

Canadian Public Administration publique du Canada

*Analyzing national, provincial, territorial, municipal, Indigenous
and international governance practice in a changing world*

*Analyser la pratique de la gouvernance nationale, provinciale, territoriale,
municipale, autochtone et internationale dans un monde en évolution*

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& Public Administration Research & Practice

Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux

Multilevel Governance & Innovation Policy

Partisan Politics & Fiscal Policy in Canadian Provinces

Has Quebec's ALMP Mix Remained Relatively Generous?

RESEARCH NOTE / NOTE DE RECHERCHE

Evolving Work of Canadian Parliamentary Caucus Research Offices

NEW FRONTIERS / NOUVELLES FRONTIÈRES

The Promise & Limitations of Participatory Budgeting

Managing the Teaching Pivot during COVID-19

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Canadian Public Administration
Administration publique du Canada

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Canadian Public Administration/Administration publique du Canada (ISSN 0008-4840 [print], ISSN 1754-7121 [online]) is published quarterly on behalf of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada by Wiley Subscription Services, Inc., a Wiley Company, 111 River St., Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774. *Administration publique du Canada* (ISSN 0008-4840 [imprimée], ISSN 1754-7121 [en ligne]) est publiée une fois par trimestre au nom de l'Institut d'administration publique du Canada par Wiley Subscription Services, Inc., a Wiley Company, 111 River St., Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774.



ISSN 0008-4840

June/juin 2020

We are grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for financial support in the publication of this Journal/Nous remercions le Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada de l'aide financière qu'il apporte à la publication de cette Revue.

published quarterly
publiée trimestriellement

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"We acknowledge the assistance of the Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program toward our mailing costs." Nous remercions l'aide financière du gouvernement du Canada, par l'entremise du Programme d'aide aux publications (PAP), pour nos dépenses d'envoi postal.

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More information: ipac2020iapc.ca

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Canadian Public Administration Administration publique du Canada

SEPTEMBER/SEPTEMBRE 2020

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**The COVID-19 pandemic crisis
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and public administration**

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Canadian governments are dealing with the impact of the unprecedented scope of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given that there will be “no turning back” to previous ways of handling public sector governance, what do Canadian and international scholars suggest that governments and public administration researchers should focus on as we look beyond the immediate crisis?

Les gouvernements canadiens font face aux conséquences de la pandémie du COVID-19, d'une ampleur sans précédent. Étant donné qu'il n'y aura pas de « retour en arrière » dans le secteur public, quelles sont les suggestions de spécialistes canadiens et internationaux pour les gouvernements et les chercheurs en administration publique?

**Beyond COVID-19: Five
commentaries on reimagining
governance for future crises
and resilience**

Astrid Brousselle,
Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly,
Christopher Kennedy,
Susan Phillips, Kevin Quigley,
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Notwithstanding the unprecedented scope of the COVID-19 pandemic, many observers believe there will be similar crises and realized risks during the 21st century. What do Canadian and international scholars suggest that governments and public administration researchers should focus on as we look beyond the immediate crisis with respect to the architecture of the state and handling governance risks, the relationship of governments with civil society, international and other borders governments manage, and furthering population and community resilience?

Bien que la crise COVID-19 actuelle soit sans précédent, nombreux sont ceux qui pensent que d'autres risques et crises surviendront au cours du 21^e siècle. Quelles sont les priorités que les experts canadiens et internationaux identifient, alors que l'on se commence à regarder au-delà de la crise immédiate? Quelles sont leurs recommandations pour la recherche et les gouvernements en ce qui concerne l'architecture de l'État, la gestion des risques, les relations avec la société civile, les frontières ; et sur comment promouvoir la résilience de la population et des communautés?

Original Articles / Articles originaux:

Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux : Synthèse des contributions canadiennes à la recherche Étienne Charbonneau, Geneviève Morin, Itizez Slama et Fatou Bèye/409

Cet article examine les études qui ont utilisé les données du Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux (SAFF) pour l'avancement des connaissances en sciences sociales. Que réserve l'avenir pour les SAFF? Quels pourrait être leur potentiel pour la recherche en matière de gestion stratégique des ressources humaines au Canada?

This article reviews studies that used the Canadian Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) data to promote social science knowledge. What might the future hold in store for the PSES? What opportunities might there be for strategic human resources research in Canada?

Multilevel governance through a strategic lens: Innovation policy delivery in Ontario Charles Conteh/429

The multilevel governance literature has matured into a widely used analytical framework for investigating policy processes that span multiple tiers of jurisdiction, but still has some gaps. Can a strategic construct of multilevel governance focusing on informal, but longer-time horizons of interjurisdictional cooperation and multi-scalar partnerships, provide richer insight to how Canadian innovation policy is delivered in southern Ontario?

La documentation sur la gouvernance multiniveaux a évolué en un cadre d'analyse largement utilisé pour étudier les processus d'élaboration de politiques couvrant plusieurs niveaux d'administration, mais elle comporte encore des lacunes. Un concept stratégique pour la gouvernance multiniveaux qui est axé sur une collaboration intergouvernementale informelle, mais sur des périodes plus longues, et des partenariats multiscalaires peut-il permettre de mieux saisir la prestation de politique innovante canadienne dans le sud de l'Ontario?

Partisan politics and fiscal policy in the Canadian provinces Rodney Haddow/450

This article evaluates the impact of partisanship on provincial fiscal policies over business and electoral cycles. Differences were found between the fiscal policies of left-wing governments and conservative ones, but less so between most Liberal administrations and conservative ones, and left-wing fiscal policies lost their distinctiveness during the last third of the study period. What explains these patterns?

Cet article évalue l'incidence de l'esprit partisan sur les politiques budgétaires provinciales au cours des cycles économiques et électoraux. Nous avons trouvé des différences entre les politiques budgétaires des gouvernements de gauche et celles des partis conservateurs, mais moins entre la plupart des administrations libérales et conservatrices. Néanmoins, les politiques budgétaires de la gauche ont perdu leur spécificité durant le dernier tiers de la période étudiée. Comment peut-on expliquer ces tendances?

Quebec's resilient redistribution model: Activation policies in the 2010s

Shannon Dinan and
Alain Noël/473

Quebec has a more ambitious, redistributive social model with an elaborate set of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) than the rest of Canada. Since the 2008 recession, most OECD countries implemented retrenchment measures, market enforcement, and individual action plans to ALMPs. What does provincial, federal, and OECD data say about whether these trends affected Quebec's ALMP?

Comparativement au reste du Canada, le Québec est doté d'un modèle social de redistribution plus ambitieux, qui comprend un ensemble détaillé de Politiques actives du marché du travail (PAMT). Depuis la récession économique de 2008, la plupart des pays de l'OCDE ont mis en œuvre des mesures de repli, la police des marchés, et des plans d'action personnalisés dans leurs PAMT. Que nous apprennent les données provinciales, fédérales et de l'OCDE quant aux répercussions de ces tendances sur les PAMT du Québec?

Research Note / Note de recherche

The work of Canadian political staffers in parliamentary caucus research offices

R. Paul Wilson/498

This research note examines the evolving organization, work, and function of parliamentary caucus research offices since the 1970s. Do they primarily support the caucus as a whole or party leaders? Have they focused on providing policy research or do they serve other functions? Does the role of these offices change when a party forms the government or remains in Opposition?

Cette note de recherche étudie l'évolution de l'organisation, du travail et de la fonction des bureaux de recherche des caucus parlementaires depuis les années 1970. Leur soutien va-t-il principalement au caucus dans son ensemble ou aux chefs de parti? Sont-ils axés sur la recherche en politiques, ou servent-ils d'autres fonctions? Le rôle de ces bureaux change-t-il lorsqu'un parti est au pouvoir, ou lorsqu'il reste dans l'Opposition?

New Frontiers / Nouvelles frontières

The promise and limitations of participatory budgeting

Wesley Petite/522

Participatory budgeting as a public engagement tool has spread around the world to great acclaim among many. Recent scholarship, however, has provided a much-needed critical lens to this practice, asking: Is participatory budgeting as empowering, inclusive, and progressive as its adherents claim? This New Frontiers contribution highlights important insights from Canadian cases and critical scholarship and suggests newlines of research to pursue.

Le budget participatif en temps qu'outil d'engagement du public s'est répandu partout dans le monde avec grand succès parmi bien d'autres. Cependant, des recherches récentes ont apporté à cette pratique un œil critique fort nécessaire en posant la question: Le budget participatif est-il aussi responsabilisant, inclusif, et progressiste que le prétendent ses adeptes? Cette contribution de Nouvelles frontières souligne d'importantes informations à partir de cas canadiens et d'un travail critique, en proposant de nouveaux sujets de recherche à poursuivre.

Teaching public administration in the COVID-19 era: Preliminary lessons learned

Jean-Francois Savard,
Isabelle Caron, Kathy Brock,
Robert Shepherd/528

In March 2020, universities in Canada suddenly required that teaching move from the classroom to the virtual world in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On June 2, 2020, the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA) held a virtual workshop to review this experience. What was learned about teaching public policy and public administration online? What are the possibilities for online delivery? Is this a passing phenomenon or unfolding transformation?

En mars 2020, en réponse à la pandémie du COVID-19, les universités canadiennes ont soudain exigé que l'enseignement passe de la salle de classe au monde virtuel. Le 2 juin 2020, l'Association canadienne des programmes en administration publique (ACPAP) a organisé un atelier virtuel pour analyser cette expérience. Qu'a-t-on appris sur l'enseignement des politiques publiques et de l'administration publique en ligne? Quelles sont les possibilités pour une prestation en ligne? Est-ce que cela constitue un phénomène passager ou une transformation émergente?

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ISSN 0008-4840 (Print)

ISSN 1754-7121 (Online)

For submission instructions, subscription and all other information visit: www.wileyonlinelibrary.com

View this journal online at wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/capa

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ISSN 0008-4840 (impression)

ISSN 1754-7121 (en ligne)

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Production Editor: Jacquelin Rajan (email: CAPA@wiley.com).

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Evert A. Lindquist

The COVID-19 pandemic crisis and repositioning governance: Implications for public administration research and practice

The COVID-19 pandemic surely falls into the category of a “wicked problem.” Governments have not only been trying to respond to immediate public-health demands but also to “get out in front” of the epidemic, restricting international travel and movement of peoples within Canada, and readying institutional capacity for different levels and scenarios of outbreak and serious illness, all while dealing with a fluid international order. But the pandemic cannot be thought of as only a public-health crisis, no matter how grave, fast-moving, and beguiling: governments have launched massive regulatory, budgetary, and other policy interventions into every policy domain and sector in order to blunt their effects on workers, firms, and non-profit organizations. Different crises and comprehensive government responses have been invoked to describe these massive government interventions: the Global Financial Crisis, the SARS epidemic, mobilization for WWII and the subsequent Marshall Plan, and even the announcement and implementation of the June 1993 restructuring of the Government of Canada, a massive reorganization which took months and years to work through. The sobering reality for governments and our society is that the COVID-19 challenge seems to embrace all of these together.

In his recent book, *Strategies for Governing: Reinventing Public Administration for a Dangerous Century* (Cornell University Press 2019), Alasdair Roberts called for reinvigoration of public administration research arguing that public-management research has focused on meso-level on specific policies and programs at the expense of research on the overall directions of governance and public administration at the macro level. Roberts suggests that there has been insufficient recognition of the distinctive priorities and balances struck by governments in different parts of the world driven variously by crises, wars, and societal shifts which involved striking new domestic policy balances, new international trade and diplomacy strategies, and reforming administrative capacities within and across levels of government. Even though his book was published before the COVID-19 epidemic struck, it is timely and significant because there can be no doubt that we are amidst a significant inflection point: public administration and governance systems are being tested and will move off in new directions as governments institute stabilization, transitional, and new policy regimes. Much will be written

on how governments, citizens, business, and the non-profit and voluntary sector responded to this latest massive public-health and related crises, whether they could have been better prepared, more quickly responded, better coordinated, and more effective.

With this as the backdrop, I invited a mix of members of our public administration research community to look ahead and consider the implications of the COVID-19 crisis and aftermath for the trajectory of Canadian governance and public administration in the medium to longer term, and the implications for public administration research (imagine proposing to SSHRC a funding program or study teams for IPAC). This collection of commentaries seeks to consider the challenges for government, governance, and public administration research as we come out of the immediate public-health crisis and survey the economic carnage, mounting government deficits and debt, hardened borders and damage to trade and migration, and the discovery of new ways of working online and supporting citizens and groups across the full spectrum of sectors (business, non-profit, hospitals, schools, governments, Indigenous communities, the homeless, etc.).

The first suite of commentaries variously center on the governance and reform challenges posed by COVID-19 for government-as-executive. *Arjen Boin* and *Paul 't Hart*, reflecting on recent experience of the Netherlands and other countries and their vast knowledge of crisis leadership around the world, point to the limits of social solidarity and expert knowledge for governments when coming out of crises as they appraise and recalibrate policy mixes, and balance the equally important but contenting needs for learning and accountability. *Jonathan Craft* and *John Halligan* observe that Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and United Kingdom not only had different strategies for addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, but also had distinctly different ways of structuring policy advice, suggesting that such advisory systems should become more agile, better able to handle diverse streams of advice, and more transparent. *Kathy Brock* and *Lori Turnbull* note that executive branches are expected to act quickly and decisively in crisis situations, which often requires suspending normal accountability repertoires of Parliamentary systems. They explore whether variation on the *Emergencies Act* might have served to better hold the executive to account and review performance than a multiparty agreement struck by the minority Liberal government with three of four opposition parties, suggesting more research is needed. *Geneviève Tellier* briefly reviews the responses of Canadian governments to the Global Financial Crisis and COVID-19 pandemic and suggests that, while they acted concertedly and coordinated well with other governments, each brought inequality to the fore and point to more research needed for a universal basic income, who benefits from crisis-related expenditures and tax relief, and strategies for reducing economic inequalities. Finally, *Jeffrey Roy* sees the pandemic as an accelerator and disrupter

of digital government initiatives, calling for more research on: digital tools superseding other service delivery channels; the effectiveness of more horizontal, networked and collaborative governance; whether open government principles can lead to better oversight and accountability; and how pandemic-related data/cyber-security challenges intersect with national security considerations.

