulroney (Harper a
39). Thus, ideological conflict and polarization fade
the fourth party system (1995 to 2003) came to be
leaning neoliberal governing paradigm. Long after the
aggressive attacks on the Keynesian welfare state were

neoliberal discursive frame guided core social and economic policies, even proposals for social reinvestment.

Canada's Fifth Party System

When the Canadian Alliance and the PCs merged and formed the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) in 2003, many observers assumed that the reuniting of partisan conservatives marked the further congealment of Canada's fourth party system. Today, however, there is a developing consensus that 2003 actually marked the end of that system's heyday. Between 2003 and 2013 the fourth party system unravelled and a new fifth party system emerged (Koop and Bittner 2013). In terms of the contours of electoral competition, the Harper Conservatives successfully reduced the governing Liberals to minority status in 2004, won minority governments in 2006 and 2008, and in 2011 formed the first Conservative majority government since the Mulroney era. While the new Conservative Party was gaining electoral strength under the leadership of Stephen Harper, the Liberals transitioned from an era defined by the long-term leadership of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien to a period of rapid leadership changes: Paul Martin (2003–06), Stéphane Dion (2006–08), Michael Ignatieff (2008–11), and Bob Rae (2011–13). The elections of 2006, 2008, and 2011 saw the CPC's electoral support grow from 36.3 per cent to 39.6 per cent, giving Harper just enough support to form a majority government. Even more striking was the shifting balance of support for the opposition parties. The once powerful Liberal Party saw its support drop from 30.2 per cent in 2006 to a historic low of 18.9 per cent in 2011, while NDP support grew from 17.5 per cent to 30.6 per cent of the vote, winning 103 seats and Official Opposition status in 2011. The Bloc, for its part, was devastated in 2011: after winning between 38 and 54 Quebec seats in each election since 1993, the party was reduced to a mere four seats. Adding to the historic character of the 2011 election was the election of the first Green Party MP, Elizabeth May. This historic realignment was at least as significant as the 1993 election. In fact, the apparent reduction in the number of electorally competitive parties in 2011 led some scholars to speculate that the fifth party system might be a two-party system in which a united right (Conservative) would be pitted against a united left (NDP) (Koop and Bittner 2013, 316). But, in an era of virtual parties whose character and electoral prospects can be transformed by a simple change of leader, the death of NDP leader Jack Layton in 2011 and the selection of Justin Trudeau as Liberal leader in 2013 were game-changers.

Despite the effective parliamentary performance of the new NDP leader Tom Mulcair, excitement generated by Trudeau's selection as Liberal leader

boosted the Liberal Party into first place in opinion while the NDP sank, once again to third place. In th Party was able to rebuild its campaign and fundraisi as the 2015 campaign approached, large numbers of rethinking their preferences. Polls indicated at least tw wanted to vote for change but were increasingly unce they preferred. At the same time, almost one-third of supported the Harper Conservatives and rejected all c tives. One month out from the 19 October election, were virtually tied in opinion polls. As election day Justin Trudeau gained the momentum required to be agent of change. The Liberals won 39.5 per cent of double what they won in 2011—and secured 184 Commons, enough for a solid majority. The NDP dro of the vote, which is still at the high end of their hist For their part, the Harper Conservatives dropped fi 31.9 per cent support. While the Bloc and Greens bo 1, respectively—there was no sense that either party more than a fairly marginalized minor party. As such, Harper era to an end, producing a distribution of vote ficially, was similar to many elections of the third part

Despite the altered character of partisan competi relative strength of the parties, the 2015 campaign re distinct characteristics of Canada's fifth party system a the beginning of the heyday of that system. Althoug maintains that, at the discursive level, the Trudeau to fund investments in public infrastructure by runni deficits marked a decisive break from the Harper Co agenda, consideration of the full range of major party p that the fifth party system, like the fourth, continues t peting versions of an essentially neoliberal governin commitments of "rollback neoliberalism"—which do 1990s and continue to motivate many Conservatives— by "roll-out neoliberalism" (Patten 2013). Still, the co neoliberal model of governance remain largely intact.