The second suite of commentaries considers the challenges confronting governments as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in the decades to come with increasingly broad lens: moving from the architecture of the state; to government-civil society relations to deliver services and work with and include increasingly diverse citizens and communities; to develop new repertoires to inform governance strategies for managing risk; to how the COVID crisis has caused us to reconceive international and sub-national borders; and to anticipate additional significant crises arising from climate change and related challenges. *Alasdair Roberts* summarizes the key themes in *Strategies for Governing* and suggests that, going forward, more public administration research should address questions about the architecture of the state and government. He reminds us of seminal Canadian research which has done just that and calls for a new generation of Canadian scholars to take up such questions. *Susan Phillips* focuses on the critical role of civil society reminding us the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the charitable and non-profit (and often largely voluntary) sector, the role of communities in mobilizing to call for change on social issues and support those in need; and to recognize and address new forms of inequality as the nature of work, employment and services change. *Kevin Quigley* considers how governance risks from pandemics, terrorism, climate change, etc., can be categorized and better anticipated, and the effects of imperfect foresight from experts and public reactions to events and government interventions, including the possibility of reduced public trust. He suggests that public administration scholars should engage more with the risk governance and foresight literature. *Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly* reviews how, despite years of reducing friction across borders to foster trade and movement of people, capital, and information, governments have rapidly and variously closed borders. He shows how the COVID-19 pandemic leads one to reconsider how new “borders” have been drawn and where they need to be drawn further, calling for more public administration researchers to work on border governance. *Astrid Brousselle*, *Chris Kennedy*, and *Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly*, like *Alasdair Roberts* and *Kevin Quigley*, see COVID-19 as only the most recent in a series of crises that will challenge governments, calling for more attention to be paid to fostering population and community resilience, and new national and international governance strategies for dealing with them.

Given the “pivot” to online delivery of courses in March 2020 experienced by all scholars at Canadian universities, I invited the organizers of

a timely online workshop hosted by the Canadian Association of Program in Public Administration on June 2, 2020 on “Teaching Public Policy and Public Administration in Times of COVID-19” to provide a summary of lessons learned. I want to thank *Jean-Francois Savard, Isabelle Caron, Kathy Brock, and Robert Shepherd* for agreeing to share their observations before they recovered from having hosted a very successful day-long event. Given that teaching online was truly a “new frontier” for many colleagues, it seems appropriate that it appears as the second contribution to our *New Frontiers* feature edited by Associate Editor, *Carey Doberstein*. And, stepping back still further, we should thank our Managing Editor, *Christy Paddick*, for managing the “pivot” for this entire issue as her household dealt with new patterns of work and learning during the last few months.

These COVID-inspired contributions are only a sample of the different issues which could be and will get taken up: a significant wave of research will wash over this and other journals in the years to come. The rest of this issue resonates in interesting ways with this focus on the COVID pandemic but, of course, were submitted and accepted for publication well before the crisis. Several articles review the Canadian experience with the federal Public Service Employee Survey (*Étienne Charbonneau, Geneviève Morin, Itizez Slama, and Fatou Bèye*), innovation policy and multi-level governance (*Charles Conteh*), whether provincial fiscal policy strategies reflect governments’ political orientations (*Rodney Haddow*), and whether Quebec’s relatively generous active labour-market policy-mix within Canada has withstood retrenchment in recent years (*Shannon Dinan and Alain Noël*). *Paul Wilson’s* research note provides a history and appraisal of the evolution of Parliamentary caucus research bureaux, while in the first *New Frontiers*, *Wesley Petite* reviews the literature and state of participatory budgeting. All these contributions provide interesting historical perspectives on the evolution of public administration practices and policies, which will be interesting to revisit in the aftermath of the COVID-19 experience.

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Si la pandémie du COVID-19 s’apparente sans aucun doute à un « problème complexe », on ne peut toutefois pas la considérer comme une simple crise de santé publique, aussi dangereuse, rapide et rusée soit-elle. Différentes crises et réponses gouvernementales globales ont été évoquées pour décrire ces interventions gouvernementales massives : la crise financière mondiale, l’épidémie de SRAS, la mobilisation pour la Seconde Guerre mondiale et le plan Marshall qui a suivi, et même l’annonce et la mise en œuvre de la restructuration du gouvernement du Canada en juin 1993, une réorganisation massive qui a mis des mois et des années à se concrétiser. La sombre réalité à laquelle doivent faire face les gouvernements et notre société est que

le défi COVID-19 englobe tous ces éléments ensemble. Non seulement les gouvernements ont essayé de répondre aux demandes immédiates de santé publique, mais ils tentent aussi de « prendre le devant » de l'épidémie, en élaborant et en travaillant sur différents scénarios, en limitant les voyages internationaux et les mouvements de personnes au Canada, et en préparant la capacité institutionnelle pour différents niveaux d'épidémie et de maladie grave. Les gouvernements ont lancé des interventions réglementaires, budgétaires et autres politiques massives dans tous les domaines et secteurs afin d'atténuer leurs effets sur les travailleurs, les entreprises et les organisations à but non lucratif, tout en faisant face à l'ordre international.

Dans son récent livre, *Strategies for Governing: Reinventing Public Administration for a Dangerous Century* (Cornell University Press, 2020), Alasdair Roberts en appelle à une redynamisation de la recherche sur l'administration publique en affirmant que la recherche en gestion publique s'est concentrée au niveau méso sur des politiques et des programmes spécifiques, et ce, au détriment de la recherche sur les orientations générales de la gouvernance et de l'administration publique au niveau macro. Roberts sous-entend qu'il n'y a pas eu suffisamment de reconnaissance des priorités et des équilibres distinctifs établis par les gouvernements dans différentes parties du monde, motivés de diverses manières par des crises, des guerres et des changements sociétaux impliquant de trouver de nouveaux équilibres politiques nationaux, de nouvelles stratégies de commerce international et de diplomatie, et de réformer les capacités administratives au sein et entre les paliers de gouvernement. Quoique son livre ait été publié avant le début de l'épidémie du COVID-19, il est opportun et important car il ne fait aucun doute que nous sommes au milieu d'un point d'inflexion crucial : l'administration publique et les systèmes de gouvernance sont éprouvés et prendront de nouvelles orientations à mesure que les gouvernements instituent de nouveaux régimes de stabilisation, de transition et de politiques. L'on écrira beaucoup sur la façon dont les gouvernements, les citoyens, les entreprises et le secteur à but non lucratif et bénévole ont réagi à cette dernière crise massive de santé publique et les crises connexes... S'ils auraient pu être mieux préparés, mieux coordonnés, plus efficaces et réagir plus rapidement.

Dans ce contexte, j'ai invité une combinaison de membres de notre communauté de recherche en administration publique à regarder vers l'avenir et à examiner les implications de la crise du COVID-19 et ses conséquences pour la trajectoire de la gouvernance et de l'administration publique canadiennes à moyen et long termes, ainsi que les implications pour la recherche en administration publique (imaginez proposer un programme de financement au CRSH ou des équipes d'étude pour l'IAPC). Cette collection de commentaires vise à examiner les défis pour la recherche sur le gouvernement, la gouvernance et l'administration publique alors que nous sortons de la crise immédiate de santé publique et que nous sondons le carnage économique,

la montée des déficits et de la dette gouvernementaux, le durcissement des frontières, les dommages causés au commerce et à la migration, ainsi que la découverte de nouvelles façons de travailler en ligne et de soutenir les citoyens et les groupes à travers tout l'éventail de secteurs (entreprises, organismes à but non lucratif, hôpitaux, écoles, gouvernements, communautés autochtones, sans-abri, etc.).

La première série de commentaires est diversement axée sur les défis de gouvernance et de réforme posés par le COVID-19 pour le gouvernement en tant qu'exécutif. En s'appuyant sur l'expérience récente des Pays-Bas et d'autres pays et sur leur vaste connaissance du leadership de crise dans le monde, *Arjen Boin* et *Paul 't Hart* soulignent les limites de la solidarité sociale et des connaissances d'experts pour les gouvernements à la sortie de crises, alors qu'ils évaluent et ajustent les combinaisons de politiques et tentent d'équilibrer les besoins, tout aussi importants mais concurrents, en matière d'apprentissage et d'imputabilité. *Jonathan Craft* et *John Halligan* observent que l'Australie, le Canada, la Nouvelle-Zélande et le Royaume-Uni avaient non seulement des stratégies différentes pour faire face à la pandémie de COVID-19, mais aussi des façons distinctes de structurer les conseils d'orientation stratégique; ils suggèrent que ces systèmes consultatifs devraient devenir plus agiles, mieux à même de gérer divers flux de conseils et plus transparents. *Kathy Brock* et *Lori Turnbull* constatent que les branches exécutives sont censées agir rapidement et de manière décisive dans les situations de crise, ce qui nécessite souvent la suspension des répertoires de responsabilité normaux des systèmes parlementaires. Elles étudient si une modification de la *Loi sur les mesures d'urgence* aurait pu mieux obliger l'exécutif à rendre des comptes et à examiner le rendement qu'un accord multipartite conclu par le gouvernement libéral minoritaire avec trois des quatre partis d'opposition, ce qui sous-entend la nécessité de recherches supplémentaires. *Geneviève Tellier* passe brièvement en revue les réponses des gouvernements canadiens à la crise financière mondiale et à la pandémie de COVID-19 et suggère que, bien qu'ils aient agi de manière concertée et bien coordonnée avec d'autres gouvernements, chacun a mis l'inégalité au premier plan; elle indique que davantage de recherches sont nécessaires pour un revenu de base universel, qui bénéficie des dépenses et des allègements fiscaux liés à la crise, et des stratégies de réduction des inégalités économiques. Enfin, *Jeffrey Roy* considère la pandémie comme étant un accélérateur et un perturbateur des initiatives du gouvernement numérique, et en appelle à plus de recherche sur : les outils numériques remplaçant les autres modes de prestation de services; l'efficacité d'une gouvernance plus horizontale, réseautée et collaborative; les principes de gouvernement ouvert peuvent-ils conduire à une meilleure surveillance et imputabilité? Et la façon dont les données/problèmes de cybersécurité liés à la pandémie recoupent les considérations de sécurité nationale.

La deuxième série de commentaires examine les défis auxquels sont confrontés les gouvernements à la suite de la pandémie du COVID-19 et dans les décennies à venir avec un objectif de plus en plus large : sortir de l'architecture de l'État; créer des relations entre le gouvernement et la société civile pour fournir des services en incluant des citoyens et des communautés de plus en plus diversifiés; élaborer de nouveaux répertoires pour éclairer les stratégies de gouvernance sur la gestion des risques; comment la crise du COVID nous a amenés à repenser les frontières internationales et infranationales?; et anticiper d'autres crises importantes résultant du changement climatique et des défis connexes. *Alasdair Roberts* résume les thèmes clés de son livre *Strategies for Governing* et suggère qu'à l'avenir, davantage de recherches en administration publique devraient aborder les questions relatives à l'architecture de l'État et du gouvernement. Il nous rappelle la recherche canadienne fondamentale qui a fait exactement cela et incite une nouvelle génération d'universitaires canadiens à se pencher sur ces questions. *Susan Phillips* se concentre sur le rôle crucial de la société civile en nous rappelant les conséquences dévastatrices du COVID-19 sur le secteur caritatif et à but non lucratif (souvent en grande partie bénévole), le rôle des communautés dans la mobilisation pour appeler au changement sur les questions sociales et soutenir ceux qui sont dans le besoin; et enfin de reconnaître et de lutter contre les nouvelles formes d'inégalité dues au changement de nature du travail, de l'emploi et des services. *Kevin Quigley* examine la façon dont les risques de gouvernance liés aux pandémies, au terrorisme, au changement climatique, etc., peuvent être catégorisés et mieux anticipés, les effets d'une prévoyance inadéquate des experts, ainsi que les réactions du public aux événements et aux interventions gouvernementales, y compris la possibilité d'une diminution de confiance de la part de la population. Il conseille aux spécialistes en administration publique de s'intéresser davantage à la littérature sur la gouvernance des risques et la prévoyance. *Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly* examine comment, malgré des années de réduction des frictions transfrontalières pour favoriser le commerce et la circulation des personnes, des capitaux et de l'information, les gouvernements ont rapidement et de diverses manières verrouillé les frontières. Il montre comment la pandémie de COVID-19 a conduit à reconsidérer le traçage de nouvelles « frontières », et le besoin d'élargir ce traçage, et il appelle à plus de chercheurs en administration publique pour travailler sur la gouvernance des frontières. À l'instar d'*Alasdair Roberts* et *Kevin Quigley*, *Astrid Brousselle*, *Chris Kennedy* et *Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly*, considèrent que le COVID-19 n'est que la plus récente d'une série de crises qui mettront au défi les gouvernements, appelant à accorder plus d'attention pour encourager la résilience de la population et des communautés, et à trouver de nouvelles stratégies de gouvernance nationales et internationales pour y faire face.

Compte tenu du « pivot » de la prestation de cours en ligne en mars 2020, qu'ont vécu tous les chercheurs des universités canadiennes, j'ai invité les organisateurs d'un atelier en ligne opportun, organisé par l'Association canadienne des programmes en administration publique le 2 juin 2020 sur le thème « Enseigner les politiques publiques et l'administration publique à l'époque du COVID-19 ». C'était vraiment une « nouvelle frontière » pour de nombreux collègues, qui apparaît comme la deuxième contribution dans notre rubrique *Nouvelles Frontières*, éditée par le rédacteur associé, *Carey Doberstein*. Je tiens à remercier *Jean-François Savard*, *Isabelle Caron*, *Kathy Brock* et *Robert Shepherd* d'avoir accepté de partager leurs observations avant de se remettre d'avoir animé un atelier très réussi. Et, pour remonter encore plus loin, je voudrais remercier tout particulièrement notre rédactrice en chef, *Christy Paddick*, pour avoir géré le « pivot » de tout ce numéro alors que sa famille faisait face à de nouveaux modes de travail et d'apprentissage au cours des derniers mois.

Ces contributions inspirées par le COVID ne représentent qu'un échantillon des différentes questions qui pourraient être et seront abordées : une importante vague de recherche va déferler sur cette revue et d'autres dans les années à venir. Le reste des articles de ce numéro fait écho de diverses manières à cette polarisation sur la pandémie du COVID mais, bien sûr, ont été soumis et acceptés pour publication bien avant la crise. Ces articles analysent l'expérience canadienne avec le Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux (*Étienne Charbonneau*, *Geneviève Morin*, *Itizez Slama* et *Fatou Bèye*); la politique d'innovation et la gouvernance multiniveaux (*Charles Conteh*); si les stratégies de politique fiscale provinciale reflètent les orientations politiques des gouvernements (*Rodney Haddow*); et si la combinaison de politiques actives relativement généreuses du marché du travail du Québec au Canada a résisté aux mesures de repli ces dernières années (*Shannon Dinan* et *Alain Noël*). La note de recherche de *Paul Wilson* présente un historique et une évaluation de l'évolution des bureaux de recherche des caucus parlementaires, tandis que dans « *Nouvelles Frontières* », *Wesley Petite* examine la documentation et l'état de la budgétisation participative. Toutes ces contributions offrent des perspectives historiques intéressantes sur l'évolution des pratiques et des politiques de l'administration publique, qu'il sera intéressant de revisiter au lendemain de l'expérience COVID-19.

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Jeffrey Roy
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Beyond COVID-19: Five commentaries on expert knowledge, executive action, and accountability in governance and public administration

Abstract: Several Canadian and international scholars offer commentaries on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for governments and public service institutions, and fruitful directions for public administration research and practice. This first suite of commentaries focuses on the executive branch, variously considering: the challenge for governments to balance demands for accountability and learning while rethinking policy mixes as social solidarity and expert knowledge increasingly get challenged; how the policy-advisory systems of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and United Kingdom were structured and performed in response to the COVID-19 crisis; whether there are better ways to suspend the accountability repertoires of Parliamentary systems than the multiparty agreement struck by the minority Liberal government with several opposition parties; comparing the Canadian government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Global Financial Crisis and how each has brought the challenge of inequality to the fore; and whether the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated or disrupted digital government initiatives, reinforced traditional public administration values or more open government.

Sommaire : Plusieurs universitaires canadiens et internationaux ont offert des commentaires sur les implications de la pandémie du COVID-19 pour les gouvernements et les institutions de la fonction publique, ainsi que des orientations productives pour la recherche et la pratique en administration publique. Cette première série de commentaires se concentre sur le pouvoir exécutif, en considérant de diverses façons : le défi pour les gouvernements d'équilibrer les exigences de responsabilité et d'apprentissage tout en repensant les combinaisons de politiques

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alors que la solidarité sociale et les connaissances d'experts sont de plus en plus remises en question; comment les systèmes de consultation en politique de l'Australie, du Canada, de la Nouvelle-Zélande et du Royaume-Uni ont été structurés et mis en œuvre en réponse à la crise du COVID-19; s'il existe de meilleures façons de suspendre les répertoires de responsabilité des systèmes parlementaires que l'accord multipartite conclu par le gouvernement libéral minoritaire avec plusieurs partis d'opposition; comparer la réponse du gouvernement canadien à la pandémie du COVID-19 et à la crise financière mondiale et comment chacune a mis le défi de l'inégalité au premier plan; et si la pandémie du COVID-19 a accéléré ou perturbé les initiatives du gouvernement numérique, renforcé les valeurs traditionnelles de l'administration publique ou un gouvernement plus transparent.

Shaping the long shadows of COVID-19: three challenges for governments

Arjen Boin and Paul 't Hart

Frantic mobilization efforts in the health sector, clear crisis communication and a remarkable degree of rule adherence have brought back a measure of government control – though of an inherently tenuous kind – over the course of events in the biggest crisis to hit the Netherlands since World War II. The infection curve, which began so badly, has been flattened. Yet still, at least six thousand Dutch citizens died of COVID-19 during the first three months of the outbreak, and many more have only barely survived after protracted and debilitating IC treatment. The economy has taken a serious hit, even though it is not yet clear how deep the damage will run (massive government outlays are still offsetting the worst of the financial impact on firms and households). The flow-on social devastation – including exacerbated pre-existing social inequalities – that may result from a prolonged recession is beginning to manifest itself.

But there are also grounds for satisfaction. We have seen an outpouring of social solidarity and self-help initiatives. The high level of compliance with the restrictions imposed surprised the experts. The general public has gained a new sense of appreciation for the front-line heroes in cure and care systems, but also in supermarkets, public transport and local government administrations. It is no surprise, then, that the national government and its leader, veteran Prime Minister Mark Rutte, concluded the “first wave” with high levels of public support.

As always, the question is how long this will last. The strong national consensus quickly proved tenuous. As soon as the crisis entered our rear-view mirror, the nibbling at its edges began. Poignant questions emerged. Parliamentarians found their voice again. Why did the spread of the virus come as a surprise? How did we miss the nursing homes where so many

elderly died? Why did we not stockpile critical medical supplies? Why have we allowed our health system to become so lean and efficient that we lacked the redundancies in IC capacity – essential for any large-scale disaster? Why did it take such a long time to ramp up testing capacity? Why were national leaders and experts so adamantly opposed to the general use of face masks? Were all those measures really necessary? Could the government not have relaxed measures a bit sooner? Last, but not least: who will foot the bill?

None of this should come as a surprise. This type of instant revisionism happens after pretty much every crisis or disaster. The “altruistic community” and the broad consensus to “take the politics out of this” that typically prevail during the early crisis stages are shattered and superseded by a grimmer climate of frustration, recrimination, politicization and legal maneuvering once the most urgent threat phase is over and the “recovery” is supposed to begin (Kaniasty and Norris 2004). As we leave COVID-19 behind us, few countries will manage to circumvent this iron law of crisis dynamics.

From solidarity and compliance to frustration and accountability

There undoubtedly will be local variations in how things turn ugly. Much will depend upon “the numbers.” Countries like New Zealand, Australia, Japan and Thailand appear to have avoided mass casualties whereas Brazil, the US, Spain and France are among the ones that have seen staggering death tolls. Levels of disenchantment will also depend on the severity and duration of the economic recessions that countries experience. Some welfare states may eventually crumble under the weight of fiscal austerity measures taken to compensate for massive drops of tax revenues and to service ballooning government debts.

But victimization stats alone cannot predict the nature of the emotional cocktail that will emerge in the coming months and – quite possibly – years, and the forms in which it will find expression. Culturally contingent attitudes to risk, loss and institutional failure weigh into the narratives that will be told about this catastrophe – particularly stories about how and why it happened, who should be held responsible, and what sanctions and measures should be taken (Douglas and Wildavsky 1982; Bovens and ‘t Hart 1996; Green 1997). There is no telling if and how loss of trust in public and political institutions will translate into some degree of social “anomie” (non-compliance, resistance, violent unrest, crime, domestic violence). Especially countries that did not manage to crush the curve or will see a second wave – and not just localized “spikes” – may face a prolonged imbroglio (Frailing and Wood Harper 2017).

This much is certain: all those governments that worked with utter dedication, at breakneck speed, and often with remarkable seamlessness across

jurisdictions and sectors to combat the spread of the virus and curb its socio-economic impacts, now face a very different set of critical challenges. For the purpose of brevity, we focus on three (cf. Boin et al. 2016):

- The challenge of *reassessment*: recalibrating the policy mix in light of the changing morphology of the crisis: making calls about which measures to retain, relax or discard. This creates a new challenge: how to motivate workers, citizens, and communities to respect the new regime.
- The challenge of *accountability*: opening up the books and initiating a national conversation about what was known and not known, done and not done, when, why and by whom, in relation to COVID-19.
- The challenge of *learning*: reconstructing, interrogating and reflecting upon one's own and other governments' responses with a view to drawing lessons designed to boost future pandemic (or more generic, mega-crisis) prevention, preparedness, response and resilience capacities.

Reassessing the policy mix: what role for expert knowledge?

COVID-19 has proved a deep challenge for nearly all policy sectors. The reigning policy paradigms, the institutionalized policy instruments, the way policies are made, the role of experts in their policy processes – the Search for the Exit Strategy put all these to the test. Without evidence-based insights and a quick way to secure these insights, policymakers had to come up with an approach that balanced economic considerations with public health concerns. How policymakers negotiated this conundrum should be an object of study for public administration research.

This will mean a renewed focus on the role of experts in supporting crisis managers (Rosenthal and 't Hart [1991] offer a foundational discussion). Much research has focused on the perennial gap between theory and policy, answering the question why policymakers systematically ignore solid research findings. Though most public administration researchers may lament it, the few months of “rehabilitation” of expert advice into governmental crisis decision-making are unlikely to be a game changer in the secular trend of increased challenges to or of expertise in policymaking processes.

The formulation of exit strategies everywhere has demonstrated the limits of expert-driven policymaking. There is no evidence-based knowledge to apply. We only have experts who know well that they really don't know how to formulate a policy on which so much is riding. Getting exits from lockdowns wrong may kill and it will be clear if it does. Rather than presenting this as a political challenge, policymakers are tempted to keep pushing experts to make those judgments for them. This is generating discomfort,

and may well compromise the viability of the newfound reliance on experts as a model to (re)introduce into “normal” policymaking.

Accountability in the face of deep uncertainty

Accountability is the hallmark of a democratic system. Knowing that an elected politician will have to explain why certain policy choices were made, imposes all sorts of conditions on the policymaking process. These conditions impose a burden on policymakers, the literature tells us. The biggest burden may well be the sacred rule that accountable politicians must be well informed. This rule has prompted all sorts of mechanisms and protocols that have come to define policymaking in democracies.

The COVID-19 experience has thrown up an insurmountable challenge for policymakers and politicians alike. They have been operating under conditions of deep uncertainty. Their efforts veer between a principled approach (decision-making based on principles rather than information) and more pragmatic approach (experimenting with limited feedback). It is not clear at all if existing accountability mechanisms can cope with these approaches. It is even less clear what the implications will be for the world of policy. If principles are allowed to rule, what do traditional accountability rules still mean for policymakers? If trial and error is the way to go, what are the accompanying accountability rules?

Learning: reflection versus politicization

Nobody is against learning, as Aaron Wildavsky reminded us a long time ago. It is still true today. Yet policy scholars have systematically documented how hard it is to learn and apply lessons to the policymaking process. Learning the right lessons from a crisis is particularly hard (Boin et al. 2008). At the same time, we know it must be done. COVID-19 has demonstrated the fragility of our complex and tightly coupled systems, which policymakers evidently cannot protect in the face of a pandemic. We know that this crisis may last for quite some time. We also know that a new pandemic is very possible. So how do we learn from the COVID-19 experience to strengthen societal and institutional resilience? What can policymakers do to facilitate an effective learning process? How will they know what lessons to adopt and implement?

Learning begins with evaluation: did we achieve what we intended to achieve? Unfortunately, this question takes on a whole different meaning in the context of accountability. Then the question becomes: why did politicians (or institutions) not achieve what they had to achieve? The threat of “exposure” and punishment inevitably undermines the process of evaluation. To explain is to blame, as the saying goes. If this lamentable condition

is not resolved, we risk ending up with no lessons learned, or worse, the wrong lessons learned.

If there is one lesson public administration researchers may take away from COVID-19, it is the need to learn in an unbiased and unimpeded way from crises and disasters. In a world that produces all sorts of upheavals – a changing climate, unstable financial systems, ongoing cyber threats – COVID-19 is but a reminder that we need to learn effectively and quickly. How can this be done without compromising democratic values, institutions and practices? Time for public administration scholarship to step up to the plate (see also Boin and Lodge 2016).