The most novel and significant features of the marketing-oriented politics and the permanent ca the permanent campaign refers to much more than campaign readiness, pseudo-campaigning, and intens is often observed during minority parliaments, when circumstance to be prepared for an election at any

campaign is, for parties and governments, a state of being in which the strategies and tactics of elections are used between elections regardless of how unlikely it is that an election could be called. The now-powerful campaign and media professionals of party leaders' entourages serve to reinforce the hyper-partisan politics of the permanent campaign. They ensure parties engage in perpetual fundraising and employ media and advertising strategies that give the party, its leader, and its messages prominence in the news media, on the Web, and in social media. They ensure that the lens of strategic political communications and message control determines even the most mundane activities of politicians and their parties (Flanagan 2014). The permanent campaign has transformed the relationship between partisanship, campaigning, and the processes of governance. It has been increasingly common for government resources to be deployed in support of electoral goals. Policy making, government communications, and senior public service appointments have been progressively politicized, and partisan political staffs have emerged as a major force in governance (Aucoin 2012). The need for organizational discipline in support of strategic precision in an era of permanent campaign has reinforced the empowerment of strong leaders supported by an almost military-style hierarchy in the organizational structure and operations of parties (Flanagan 2013).

Marketing-oriented politics, as Marland and Giasson explain in this volume, has emerged as modern electoral–professional parties developed the capacity to employ polling and big data analytics to develop the sort of fine-grained understanding of the electorate that allows researchers to identify the characteristics, interests, and political attitudes of clusters of like-minded voters. As in the world of consumer marketing, parties now employ research to develop "market intelligence" in the task of "market segmentation" and, importantly, they are willing to alter not only their rhetoric but also their policies and programs to appeal to those segments of the electorate that, when mobilized, have the potential to alter election results. Canadian parties' embrace of a marketing orientation disrupts many aspects of traditional brokerage politics, including the focus on accommodating regional interests within a unified conception of the national interest, as well as the desire to appease flashpoints of political tension and avoid the ideological fringes. It is not, however, identical to the catch-all politics of big-tent parties that strive to use persuasive campaigns to attract the support of as many voters as possible by targeting appeals to a range of traditional supporters and new electoral groupings who could be enticed to come on board (Carty et al. 2013). Instead, marketing-oriented parties are unique in, first, their willingness to shift from a focus on persuasion to designing and framing policies that appeal to key segments of the electorate and, second,

their embrace of the notion that the easiest and most
cal power is to build a "minimum winning coalition"
supporters (Flanagan 2014, 71). In the context of Car
single-member plurality electoral system with multipl
it is accepted that as little as 39 per cent of the vote
majority government—indeed, with only two-thirds c
turning out to vote, a party that carefully targets appe
the electorate might be able to achieve a minimum w
even fewer votes. Thus, rather than producing catch-a
orientation might be consistent with what could be
politics." This realization is transforming the strategi
ties, including their approach to political communic
of data-driven microtargeting, and, for some, their wil
wedge politics.

Wedge politics involves strategic political interventi
fully divisive and polarizing. The goal is to galvanize
ers who can be counted on for fundraising and elec
opponents are enraged (and demonized) in the proces
2014). Employing wedge politics—as the Conservative
its repeal of the long-gun registry, much of its tough-c
the 2015 promise to ban the wearing of niqabs at citize
risky because the outcomes of inflaming flashpoints o
unpredictable. As such, while the market orientation
party system makes wedge politics more likely, this sort
not inevitable.

The impact of the permanent campaign and market
the way parties approach strategic political communica
ment, and political marketing is centrally important to
fifth party system. Parties now view the media as a m
effort to limit the capacity of news organizations to set
snub or bypass media outlets that are viewed as nega
their leader or message. The Conservatives, when in
ited and managed the media's access to ministers and
No one spoke publicly without fairly high-level appr
regularly avoided the parliamentary press gallery while
able to more conservative talk radio programs, regio
sion programs, and specialized news media, such as OM
serve identifiable ethnic communities that have becom
the Conservative Party (Ditchburn 2014). In their effo
news stories and manage the longevity and political
negative stories, all parties have become quite profici

news media with "information subsidies" in the form of prewritten quotes, pseudo-events, and photo opportunities that are little more than prepackaged political news stories (Marland 2014). Moreover, when in government the Harper Conservatives displayed an unprecedented willingness to allow strategic political goals to trump the legitimate governing purposes of government—not party—communications (Thomas 2013).