Executive governance and policy advisory systems in a time of crisis

Jonathan Craft and John Halligan

The COVID-19 pandemic provides a stark reminder of the need for high-quality policy advice in government and the uneven ability of the systems of advice around government to perform effectively, particularly during crises. Our analysis of the Australian, Canadian, New Zealand and United Kingdom (UK) responses focuses on how the policy problem was (mis)diagnosed, and divergent initial responses along with varying abilities to coordinate policy advice and adapt. Despite a shared administrative tradition rooted in Westminster principles, the comparisons are stark. Australia and New Zealand featured similarities in early milestones, but then diverged when New Zealand opted for decisive and emphatic action. Canada and the UK fared much worse with clear evidence of failings in their advisory systems detailed below. Here we reflect on how each countries' advisory system operated in this crisis and distil some lessons. This fast-moving and complex field cannot be properly analyzed in a brief review and so our focus is on a few notable comparisons.

Frequently compared, these countries share principles and practices of Westminster style government, some more defined than others, which guide how politicians, public servants, and others engage in advisory activity and exchanges. Responsible government is defined by the fusion of the executive and parliament along with primary features, including strong cabinet government, ministerial responsibility and a permanent bureaucracy that is neutral, non-partisan and professional. There are differences with structure – Canada and Australia feature federal systems while the UK and New Zealand are unitary systems – and with the countries' reform pathways (Craft and Halligan 2020).

Governments grappled with the challenges of making sense of fast-moving science-based public health advice, both domestic and international, and

advice from departments and agencies spanning health, economics and public safety. Under normal conditions, the policy advisory systems (PAS), defined as the assemblage of advisory units and practices that exist at a given time with which governments and other actors engage for policy purposes, are marked by tensions. Several were more acute during the crisis, notably the role of expert advisers and the public service vis-a-vis the democratic principles of responsible government, relationships with devolved governments and executive federalism, the mobilization of public services to overcome silos, and engagement with other organizations. The pandemic also pulled the curtain back, with public briefings, often daily, that revealed data (of varying quality) and expert advice governments had at their disposal. This transparency departs from the typically opaque nature of Westminster PAS (Craft and Halligan 2020).

Three strategies: the experience of four countries

Three general responses are evident. New Zealand adopted an elimination strategy, while Australia and Canada favoured a suppression approach, which the UK was forced to adopt after early championing of the high-risk “herd immunity” approach. Table 1 details variance in the number of cases and in deaths per country.

Australia had an elaborate apparatus in place for processing international and national data and for national communication among Australia’s governments. The machinery for handling a pandemic was triggered by the rapidly changing position in China. The Communicable Disease Network advocated a national health response. The National Incident Room (Department of Health) was activated and the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) supported border controls for Wuhan flights (January 20). The first Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus specified an escalating series of responses, from self-isolation of suspected cases to people working from home. Government activated the plan and declared that the coronavirus would become a global pandemic

Table 1. *COVID-19 Infections and Mortality Rates (As of August 10, 2020)*

<i>Country</i>	<i>Infections</i>	<i>Deaths</i>	<i>Case-fatality</i>	<i>Deaths/100K pop.</i>
Australia	21,397	313	1.5%	1.25
Canada	121,367	9,028	7.4%	24.36
United Kingdom	312,574	46,659	14.9%	70.18
New Zealand	1,569	22	1.4%	0.45

Source: Johns Hopkins University (2020).

(February 27, while the WHO did not do so until 12 March). Border closures were extended to cover high-risk countries from late February. Overseas arrivals were required to self-isolate for 14 days from mid-March then borders were closed for non-citizens and residents (the hotel quarantine included Australians from March 29).

Canada's response was incremental but failed to adequately seize early opportunities to get ahead of the pandemic. The early focus was on repatriation of Canadians abroad and dealing with cruise ships and not quickly imposing rigorous containment and suppression tactics. For example, *mandatory* quarantining for those returning to Canada, or showing symptoms, was only invoked on April 14th. Poor data collection also hampered effective reporting and modelling, and capacity issues led to slow testing, tracing, and tracking. The best available advice missed the mark, advising government that there was a low risk for within-country transmission until early March, only to recommend widespread societal and economic shutdowns two weeks later in response to community transmission and increased infection and death rates (Tasker 2020a). The public service and Public Health Agency of Canada's advice recommended management rather than early suppression via comprehensive mandatory screening and early tracking and tracing. The full authority of the *Quarantine Act* was not invoked in part due to advice that suggested compliance would be problematic and that self-isolation measures would ensure "less pressure on public health resources" (Tasker 2020a). This early response proved costly.

The New Zealand response to a rapidly mounting number of cases was the adoption of pandemic eradication, which mean eliminating community transmission. This was based on the government accepting the recommendations of public health advisers. On March 19, it closed its borders to foreign travelers and made people coming home quarantine for 14 days. Then several days later as the number of cases soared, the government first introduced level 3 restrictions followed by level 4, *eliminate*, which entailed full lockdown measures that were strict by international standards (see Table 2). The prime minister was able to claim in June that the virus had been eradicated (although cases have since surfaced). New Zealand has the advantages of being a small island-based state with low population density and a centralized and integrated government. The extensive testing was high in international terms and tracing was facilitated by the lockdown. The mortality rate has been similar to Australia (Table 1), but debates have occurred about the economic costs of the respective approaches.

The UK response was mired by multiple errors and missteps. It first adopted a controversial strategy favouring widespread infection to develop "herd immunity." It was compelled to adopt a more mainstream suppression approach including lockdowns and travel screening after climbing death and infection rates. The reliance on exhortations to the public to do the

Table 2. *Early Milestones in Country Responses*

	<i>First confirmed case reported</i>	<i>International travel ban</i>	<i>Mandatory quarantine imposed on (returning) travellers</i>	<i>Widespread closures and domestic restrictions</i>
Australia	January 25	March 19	March 13 (19)	March 13-20
Canada	January 25	March 16	April 14	March 12-22*
United Kingdom	January 29	n/a	June 8	March 23
New Zealand	February 28	March 19	April 10	March 25

*Provincial and municipal governments adopted varying degrees of restrictions in this period.

right thing also extended to travel, border restrictions being delayed until early June. The vociferousness of the debates, the pervasiveness of the blame game and the division among experts and observers derive from a range of arguments bandied about. These include the poor condition of the National Health Service following a period of austerity; the handling of aged care; the fragmentation of the relevant machinery; and the composition of expert committees. The government has changed central decision-making bodies, crisis machinery and science advisory forums. The Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms (COBR) on COVID-19 included ministers from the three devolved nations but was criticized for lacking prime ministerial leadership as it was chaired by a minister until March. The COBR played a coordination and decision-making role but was superseded in May (IfG 2020). The advisory structure was there but failed to work well and was abused by the political executive. Unwilling to learn from the experience of others, the UK has been derided in the media for the attachment to British exceptionalism. The prime minister has been depicted as the wrong leader for this type of crisis. The death total is the fifth highest in the world and the death rate is the third highest (ignoring two micro-states).

New Zealand was able to use unitary arrangements to its advantage but had to overcome its siloed public service to ensure a coherent response and the government used a highly centralized approach to securing coordination across the system, along with heavy reliance on and deference to expertise, and earlier and more comprehensive public restrictions. The situation was more complicated with the devolved systems whereby national governments have greater financial wherewithal but the main delivery responsibilities rest with subnational units. In Canada, collaborative executive federalism was essential but hampered by problems of poor quality and inconsistent data, spotty availability of personal protective equipment, and poor provincial responses to select outbreaks in seniors' care facilities and pockets of seasonal workers. Australia's response has been more effective with formal and structured approaches to collaborative federalism and policy coordination. National Cabinet comprising the prime minister, state premiers and territory chief ministers became a key inter-party decision maker for many purposes from mid-March, with regular meetings to review progress with COVIDSafe Australia. National Cabinet was determined to be a more effective body for national decision-making than the Council of Australian Governments, which was replaced by a National Federation Reform Council centred on National Cabinet. The need to achieve a united front nationally on core issues is important in larger and more complex systems. In devolved systems, the challenge is to balance national strategies with discretion for nations, provinces and states so that they can respond to local needs.

Implications of structuring advice

Governments made important choices in how to structure advice and key advisory processes. The UK's reliance on the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (Sage) has been singled out for the fragmented and faulty response. Early criticisms were levelled at politicization given high profile No 10 special advisor Dominic Cummings had attended meetings, but it was more roundly criticized for its lack of transparency and an inappropriate mix of expertise. It has been argued that, "If independent public health experts had not been excluded from the core committee, which is dominated by modellers, virologists, clinical academics and behavioural scientists, the influenza-driven 'herd immunity' strategy might not have materialised" (Costello 2020). Jeremy Hunt, a recent health minister and chair of the health select committee in charge of reviewing the UK handling of COVID-19, observes that "the failure to look at what [Asian] countries were doing at the outset will rank as one of the biggest failures of scientific advice to Ministers in our lifetimes" (Hunt 2020).

Poor responsiveness and slow-moving machinery were apparent. Public Health England (PHE), the executive agency established to provide advice on public health issues has been critiqued for a slow response. PHE had the responsibility for testing: "the decision to abandon widespread tracking of the virus as it began to spread is regarded by most scientists as the key mistake in Britain's handling of the pandemic, which has led to the country recording the highest number of deaths in Europe." Its slow responses, "forced the government to take over some of its functions and set up new bodies... the test and trace service had to be taken out of PHE's hands, while the Joint Biosecurity Centre, which determines the COVID alert level, had been set up specifically to do a job PHE should have been doing" (Rayner 2020). Failures to adapt and modify responses in light of the fast-changing consensus and evidence on COVID-19 was a major catalyst for the poor UK and early Canadian performances.

For at-risk groups, lack of responsiveness was also apparent. In Australia, two neglected communities have been variously depicted as a "missed opportunity," "blind spots" and the subject of "ad hoc" engagement. The first involves high-risk groups like migrant communities with suggestions that pandemic messages were not registering, particularly where English was a second language. A May report was discussed with the AHPPC, the key decision-making body for health emergencies, but did not register in the system. A second report argues that most Indigenous Australians reside in urban areas, but the focus has been on remote communities and the needs and risks of urban communities have been overlooked. Canada, as already noted, also failed to target responses for at-risk communities including migrant workers and long-term care seniors' facilities. Adequately responding

to constituencies and sectors that are vulnerable or at-risk will continue to challenge all four countries as they implement economic responses and grapple with potential second waves of the virus.

Doing better: balanced input, transparency, agility

Governments need to recognize the limits of public service and expert advice in a crisis. It may not be stress-tested and may be contradictory. Executives have to be careful with using non-public service advice (e.g., health units, experts on committees) that they are not accustomed to and take care organizing and balancing various forms of advice. The preparedness to act early and boldly in moving between levels of internal lockdown was vital in suppressing coronavirus. It is well-established that the timing of interventions is critical for flattening the infections curve. This also applies to where reversals occur when quick and decisive action is needed to resurrect some form of lockdown. The risks of relying on non-mandatory, incremental interventions are high.

The closed and opaque nature of PAS can be problematic in crises when confronted with the need to educate and engage society as part of a coordinated response. New Zealand, with a tradition of Cabinet transparency, meant that citizens and the press could access cabinet minutes and papers on COVID-19 related matters. The Australian National Cabinet is also notable for providing details of meeting decisions and key advisory documents. In contrast, the UK was highly secretive, with the activities of the Sage committee drawing particularly stinging criticisms that ultimately led to the publication of meeting minutes. The Canadian response featured frequent public briefings by public health officials and politicians, but little public access to the policy advice provided to federal Cabinet.

Finally, governments that were able to pivot quickly did better. Adaptability in the short-term is not necessarily a strong suit of PAS in Anglophone countries, but they do have the ability to change and a reputation for responding well under emergencies. Governments that can tap the exigencies of a crisis to galvanize agencies, sectors and jurisdictions to act and collaborate are more successful.

Balancing accountability and action during COVID-19: how the *Emergencies Act* provided a model for an empowered Parliament

Kathy Brock and Lori Turnbull

Westminster parliamentary systems work by striking a well-calibrated balance between a powerful executive branch that can take decisions and

actions effectively and a functional legislative branch that holds the government to account. In times of emergency, the balance between decisiveness and accountability tends to lean more heavily towards an even more powerful, effective executive. However, even in exceptional times, the actions of the executive have been subject to the review of Parliament, sometimes retroactively. Once an emergency or exceptional circumstances pass, the equilibrium between the branches should be restored to normal levels of accountability, lest we lose the healthy and vital system of counterweights in a parliamentary democracy.

During the extraordinary conditions created during the COVID-19 crisis, the Liberal minority government made deals with the New Democratic, Bloc Québécois, and Green parties which reduced the ability of Parliament to hold the executive to account by eliminating key levers of power at the opposition's disposal and by limiting the frequency of House of Commons sittings. This was neither necessary nor desirable given that the parties could have opted for an alternate model retaining the full powers of Parliament to scrutinize the executive while enabling the executive to act swiftly to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic. This episode raises serious questions about the nature and scope of multiparty agreements, the relationship of the executive to the legislative branch, and the role of Parliament in crises – all of which merit further investigation and research in the future.

Government interventions under pressure

In the early days of the pandemic, the federal government amended the *Financial Administration Act* to permit using special warrants to make payments to Canadians without Parliament sitting (Bill C-12). Parliament passed the amendments quickly and under pressure just before adjourning to allow members of parliament to return home and social distance. Within two weeks, a reconvened Parliament passed an \$82 billion federal aid package called the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act* (Bill C-13). This sweeping statute made several amendments to existing legislation to extend deadlines for tax filing and payment, increase Canada Child Benefit payments, introduce new Emergency Care and Emergency Support Benefits as well as an Indigenous Community Support fund. It also allowed the Ministry of Finance to borrow without authorization of the Governor in Council and extended budget and debt reporting requirements. This bill also was passed under pressure with scrutiny mainly limited to a special House committee and some House members and Senators passing it without full scrutiny or knowledge of its contents. Two further bills (C-14 and C-15) provided subsidies to small business employees and students and extended reporting deadlines for other Finance matters. Further emergency measures were introduced under the *Quarantine Act*, the *Aeronautics Act*, and other federal

legislation and regulations. Orders in council have been used to implement many important aspects of the federal response to COVID-19, including the Canada-US border closure, efforts to manage food and drug shortages, and *Income Tax Act* amendments. In contrast, the UK and Australian COVID-19 Response Acts and other legislation were debated and amended in both of those parliaments which operated to allow opposition questioning of government actions on COVID-related and other matters.

Throughout the COVID-19 lockdown period, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced relief programs for individuals and businesses, travel restrictions, physical distancing rules, and border closures that posed unprecedented economic, social, and health related consequences. These announcements were made from his Rideau Cottage residence as opposed to the House of Commons, which meant that the immediate reaction to these announcements came from journalists rather than Members of Parliament. As a result, the response of the opposition to the announcements was often delayed or received little coverage in the media.

Sidelining the legislative branch

Under a multiparty agreement struck by the Liberals, NDP and Bloc Québécois, the House met in plenary one day per week with most members attending through remote technology. A Special COVID-19 Committee of all House members met virtually two days per week to raise any matters related to the COVID-19 crisis. Votes were suspended in the House owing to technical complications. Standing committees continued virtual meetings. The Senate decided to adjourn to June 2 unless required to meet to pass legislation relating to COVID-19, although its committees could continue any COVID-related business through virtual meetings. This meant that the ability of both houses to consider government measures was limited. Another multiparty agreement (between the Liberals, the NDP and the Greens) commenced in late May, removing the possibility of opposition days, private members bills, and order paper questions for the remainder of the spring sitting (Canadian Press 2020). All of these mechanisms are integral to opposition parties' ability to affect the parliamentary agenda, initiate confidence votes, give voice to their priorities, and obtain meaningful answers to their questions on government actions and policies. It was easy to forget that this was, in fact, a minority government, whose command of the confidence of the House could not be tested or assured in such an environment.

There was one shining moment that demonstrated the indispensable role that the opposition plays in holding the government to account and validated the importance of Parliament. Though all federal parties supported the aid package (Bill C-13), the Conservative Party pushed back on a government proposal to tax, spend, and borrow broadly without parliamentary

approval until December 2021. The Liberals acquiesced to a revised deadline of September 30th. But things went downhill from there. The NDP and Greens' deal with the Liberals, who were looking to break for the summer, significantly undermined Parliament's ability to do its job. In exchange for a promise from the prime minister to talk to the provinces about pursuing universal sick leave, the two opposition parties gave away almost every tool in the opposition's toolkit. The multiparty agreement effectively neutralized the opposition at a time when the government was exercising tremendous power.

The government and opposition parties were acting in a compressed time period in an exceptional time when pressures to respond to the COVID-19 crisis were escalating daily. Members of Parliament wanted to meet the needs of Canadians in the crisis and to model the need for social distancing. These considerations affected their decision to have a truncated Parliament in operation. It is understandable but, as mentioned, the UK and Australian parliaments were able to continue operations with virtual voting. In Canada, the government and opposition parties did not use but had available to them a model of how Parliament could operate with full powers to scrutinize government without limiting the ability of the executive to respond decisively and powerfully to the crisis. That model can be found in the provisions of the *Emergencies Act*.

Multiparty agreements vs. the *Emergencies Act*

In March 2020, the federal government contemplated invoking *Emergencies Act* (R.S.C. 1988, c.29) to empower it to deal with coronavirus related matters. The Act was written "to ensure safety and security" during emergencies by authorizing the Canadian government "to take special temporary measures that may not be appropriate in normal times" (Preamble). Instead, the government decided not to invoke the Act, viewing it as "a measure of last resort" in the words of Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland (Tasker 2020b). Under the terms of the Act, it could only be invoked if the federal government proclaimed that the COVID-19 situation constituted a "public welfare emergency" after consultations with the provinces had yielded intergovernmental agreement that the situation exceeded "the capacity or authority of a province to deal with it" (Ss. 3, 3.a, 5.b).

Using the legislative and other policy instruments mentioned above, the federal government was able to adopt the necessary measures that complemented the actions being taken by the provinces and territories to deal with the crisis. Although not invoked in the initial phases of the crisis, the *Emergencies Act* provides a model for ensuring executive accountability

to Parliament during a crisis that the parties could have adopted for the COVID-19 crisis rather than the one secured by the multiparty agreements.

First, and foremost, the *Emergencies Act* locates responsibility and powers for dealing with a declared emergency to the executive consistent with the Westminster model of parliamentary government in two ways. The responsibility for assessing the situation and declaring that it constitutes an emergency consistent with the defined terms in the Act rests with Cabinet (S. 3). The legislation also confers on Cabinet broad and sweeping powers to make temporary orders and regulations that it constitutes are necessary for dealing with the emergency but that might not be appropriate in normal circumstances (Ss. 8, Preamble). To this extent, the actions that the Liberal government took during the COVID-19 crisis (to the time of writing), were consistent with the Act's vision of strong, decisive executive action.

Second, the terms of the *Emergencies Act* depart from the multiparty agreement and what transpired during the COVID-19 crisis. The Act renders the executive fully accountable for the decisions and actions that government takes in an emergency both during the emergency and afterwards. Unlike the preceding *War Measures Act*, which allowed Cabinet to govern by order-in-council and bypass the House of Commons and Senate (Smith 2020), the *Emergencies Act* stipulates that Cabinet exercises its temporary emergency powers "subject to the supervision of Parliament," the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and other rights legislation, and the federal division of powers in the *Constitution Act 1867* (Preamble). Judicial review of government actions is likely to be limited "as courts would defer to Cabinet's interpretation of the Act, its assessment of the situation and its determination of which particular measures are necessary" (Block and Goldenberg 2020; cf. West and Forcese 2020 as quoted in Balakrishnan 2020). Thus, the more powerful and immediate oversight power resides with Parliament.

Parliament exercises its powers of review in three ways according to the *Emergencies Act*: reviewing the declaration of an emergency; reviewing every order or regulation made by Cabinet during the emergency; and a post-emergency review. Under the Act, Parliament has the power to review Cabinet's emergency declaration, reasons for the declaration, and the report prepared by the government on its own consultations with the provinces within seven sitting days of the declaration (Ss. 58.1, 58.5). Parliament may revoke the emergency declaration (S. 58.7) or a continuation or amendment of an emergency declaration (S. 60). Given that a declaration of emergency is likely to be taken with much forethought as the previous comments by Freeland indicates, this power is important but not where a government is likely to stumble. For our purposes here, it is significant that in contrast to the multiparty agreement, in this model Parliament is fully operational with enhanced opportunities to examine the decisions and reasoning of the government.

More pertinent to the COVID-19 situation are the provisions in the Act concerning orders and regulations. Cabinet must submit every order or regulation to Parliament for review. Both Houses, not just one, would need to agree if an order or regulation were to be revoked (S. 61). This allows for transparency and review of government actions but sets a high bar for those actions to be quashed. If an order or regulation is confidential, then it would be reviewed in private by a parliamentary review committee comprising members from both Houses and accepted or rejected (Ss. 61, 62). This review would bolster public confidence that all government actions are not taken surreptitiously or arbitrarily. Under the multiparty agreement, the opposition parties relinquished this important power of review and veto.

The most important power of review lies in the post-emergency phase. The *Emergencies Act* requires Cabinet to strike an inquiry into its declaration of an emergency and the actions it took during the emergency with a report to Parliament within a year of the end of the emergency (S. 63). This allows Parliament to consider the government's action in a more reasonable time and to make recommendations for future situations. This step is not covered by the agreement and yet is critical to good governance.

In contrast to the multiparty agreements, the *Emergencies Act* provides a model of a fully operational Parliament that can ensure executive accountability and is much closer to the model that operated in Britain. If the parties had agreed to adopt a similar model using remote technology, then Parliament would have continued to play a vital role in responding to the COVID-19 crisis and would have been able to ensure that the regular business of government would have continued to be subject to debate and scrutiny. Among other things, special unsupervised spending warrants would not have been justified, the government could have been rigorously questioned in the House on its spending announcements, and the delay in closing the border or any orders under other acts could have been investigated and perhaps revoked in Parliament if over-reaching or not justified.¹ Parliament would have remained and been seen to be a vital institution in responding to emergencies and crises rather than as a shadow in the wings.

Conclusion: an agenda for research

These events raise important questions about the role of Parliament and whether multiparty agreements ought to be used as a vehicle through which to cede critical levers of power at its disposal. Further areas for research include: the nature and scope of multiparty agreements; the possibility of amending House rules and procedures to provide for a model of Parliament to operate during crises like COVID-19 similar to the model in the *Emergencies Act*; whether any fundamental changes to the operation of the House of Commons should require all-party agreement under the rules

and procedures of the House; updates to the *Emergency Act* given recent changes in the Senate; other means of ensuring executive accountability to Parliament during crises and exceptional circumstances if an emergency is not declared; and, a comparison of how parliaments within Canada and internationally fared in holding the executive to account during the global pandemic.

Lessons from the Great Financial Crisis (GFC) to COVID-19: budgetary responses and future challenges

Geneviève Tellier

There is no doubt that the current pandemic is exceptional. All over the world, governments implemented drastic measures to limit the propagation of COVID-19. Economically, these measures were unprecedented: borders were shut down, businesses closed, workers forced to work from home, etc. In Canada, it is reported that the GDP has plummeted by 12% while the unemployment rate rose to 13% during the first two months of the pandemic (Statistics Canada 2020). The federal government now forecasts that its deficit will total 343.2 billion dollars for 2020–2021 (Department of Finance 2020). This figure will in all probability increase.

How do we deal with a crisis of this magnitude? To find some answers to this question, what follows first turns our attention to the past, and then identifies some promising lines of research for public budgeting and public administration scholars.

From the GFC to COVID-19: lessons learned and unfinished business

Only a decade ago, we witnessed another major event, the 2009 financial crisis, viewed then as the biggest economic recession in modern times: business activities plunged to record low, unemployment rose, and investments stalled. All around the globe, governments were asked to bail out major private companies and help workers who had lost their job. Although not identical, the current pandemic and the 2009 GFC share many similarities. Among these, they both required massive public financial interventions. Therefore, it seems natural to examine what lessons were learned from the GFC and analyze if they can help us manage the present crisis as well as its aftermath.

The GFC taught us two important things about public budgeting. The first was that strong government interventions are needed to prompt economic recovery. This new course of action came after years of austerity measures,

balanced budget initiatives, tax cuts, etc. In other words, Keynesian ideas were rediscovered². The second important lesson was that national public policies are vulnerable to external events. Nowadays, globalization not only entails the circulation of goods, services and financial resources. It is also about national public policies that have been impacted by decisions occurring elsewhere. Governments must be prepared to work collaboratively with other governments (international, national, and subnational) and various other stakeholders in an uncertain environment.³

Have governments learned from these lessons? Were they better prepared to face a severe crisis? Looking at the response of the federal Canadian government to the pandemic caused by COVID-19, the answer is yes, up to a point. The federal government adopted and implemented relief measures that targeted millions of Canadians and businesses in only a few weeks. This was impressive considering how long it usually takes to set up new programs. In addition to considerable political will, the administrative apparatus was flexible enough to quickly initiate a response.

The federal government was also able to secure the support of parliamentarians to use special warrants, within days. Without these warrants, it would not have been able to use public funds, while parliament is adjourned. Partisanship was put aside during this major national crisis, even though the government was in a minority position. This contrast sharply with the GFC when the minority conservative government was under attack from opposition parties for its weak recovery strategy. In addition, the Department of Finance and the Bank of Canada made sure enough liquidity was available for businesses and Canadian governments, again within days. This decision allowed Canadian governments to direct their attention to recovery initiatives. They will deal with the issues of high deficits and debt repayments latter.

Finally, the Canadian government was in constant communication with other countries and with international organizations to coordinate the response to the pandemic. Overall, the Canadian government reacted swiftly to address the COVID-19 pandemic, a sharp contrast with Canada's initial response to the GFC.⁴

However, I want to suggest that the Canadian response to the GFC and COVID-19 remains an unfinished business. GFC was not just about the collapse of the US housing market that spread to economic sectors all over the globe. It also brought to light the issue of economic inequalities, revealing growing disparities between the few most affluent in our society and the rest of the population, the precarious working conditions, the increasing costs of living, etc. The rise of various popular protests here and abroad (Yellow Jackets, Brexit, Occupy Wall Street, *Printemps Érablé*, to name a few) and the election of populist leaders (Trump, Bolsonaro, Kurz, etc.) all point in the same direction: there is a growing disaffection about the use of public

financial resources. The problem concerns equally how governments fund public services as well as how they collect revenues. Furthermore, there is not a strong consensus on the solution to be adopted. For some, public expenditures and taxes are too high, while others find them too low.

The events that have triggered the pandemic crisis and the GFC are entirely different. However, they required similar government actions and focused attention on inequalities prevalent in our society. Indeed, the current pandemic offers an extraordinary opportunity to reflect on these issues and make progress.