As the fifth party system was emerging, the Harper Conservatives were at the forefront of a revolution in political campaigning: the rise of data-driven microtargeting. All of Canada's major parties now rely on massive databases, data analytics and predictive modelling, and data-driven microtargeting to maximize their capacity to identify and mobilize key clusters of voters. The Conservatives were first to develop their database, the Constituent Information Management System (CIMS), in 2004. In the 2006 and 2008 general elections the CIMS database was effectively employed in battleground constituencies where centrally coordinated voter contact programs were used to identify and get supporters to the polls. By 2011 all three major parties had roughly similar databases, but the Conservative database contained considerably more personal information on voters and it was employed most effectively. Thus, as they prepared for the 2015 election, the NDP and Liberals overhauled their databases (known as Populus and Liberalist, respectively) and invested heavily in training local campaign teams to collect and employ data in voter persuasion and mobilization. Both parties developed in-house analytics operations, with the Liberals spending three times what they had invested in data and data analytics in 2011 (Patten, in press). Developing and mining party databases allows campaign teams to identify target markets of voters to whom they can tailor boutique policy commitments and political communications (Delacourt 2013). With this increased market intelligence, parties are shifting from emphasizing broad appeals to narrowcasting targeted appeals that will, increasingly, rely on communications via social media. When market research and voter databases are used in highly focused direct voter contact programs, a local candidate's support can increase by 5 to 10 percentage points on election day, enough to ensure victory in a battleground constituency (Flanagan 2010).

As the fifth party system took shape, the Conservatives' effective use of database technology and targeted messages in fundraising motivated changes to the legal regulation of party financing. Just two years after the Chrétien government's dramatic 2003 overhaul of the regulations, Harper instituted an all-out ban on corporate and union contributions to political parties, even at the local level, and further reduced the maximum contributions individuals can make to parties, candidates, constituency associations, and contestants in local nomination and leadership races; as of 2015, that limit

was $1,500. Then, as Young explains in this volume, ernment made changes to the structure of public fina leaving tax credits for donations and the partial reimbu expenses in place, they committed to phasing out the subsidy. The last of these subsidies was paid in April 2 these changes is to require parties to be more aggressi numbers of small and mid-size contributions. Wealthy and unions are no longer able to support parties or fu large donations that were once common. Thus, the will be those who effectively use databases and speedy cations to encourage multiple donations, sometimes versies that arise around divisive wedge issues.

Conclusion

Canadian political scientists have dedicated consider rating a rich and encompassing conception of the p looks beyond the number of parties, party competiti of voters in support of those parties. The distinctive system include the organizational structure and op our parties; the legal framework of rules governing p tics; the accepted norms of leadership, campaigning, the relationship of parties and campaigning to gover tems of political representation; and finally the discu defines the dominant conception of the Canadian and the core issues, interests, and identities that are debate. This chapter's review of the evolution of Cana could only provide a partial and limited overview of glimpses into the character of these systems reveal a lo character of party politics in Canada. One observatio others: after generations of students being taught abo and brokerage parties, this chapter highlighted the fa related to the new marketing orientation of political p the tradition of brokerage-style party politics. Today, party system, Canadian politics is no longer accon politics. Carty et al. (2013) contend that Canadian p some time, catch-all rather than brokerage parties. N the permanent campaign and the development of s technologies and microtargeting, party politics in Ca by a new marketing-oriented politics—and catch-en brokerage politics.

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Suggested Readings

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Notes

1 The Patrons of Industry was a farmers' organization that nominated candidates for election in a number of federal and Ontario provincial elections during the 1890s. The McCarthyites were a slate of candidates who supported the anti-French and anti-Catholic views of the Canadian parliamentarian Dalton McCarthy and his Imperial Federation League.

2 Stratarchical parties are characterized by a diffusion of power among and within different strata (or levels) of the party organization. Rather than all aspects of the party being shaped by centralized command and control, there is tolerance of autonomy, local initiative, and intraparty competition. Lines of communication and control between branches of the party are weaker than would be found in a hierarchical organization (Eldersveld 1964).

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