Three promising areas for budgeting research

Setting up a universal basic income (UBI) program. The purpose of a UBI is to provide an unconditional income to all Canadians, regardless of their work status. By doing so, a UBI would replace existing social programs that provide conditional financial support to specific groups (such as the unemployed, the elderly, students, people with disabilities, etc.). It is therefore seen as a new way to deliver public services that values simplicity and flexibility. However, many observers fear that the costs associated with a UBI would make it prohibitive, while others believe that it will create disincentives to work. This explains why so few governments have ventured into seriously considering it.⁵ However, the implementation of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) that targeted almost all Canadians has automatically revived the idea. The federal government has also implicitly suggested that a Canadian UBI should be set at \$24,000 per year (the CERB provides \$2,000 per month). Whether it will be deemed a success or not, we are in the midst of an exceptional natural experiment, which will provide a unique set of reliable data to explore the feasibility and implementation of a national UBI in Canada.

Do major crises generate more consensual public policies? As research has demonstrated over the years, government ideologies do shape public policies.⁶ Moreover, the gap between right-wing and left-wing ideologies has recently widened, leading to a more polarized political landscape. However, the various measures adopted to mitigate the economic impacts of the pandemic may signal a realignment. Federal and provincial Canadian governments of all stripes have swiftly implemented attenuating measures to counter the negative effects of the pandemic. On closer examination, we notice some variations: some governments seem more inclined to offer direct monetary assistance to individuals and businesses (in British Columbia, Québec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador and at the federal level), while others seem more supportive of tax relief measures (Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario).⁷ How can these differences be explained? Are they meaningful? Will they last? Furthermore, the pandemic may force some political parties to rethink their

political propositions, especially right-wing parties. Can it still be possible to advocate spending cuts, tax cuts, or both, while promising improved public services? If so, how? Overall, research should investigate if the pandemic will influence the ideological stance of political parties.

Embracing fiscal sociology. Fiscal sociology investigates the relationship between the state, society and taxation. It tries to understand why we consent collectively to pay taxes, by paying close attention to the influences of institutions, the redistribution of wealth, and the use of various tax policy instruments. After some promising debuts (initiated by the work of de Tocqueville and Pareto, and subsequently by Goldstein, Schumpeter, Mann), this field of research went largely unnoticed. It has been, however, recently rediscovered in the US and in Europe.⁸ Fiscal sociology would be particularly useful for analyzing economic inequalities and examining how taxation can alleviate these inequalities. Furthermore, its contribution would also be valuable to study the intergenerational redistribution of public debts (which will be substantial in the coming years).

Concluding remarks: looking towards the big picture

The research topics identified above have a common element: each explicitly acknowledges that politics matters when budgetary issues are being discussed, analyzed, and policies are developed and implemented as a result. My hope is that, among the usual focus on managing deficits, debt, and fiscal policy, these suggestions will contribute to developing this field of research.

Some researchers have recently expressed concerns about how research in public administration is often missing the big picture: the discipline should not just focus on the study of administrative reform (the meso-level of government). Where public budgeting is concerned, future research should also pay attention to the overall direction and performance of government (the macro-level) and acknowledge the presence and influences of political values (Botterill and Fenna 2019; Roberts 2020).

Traditionalism or transformation? Canada's COVID-19 response and the future of digital government

Jeffrey Roy

COVID-19 is both an accelerator and disruptor of digital government. Acceleration stems from concerted efforts to devise data-driven analysis and surveillance systems aimed at lessening the spread of infection, and digital service channels have evolved from an option for delivering

government services to essential “digital by default” platforms in support of an unprecedented expansion of individual and commercial support programs. With at least the temporary closure of most physical service centres, and an enormous strain on telephony channels, online platforms are certain to play an expanded and central role in the service delivery apparatus of the public sector going forward. Yet across these health and service realms – and more widely across the public sector – disruption also stems from the accelerated pace of digitization (inside and outside of government) as well as pre-coronavirus digital agendas now potentially stymied or recast in light of shifting policy and political priorities. How such tensions are dealt with will shape the future of digital government and, by extension, the evolution of public sector governance during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

It helps to provide some parameters around the fluid term “digital government.” This term has evolved since some scholars distinguish between earlier notions of “e-government” as a more basic and linear extension of the public sector into the Internet era (Roy 2006; Pablo et al. 2007; Gasco 2014; OECD 2015; Clarke et al. 2017). By contrast, “digital government” offers a more transformative and dynamic prism also deemed “Public Administration 2.0” (Lips 2012; Reddick and Aikins 2012; Roy 2013, 2017, and 2019; Clarke et al. 2017; Clarke 2019), which has been adopted by the Canadian government (Government of Canada 2017).

As Lips and many others have argued, we must consider if and how digital government disrupts traditional public administration (TPA), competing theories such as new public management (NPM), public value management (PVM) and new public governance (NPG). Furthermore, we must add digital era governance (DEG), a template that Lindquist and Huse suggest is less distinct and more encompassing of shifting elements of the others (Dunleavy et al. 2006; Dunleavy 2010; Lindquist and Huse 2017). Arguably the most thorough review of these varying though often inter-related perspectives is Clarke’s detailed examination of the Government of Canada’s digital efforts (Clarke 2019). Importantly, for our purposes, Clarke contrasts traditional public administration – presenting it as closed government, with more outward and transformational perspectives of digital government: “...whether by challenging the silos and hierarchies that have long underpinned a closed bureaucrat-bureaucrat relationship, or by calling for the uptake of new agile and open policy making and service delivery approaches, the dominant theories of digital government offered to date argue that closed government is entirely incompatible with the demands of governing in the digital age” (Clarke 2019: 11). As the personal computer era evolves into the mobile device era, such a contrast becomes evermore relevant to the inherent tensions facing the public sector (Roy 2013 and 2017). The creation of public value, in turn, becomes more networked, more open, and more

participative (Stoker 2006; O’Flynn 2007; Clarke et al. 2017; Fountain 2017; Margetts 2017; Pederson 2020).

Millard provides a thoughtful and encompassing perspectives of open governance and the recasting of public sector organization and action (Millard 2015). He articulates broad directions for systemic openness as an underlying paradigm for transformational digital government (Millard 2015). Such an orientation is at least partially reflected in more contemporary forms of open government – as well as the Open Government Partnership (OGP) internationally (Francoli 2014 and 2015; Francoli and Clarke 2014). Millard’s directions are also closely aligned with many prescriptive suggestions put forth by Clarke in her (pre-COVID-19) undertaking. For example, she seeks “digital era open government” and calls for Ministerial commitments to be more horizontal and networked accountability and a more outward public service that “must go to platforms and forums where stakeholders and citizens are already congregating and where nongovernmental actors are the dominant players setting the terms of the conversation” (Clarke 2019: 206). Yet, a key and over-arching lesson from her investigation is that inertia rooted in TPA acts as a major constraint on systemic reform (*ibid.*).

Pandemic response and digital government since COVID-19

At the time of writing, two intertwined impacts of COVID-19 stand out for consideration with respect to digitization and its impacts on public sector: i) pandemic support-assistance and digital-service channels; and ii) health-related surveillance and pandemic-tracking mobile phone apps designed for such a purpose.⁹

With respect to pandemic supports for individuals and companies, a case can be made that the federal government’s immediate efforts with digital delivery channels have thus far been a qualified success. Faced with the emergence of digital-by-default by necessity, unparalleled user demand, and a tremendous sense of urgent need, billions of dollars of assistance were fast-tracked and provided via online channels with minimal delays. Such performance contrasts with many federal government digital and technological system mishaps in recent years (including concerns conveyed by the Auditor General about the readiness of digital service channels) as well as the March 2020 technical struggles of the US federal government in their support for small businesses. Invariably, this Canadian “success” is tempered by numerous instances of individuals facing delays or processing challenges, and the over-burdening of call centre operations as a result (widely reported upon by media sources through March and April).

Two broad implications of such efforts stand out: first, concerns around the absence of sufficient oversight in terms of both digital-service performance

and overarching policy and financing decisions (a key facet of Parliamentary debate in recent months); and second, a potential reversion to centralized digital service design at the expense of service innovation predicated on user engagement and collaborative design. Other observers highlight the related risk of rushed delivery solutions rather than more thoughtful investments in underlying digital architectures (Miller 2020). Key questions going forward stem from such tensions, as well as the degree to which digital-by-default becomes a more accepted and utilized form of service interaction with the public sector across wider segments of society.

Mobile phone apps have played key roles in the more successful efforts of numerous countries to further pandemic tracking and tracing efforts, including early adopters such as Singapore and South Korea. The former's decision to release the underlying open source code for the app allowed other jurisdictions to follow suit, as Alberta (the first and only Canadian jurisdiction as of June 2020). In June 2020, Prime Minister Trudeau seemingly committed to a forthcoming pan-Canadian under development. Around that time, Apple and Alphabet (Google) collaborated in an unprecedented manner to design an app compatible with Apple and Android devices. Fuelled by privacy protection concerns and actors such as Privacy International, the German Government was even persuaded to abandon its own model. As one German official observed: "We need to have a discussion on how Silicon Valley is increasingly taking over the job of a nation state.... But we don't need to have it amid a pandemic" (Scott et al. 2020). This has heightened concerns about the implications of COVID-19 tracking and data-gathering capacities for citizens and fears that "digital surveillance tools will become permanent" (Momani 2020).

As Canadian governments decide whether and how to proceed with a pan-Canadian model of app-based tracing, the underlying constraints of traditional federalism present an additional variable. A central question is whether the pandemic crisis will spur more innovative and collaborative governance arrangements across federal, provincial and territorial levels – or whether traditional politics and administrative structures of Canadian federalism will impede such an effort. Although federalism can spur flexibility and variation (as it has across provinces and territories in many aspects of data-driven efforts in response to COVID-19), here it bears noting that the Liberal government has committed to a national model which arguably suggests a leading role on the part of the federal government.

An agenda for digital government and governance research in the pandemic era

The over-arching lesson from the preceding, preliminary review of the digital contours of the Government of Canada's COVID-19 response is a

familiar tension between traditionalism and transformation (Roy 2006 and 2008; Clarke 2019). Despite pressures for greater systemic openness and societal mobilization generally, and stemming from pandemic reactions and responses, COVID-19 may strengthen many aspects of the core functioning of Westminster democratic governance and traditional public administration, rather than spark more systemic openness and governance innovation, especially in the near term. Such a viewpoint is reinforced by the emerging fiscal realities across all governments in Canada that suggest austerity measures ahead. Such reinforcing of traditionalism does not negate the important digital efforts of recent years and, indeed, potential opportunities lie ahead, especially as governments have increasingly embraced more transformational principles pertaining to digital government and given the accelerated digital transformation of society at large in light of the pandemic (particularly the explosion of online commerce and remote working arrangements).

On the latter point, much depends on mobilizing civil society and academic and professional research communities and their ideas and resulting influences on governmental action and priorities. For example, calls for a National Data Architecture by the University of Waterloo's Centre for International Governance Innovation seem especially prescient at the moment, whereas the formation of the Canadian COVID-19 Accountability Group to publicly advocate for openness and oversight of pandemic response spending further reflects new elements of our collective pandemic governance systems that could emerge. This special journal issue devoted to COVID-19 is a further example of the potential importance of such contributions.

Four areas are especially ripe for investigation as part of a renewed research agenda linking public administration, the coronavirus pandemic, and digitalization. The thematic areas are:

1. the evolving and presumably shifting service delivery apparatus of the public sector, the extent to which digital channels grow in predominance relative to other channels, and the impacts of such a shift on service design and execution;
2. the emergence and effectiveness of more horizontal, networked and collaborative governance arrangements across governments (both within and across jurisdictions);
3. the changing contours of open government and whether systemic openness tied to the three dimensions of past federal Open Government Action Plans (information, data and dialogue) can be levers for better oversight and accountability of governmental actions and enablers of public-sector and societal innovation in responding to new pandemic challenges; and
4. understanding and critically assessing the expansion of data security and cyber-security challenges tied to the pandemic and their interplay with

a potentially fluid national security agenda (a theme excluded from this short article).

Running within and across these inter-related research themes is the emerging hypothesis from our discussion here: whether or not the pandemic will create conditions for a reversion to more traditional forms of public administration (more centralized, controlling and less open), posited as the most likely trajectory for what lies ahead; or, instead, whether new forms of more shared and networked governance models predicated on systemic openness can be forged. With respect to the latter, there is fertile intellectual groundwork from prior to the pandemic which envisioned digitally and openness-minded reforms (Clarke et al. 2017; Lindquist and Huse 2017; Roy 2019; Clarke 2019). One specific area meriting further attention is whether a reshaped public-sector ethos emerges from the pandemic (yes, this commentary suggests systemic constraints to such emergence), and whether more horizontal, outward and networked governance formations emerge (and, if indeed they do emerge, what sort of accountability mechanisms are formed and deployed to balance openness-laden innovation with inward pressures for control).

Conclusion

This article began by stating that COVID-19 is both an accelerator and potential disruptor of digital government. As the federal government faces rapidly growing program spending pressures and invariably the limits of its own actions, and as demands for digital infrastructure and digital literacy heighten across society at large, it is arguably imperative that the Government of Canada become more agile and innovative both internally and in concert with other government levels, other sectors and with the public at large. Yet given the propensity of crises to reinforce centralized leadership and governance control within the Westminster governance system, embracing this reorientation will be no small task and much will depend upon the evolution of political leadership and public expectations as the scope and impacts of COVID-19 become more fully apparent.

Notes

- 1 In contrast to the federal legislation, the BC emergency legislation does not provide for legislative scrutiny of the temporary suspension, override or replacement of existing statutes in an emergency which the BC Ombudsperson found contrary to the principles of good administration including transparency and accountability (2020: 35)
- 2 This does not mean that all countries implemented similar stimulus packages, nor that all agreed with Keynesian principles. For a detailed account of various national fiscal responses to the GFC see Wanna et al. (2015). On how neoliberal thinkers replied to the resurgence of Keynesianism, see Blyth (2013).

- 3 According to Doern et al. (2013), we now live in an age of perpetual budget crisis.
- 4 For a detailed account of the Canadian response to the GFC, see Good and Lindquist (2015).
- 5 Ontario Premier Wynne launched a three-year pilot project to study the feasibility of a UBI program, which was cancelled abruptly by the Ford government.
- 6 See Tellier (2005) as well as several studies published in the annual publication *How Ottawa Spends*.
- 7 An excellent comparative analysis is provided by the Chaire en fiscalité et finances publiques, Université de Sherbrooke, available here (in French): <https://cftp.recherche.usherbrooke.ca/outils-ressources/outil-de-comparaison-mesures-covid19/>.
- 8 See, for instance, the work of Martin et al. (2009), Leroy (2011) and Mumford (2019). In Canada, fiscal sociology has started to be investigated by historians (see Heaman 2017; Tillotson 2017).
- 9 A third set of factors is also addressed in an expanded version of this article currently under review, namely a widened set of digitally-rooted national security threats at least partially intertwined with the pandemic.

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Beyond COVID-19: Five commentaries on reimagining governance for future crises and resilience

Abstract: Several Canadian and international scholars offer commentaries on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for governments and public service institutions, and fruitful directions for public administration research and practice. This second suite of commentaries considers the challenges confronting governments as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in the decades to come with an increasingly broad lens: the need to understand and rethink the architecture of the state given recent and future challenges awaiting governments; the need to rethink government-civil society relations and policies to deliver services for increasingly diverse citizens and communities; the need for new repertoires and sensibilities on the part of governments for recognizing, anticipating, and engaging on governance risks despite imperfect expert knowledge and public skepticism; how the COVID-19 crisis has caused us to reconceive international and sub-national borders where new “borders” are being drawn; and the need to anticipate a steady stream of crises similar to the COVID-19 pandemic arising from climate change and related challenges, and develop new national and international governance strategies for fostering population and community resilience.

Sommaire : Plusieurs universitaires canadiens et internationaux ont offert des suggestions sur les implications de la pandémie du COVID-19 pour les gouvernements et les institutions de la fonction publique, ainsi que des orientations futures pour la recherche et la pratique en administration publique. Cette deuxième série de commentaires examine les défis que devront affronter les gouvernements en raison de la pandémie de COVID-19 et dans les décennies à venir, dans une optique large. Cette série souligne le besoin de comprendre et de repenser l'architecture de l'État, de revoir les relations entre le gouvernement et la société civile pour fournir des services à des citoyens et des communautés de plus en plus divers, d'élaborer de nouvelles façons d'identifier et d'anticiper les risques, et de s'engager malgré

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l'imperfection des connaissances d'experts et le scepticisme du public, de repenser les frontières, tout ceci en tenant compte des crises et défis à venir, de façon à promouvoir la résilience de la population et des communautés.

Reinventing public administration for a dangerous century

Alasdair Roberts

In retrospect, the last few years of the twentieth century were a moment of calm before a violent storm. We have spent the first decades of the twenty-first century dealing with a series of extraordinary shocks. The wave of terrorism that included the attacks of September 11, 2001, has been described as the most violent in a century (Rapoport 2004). The global financial crisis of 2007-2008 triggered the most severe economic breakdown since the Great Depression of the 1930s (Stewart 2008). The pandemic of 2020 has been called the greatest challenge that the world has confronted since World War II (Donahue 2020).

This series of shocks has upended conventional wisdom about the role of government. In the 1990s, it was fashionable to say that states were in retreat because of globalization. "Heads of governments," Susan Strange announced in 1996, "have lost the authority over national societies and economies that they used to have" (Strange 1996). Today, we know that reports about the death of states were premature. "The state is here, the state is present," Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte assured Italians as the COVID-19 epidemic spread in March 2020. Like other national leaders, Conte promised that government would take "extraordinary measures" to protect the Italian people (ITV News 2020).

No simple formulas for governing well

We have learned over the last two decades that there is no simple formula for governing well. Many people thought otherwise in the 1990s. At that time, there was stock advice for leaders everywhere: embrace democracy and the rule of law, restrict government, liberate markets and open borders. These policies were promoted as the only sure path toward peace and prosperity (Friedman 1999: 104; Mandelbaum 2002: 4-5).

National leaders spent the next two decades violating this formula in many ways. In moments of crisis, civil rights were suspended, surveillance was intensified, bureaucracies were expanded, borders were closed, and businesses were nationalized, regulated and shuttered. Realism and pragmatism became the order of the day. Leaders emphasized imminent dangers and promised to “do whatever it takes” to protect their countries. The general principles that were propagated in 1990s were bent to protect homeland security, avert economic collapse, and prevent mass death.

In the 1990s, conventional wisdom said that political leaders should limit their discretion so far as possible. The journalist Thomas Friedman even said that leaders should put themselves in a policy “straitjacket” (Friedman 1999: 104). This conventional wisdom was heavily influenced by the German doctrine known as ordoliberalism, which emerged in reaction to the Weimar era and emphasized the dangers of undisciplined state power (Gerber 1994). Leaders were expected to check their authority by making “binding commitments” to simple policy rules such as keeping a balanced budget, delegating power to arm’s-length agencies, allowing industries to self-regulate, and pushing citizens to accept “personal responsibility” for their circumstances (Harvey 2005: 23 and 76; Roberts 2010).

However, the 2000s illustrated the limitations of the ordoliberal formula. Leaders could not shirk public accountability, and so in moments of duress they broke out of the straitjacket and recovered plenary authority. Leaders also discovered that there were no simple rules to guide decisions in complex and dangerous circumstances. Every crisis required delicate judgments about the substance, calibration and timing of policy: What exactly should government do, when should it act and how far should it go, and when should measures be reversed?

In fact, our experience of governance since 2000 may not be unusual. If we take a long view of history, shocks and stresses – wars, internal disorders, economic disruptions, epidemics, natural disasters – are commonplace. Leaders are inevitably stuck with the difficult task of steering through the shoals. Moreover, turbulent conditions are likely to continue for the remainder of this century. We can expect further dislocations because of climate change, advances in artificial intelligence and automation, shifts in power among nations, population aging and other demographic transformations. In addition, there is the continued risk of pandemics, financial crises and surges of terrorism.

Focusing on governance strategies in turbulent times

In a recent book, *Strategies for Governing*, I have argued that specialists in public administration should reframe their work to accommodate the realities of

this dangerous century (Roberts 2019). I argue that the mainstream of public administration – the scholarship that is represented in top international journals – spends too much time addressing governance problems of the late twentieth century. The aim at that time was to make government “work better and cost less” in an environment characterized by erratic economic growth and growing resistance to taxes (Gore 1993). Hence the emphasis on downsizing bureaucracies, performance-based controls, alternative modes of service delivery, and reliance on market mechanisms, among other topics.

I also suggest in this book that the study of public administration can be approached at different levels of analysis (See Table 1). The research agenda in the period between the early 1980s and early 2000s was focused intensely at the middle- or meso-level. The emphasis was on innovations in management and program design that would improve efficiency and effectiveness. At the same time, there was less attention within mainstream scholarship to high-level matters of governance – that is, the processes by which national priorities and broad national policies are determined and translated into action. In a sense, the field de-skilled itself. The training of new scholars did not emphasize high-level questions and how these questions could be examined systematically.

In periods of calm, when national priorities are well-established, neglect of the macro-level may not matter very much. We can take the broad arc of national policy for granted and operate within it. By contrast, neglect of the macro-level is highly problematic during periods of turbulence. National priorities and the broad lines of policy are likely to change quickly, with important consequences at the lower levels of administration. If we do not study the macro-level, and understand its dynamics, we are apt to be caught flat-footed – as we have been repeatedly over the last two decades.

We need to complement existing research, which is focused on the middle- and micro-levels of governance, with more research that is focused on

Table 1. *Levels of Analysis in Public Administration*

Macro-level	Study of the governance strategies that are devised by leaders to advance critical national interests and the ways in which these strategies influence the overall architecture of the state
Meso-level	Study of the design, consolidation, administration, and reform of specific institutions—that is, laws, organizations, programs and practices—within the state
Micro-level	Study of the attitudes and behavior of officials within the state apparatus and of people who are subject to their authority

Source: Roberts (2019: 17).

the macro-level. In other words, we should emphasize the realm of grand politics.

I approach this subject in the following way. Every state has a ruling group that is concerned with determining national priorities and the broad policies by which those priorities will be pursued. These two elements – priorities and policies – constitute a strategy for governing. Strategies are executed by building or reforming institutions: laws, organizations, programs and practices. This complex of institutions constitutes the state, but it can also be regarded as an expression of strategy.

Specialists in public administration have an immediate interest in overall strategy and the processes by which it is formulated. High-level strategy dictates the path of administrative reform. People who want to know where administrative reform is headed will naturally want to understand the strategy that is guiding it. At the same, high-level decisions about strategy ought to be influenced by knowledge about what institutions are capable of doing, or might be capable of doing after reform. Consequently, specialists in public administration should be skilled in providing advice to national leaders as strategies are formulated.

Implications for public administration research

How would the scholarly agenda in public administration change if we took the macro-level seriously? We might pay more attention to processes of decision-making at the apex of government. This is the space in which many key strategic choices are made. We want people at the top who are well-qualified and approach their work with the right mentality. Decision-makers must be supported by agencies and processes that improve their ability to anticipate dangers, make plans, and respond intelligently to rapidly evolving events (Weller et al. 1997: Chapter 1; Boston 2014: Part 3; Wu et al. 2018; Fuerth and Ronis 2020). Skill in inter-governmental coordination, especially on non-routine business, is also critical. So too is a capacity for wide-scale executive organization – or “whole of government reform” – to assure that public institutions are properly oriented to major threats, and using the best available technologies (Arnold 1981; Christensen and Laegreid 2007). I do not argue that these topics have been ignored over the last thirty years. But they have fallen out of fashion in mainstream research.

In some ways, Canadian scholars have an advantage with regard to the shaping of a new agenda for public administration. There are lines of research that have persisted in Canada while they have faded in the United States and the handful of other countries that dominate mainstream public administration. J.E. Hodgetts, for example, has been rightly celebrated for his body of work. Hodgetts emphasized the “great tasks” of government and insisted on the need for a “broader understanding of politics” as well as

“deep historical study of the many environmental factors” influencing public administration (Gow et al. 2011: 169, 173 and 184). These are exactly the qualities that should be emphasized today. And of course there is a long tradition in Canadian scholarship of research on high-level decision-making, policy and planning capacity, and intergovernmental coordination (French 1984; Bakvis 2000; Inwood et al. 2011).

This journal recently featured a colloquy on the state of public administration research in Canada (Volume 61, Issue 3) that asked whether the Canadian scholarly community was “punching below its weight . . . on the world stage” (Charbonneau et al. 2018). Canadian research, it was argued, is not cited as much in the mainstream literature as it should be. But this may not be a problem if the mainstream literature is not focused on the range of questions that are likely to be critical in coming decades.

The present crisis presents an opportunity for Canadian scholars to chart a course that is suited to Canadian needs and also provides a model to scholars elsewhere about the reorientation that is needed within the field of public administration. We have an opportunity to build on the historic strengths of Canadian scholarship and advocate for an approach better suited to dangerous times. This approach would combine an appreciation of the challenges of statecraft, sensitivity to a wide range of “environmental factors,” a historical sensibility, and a capacity to engage in informed speculation about future states.

Government-civil society relations post-pandemic: a reinvention triptych

Susan D. Phillips

The convergence of the global pandemic and accelerated movement for the racial/Indigenous justice is set to reshape governments’ relationships with civil society. How public services are financed and delivered, how governments engage with communities and the nonprofit sector, and how both governments and nonprofits practice meaningful inclusion will need to be radically reformed.

Reinventing service delivery

Think ahead, say, five years. You can’t visit grandma in palliative care, send your kids to summer camp, go to the theatre or access many other services that matter to you. The barrier is not a continued requirement for physical distancing, rather that the charities and nonprofits that once provided these services no longer exist due to COVID-19.

The first challenge for public management post-pandemic, then, will be how to recoup lost services valued by citizens. COVID-19 is already having

a devastating effect on Canada's charitable and nonprofit sector, which employs about 10 percent of the workforce (Statistics Canada 2017). With fundraising events cancelled, venues closed, ticket sales lost, other earned-income evaporated, and volunteers forced away, 70 percent of charities are experiencing reduced revenues, on average about a 30 percent decline (Imagine Canada 2020; ONN 2020; Sask Nonprofit 2020). One in five charities, out of 86,000, will likely close or merge (Imagine Canada 2020), negatively affecting a diversity of subsectors including human services, arts and culture, faith, sports, and international aid. The effects are likely to be place-differentiated, with some locales hollowed out of organizations to a greater extent than others, creating "charity deserts" (Mohan 2015) that leave already vulnerable communities even more vulnerable (Black to the Future 2020). COVID-19 has also pulled back the curtain on the gendered nature of the sector and on precarious work that is under-paid, lacking pensions and benefits and unstable due to short-term contracts, which particularly impacts racialized and immigrant women (Thériault and Vaillancourt n.d.; ONN 2018). In addition, the essential, often invisible role played by volunteers (mainly older women) and families in shoring-up under-staffed facilities became apparent as the pandemic took its toll on long term care homes.

An optimistic, short-term approach for recovery of the nonprofit sector is to extend wage subsidies and other community funding so that there is a "ramp" rather than a "cliff" (Social Ventures Australia and CSI 2020) off the public sector supports, allowing organizations to retain staff and regain stable revenues. The assumption of this "organic" approach to rebuilding is that, with the help of philanthropy and innovative new business models, resilient organizations will survive and, over time, new ones will spring up to replace those that do not make it. This scenario will not be an effective route to restoring publicly valued services and a vibrant nonprofit sector, however. Philanthropy is no substitute for government, and charitable giving and volunteering has been stagnant for years (Lasby and Barr 2018). Although almost \$50 billion in assets are held by private foundations in Canada (PFC 2019) – most of it held in perpetuity with a mandatory payout of 3.5 percent annually – this will not suddenly be spent out to cover the \$15 billion that is predicted to be lost from the sector due to COVID-19 (Imagine Canada 2020). More than a return to the status quo of 2019 will be required: the "charity model" that has been an integral part of the liberal welfare state over the past fifty years needs to be reinvented.

The charity model relies on a "goodwill" motivation or "passion bonus" to substitute for full compensation of wages and organizational operating costs. With centuries old roots in religion, the charity model was secularized in the Victorian era, absorbed into the creation of the modern welfare state in liberal regimes such as Canada and widely expanded under New Public Management (NPM) beginning in the late 1980s. The contemporary

manifestation, which Canadian public administration initially dubbed “alternative service delivery (ASD),” puts an emphasis in government-nonprofit contracting on state control and accountability for public money (Armstrong 1998). Governments determine the deliverables of contracts, manage competitive bidding processes, set results-based frameworks and impose strict accountability and reporting requirements. These contracts rarely pay the full cost of service provision, however, reflecting a popular view that funders (and donors) should not be responsible for “overhead” or administration costs. For nonprofits, this has fuelled a “starvation cycle” (Hager et al. 2004; Leczy and Searing 2015) – a systematic under-investment in the infrastructure such as technology, training and personnel that supports resilience and innovation. This also makes it very difficult to accumulate reserve funds that could support more than three months of operations (ONN 2020), which is contributing to the quick demise of many charities.

For Canadian governments, the charity model has enabled policy neglect of this sector. While there have been attempts at reform, most with limited success, these have focused quite narrowly on contracting arrangements (e.g. Independent Blue Ribbon Panel on Federal Grant and Contribution Programs 2006) or charity regulation (e.g. Joint Regulatory Table 2003), rather than on the broader policy frameworks and machinery that structure and guide relationships between the state and the sector (Anheier and Toepler 2019). A Special Senate Committee on the Charitable Sector took up some of these broader issues in its 2019 report, offering 42 specific recommendations for strengthening the sector and its relationship with the federal government – recommendations that have yet to be implemented. However, the “rubber hits the road” relationships occur primarily with provincial governments, some of which have demonstrated open hostility to nonprofits, particularly those undertaking policy advocacy, in recent years.

Canadian public administration scholarship has not motivated deeper examination of these policy frameworks and, indeed, has facilitated considerable complacency. Beginning in the 2000s, Canadian scholars embraced the paradigm of “New Public Governance (NPG)” which originated in Europe and emphasizes networked, collaborative governance and the co-creation of policy between governments and nonprofits. Conceptually, NPG has much to offer as a model of cross-sector collaboration. But we have failed to test well empirically its existence in the Canadian context. Indeed, we often repeated the notion that such co-creation existed until we began to believe it, or based our evidence on a few, usually favourable case studies. Thus, we tended to conclude, with some cautions, that “co-governance of policy offers the nonprofit sector unprecedented opportunities to influence policy and craft policy solutions” (Brock 2020: 267).

I hope that I am wrong in my own, unsubstantiated assertion of the limited presence of collaborative governance in Canadian public management.

Perhaps opportunities are unprecedented, but policy co-creation with the nonprofit sector still seems constrained in our country. It is telling, for instance, that the initial federal proposal for wage subsidies for workers displaced by COVID-19 and other supports for employers did not include charities and nonprofits, and it took quick advocacy by sector leaders to get them covered by these programs (Emergency Coalition of Canadian Charities 2020). The fiasco of the agreement (and its subsequent cancellation) with Canada's "celebrity" charity – the We Charity founded and run by the Kielburger brothers – to manage the \$543 million Student Service Grant program on the justification that it was the only charity capable of such delivery sadly reflects on how little the federal government understands or has constructive dialogue with the sector.

Community mobilization

As Canadians (for the most part) heeded the call to "stay home" during the early stages of the pandemic, an informal movement of "caremongering" arose – neighbours formed small pods to help neighbours and grassroots groups of mutual and community aid quickly formed (Moscrop 2020). This informal, place-based community mobilization has been counterbalanced by the nation-wide protests and other forms of collective action in support of the international anti-racism movement. What makes the 2020 round of anti-racism mobilization a critical change moment is its broad base of support: while Millennials and Gen Zs have been the primary participants in demonstrations, three-quarters of Canadians support the demonstrations, with such support consistent across the country and across gender, ethnicity and social-economic status (Narrative Research 2020).

The combination of local, self-help and national, systemic-change movements creates new dynamics for public policy and management. A renewal of the importance of place can be anticipated. The effects of COVID-19 have been felt quite differently in different places – between urban and rural, among and within cities – highlighting place-specific economic and social disparities, the importance of leadership by mayors and municipal governments, and the need for policies on opening the economy to be place-sensitive. In pandemic recovery and rebuilding, the exigencies of place will need to be incorporated into public policy and service reconfiguration by all levels of government. In spite of a spatial turn in public policy and in social science scholarship (Logan 2012) in many other countries over the past decade or so, the national and provincial politics of Canada have made differentiation by place quite difficult. And, Canadian scholarship has similarly lagged behind, with few taking up Bradford's (2005) call to take place more seriously in policy and research. The pursuit of more place-based policy, planning and philanthropy, however, needs to avoid an inherent paradox: that with

a greater focus on locale, the risk is diminishing the ability to draw together cross-sector in order to pursue big issues such as sustainable development goals and climate change.

Action on such issues will hinge on meaningful forms of public and community engagement by governments. With heightened collective action, particularly the pressure for fundamental changes to public services such as policing and the revival of attention to climate change post-pandemic, the current practices of “consultation” will be neither legitimate nor adequate to support the kind of systemic changes that are in motion. New processes and mechanisms that engage civil society leaders and citizens in deeper dialogue on complex issues and ways to rebuild the nonprofit sector will need to be developed and tested. Perhaps we will get to NPG after all. We also have an opportunity to build upon the community mobilization of COVID-19 to strengthen the culture of philanthropy and create stronger infrastructure for volunteering, participation and giving.

Diversity, equity and inclusion

The third challenge is not only engaging in more meaningful ways with diverse communities, but ensuring diverse communities are more meaningfully engaged within both governments and civil society organizations. While better practices of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) have been on the agenda for years, they are now at the heart of the ability to implement major change.

Accompanied by mandatory reporting on the legislated “equity” categories, the federal and many provincial governments have achieved increased representation of racialized and Indigenous employees, nearing or even surpassing the levels of workforce availability, although with reduced participation in the executive categories (TBS 2020). However, the nonprofit sector lags behind governments in DEI. While data are limited and there is no mandatory reporting on the composition of boards of directors of Canadian charities or their senior management, only an estimated 12 percent of those in leadership roles are from racialized groups, and in a city as diverse as Toronto, only 17.4 percent in 2017 – a slight decrease from 2014 (Cukier 2018).

Inclusion is more than a number, however, but is both a behaviour and an outcome. As Fredette and Bernstein (2019) note, having a critical mass of “minorities” (including youth) on a board not only produces more equitable boardrooms, but it shifts control that is often held in check by the majority, and thus promotes the exercise of collective influence that changes behaviour and can advance change. Meaningful inclusion needs to cultivate leadership pipelines and talent development, strengthen governance and management practices, and provide better reporting on DEI practices (Omidvar 2020). The post-pandemic world will put an onus on nonprofit

leaders and public service executives to be more strategic and risk taking as they adapt to the digital and technological transformation and work-from-home routines. If post-pandemic there is a large scale exit of leaders from the public and nonprofit sectors, the opportunity window to implement a human resource renewal plan and cultivate new leadership in an inclusive manner will be narrow.

Conclusion

“Never waste a good crisis” – the line simultaneously attributed to Machiavelli, Churchill and Saul Alinsky in *Rules for Radicals* – is a fitting mantra for 2020. Canadian public management faces not one, but two historical moments that have created an imperative for change in policies, practices and scholarship. The disastrous effects of COVID-19 on the nonprofit sector require not mere recovery and restoration of the status quo but reinvention of models of service delivery, better means of engagement in policy development, and more effective inclusion and human resource strategies. More place-sensitive approaches supported by better data and data analytics will be essential. The mobilization of grassroots self-help as well as Millennials and Gen Zs demonstrating against racism creates an opportunity to renew a culture of philanthropy, volunteering and activism. Finally, public management scholarship has much work to do in providing better conceptual and empirical analyses of the government-civil society nexus.

COVID-19: governance strategies for managing uncertain risks

Kevin Quigley

Each year, government scientists estimate the health of fish stocks in order to set total allowable catches for the opening of fishing seasons. In reference to the estimate, a scientist once noted to me that counting fish is as easy as counting trees, except the fish are invisible and they move.¹ Infectious diseases like COVID-19 can be described in a similar way. In fact, it’s even more challenging because it is a new variant of the disease (WHO, January 21, 2020; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention May 13, 2020) with many unknowns about how the disease spreads, which makes existing data and past experiences only so helpful.

The International Risk Governance Council (IRGC) framework (2008) divides risks into four classes: simple, complex, uncertain, and ambiguous.² The classification of risk is “not related to the intrinsic characteristics of hazards or risks themselves but to the state and quality of knowledge available about both hazards and risks” (Renn and Walker 2008: 18). In the risk governance literature, we would classify the risks associated with COVID-19 as

uncertain. Uncertain risks exist where there is “a lack of clear scientific or technical basis for decision making” (Renn and Walker 2008: 18–19). In short, there is an absence of reliable predictive data. While experts may know a lot about infectious diseases, the magnitude and novelty of the social, health and economic disruption caused by COVID-19 constitutes a significant challenge to any knowledge claims. While terrorism and climate change have different consequences and time horizons when compared to pandemics, they are also examples of uncertain risks.

Challenges of uncertainty

Uncertainty challenges experts. Uncertain risks frequently generate surprises or realizations that risk modelling frameworks fail to anticipate or explain. Experts can simply get it wrong. We have seen this in the pandemic: the threat was clearly underestimated in February, and precious time was lost in preparing (Shear et al. April 1, 2020 and Doolittle June 26, 2020); public health officials have also changed their advice from time to time, as they did about whether or not people should wear masks to limit the spread of the disease (Cheng June 9, 2020) or whether or not it could be spread by the asymptomatic (Tompkins June 9, 2020 and WHO July 9, 2020).

It is also difficult to anticipate how the public will react to uncertain risks. The psychology of risk literature identifies several biases in people’s ability to draw inferences in the face of uncertainty. People are particularly anxious about unknown and high dread risks (Craig 2005 and Quigley et al. 2017: 12). Unknown risks include those that are unobservable, unknown to those exposed and to science, new and have a delayed effect. High dread risks include those that are understood to be uncontrollable, inequitable in their reach, potentially catastrophic, high risk to the future, not easily reduced, include involuntary exposure and affect people personally. Uncertain risks like pandemics have many of these characteristics. Moreover, our willingness to tolerate risk is influenced by a variety of social factors, including age, gender, income, employment status, ethnicity, lived experiences, (dis)ability, geographic location, worldviews and institutional arrangements (Jaeger et al. 2001; Quigley et al. 2017; and Hood et al. 2001: 9).

Psychologists recommend aligning mental models between experts and laypeople (Morgan et al. 2001). Experts provide information to lay audiences to get them to think of the risk as experts do. This strategy makes sense but has limitations in practice. The experts’ messages have to be accessible and include appropriate actions people can take to manage the risk; experts are not always known for such clarity. Different advice from around the world about how to act in the face of COVID-19 and different regulations implemented within different provinces, territories, and states of the same country (e.g. Canada and the United States) serves to confuse, not clarify

(Beech et al. May 3, 2020; Hale et al. May 2020; Neustaeter July 6, 2020; and Cheng June 9, 2020). Also, audiences do not always trust experts. Finally, people also show confirmation bias (Wason 1960), which suggests they seek information to confirm, not to challenge, how they feel about issues.

Other psychological biases may work against public health challenges like pandemics, in particular. The relationship between people's anxiety levels and their willingness to engage in preventive or containment measures is well documented (for examples, see Tausczik et al. 2012; Hilton and Smith 2010; Jones and Salathé 2009). Government recommendations during a pandemic are more likely to be followed by those who perceive the risk of infection to be greater. Unfortunately, the relationship between people's anxiety and the probability of them becoming ill can be weak (Jones and Salathé 2009). From a probability point of view, people often feel anxious about the wrong things. Medical advice may also conflict with personal, cultural, or religious beliefs (e.g. see the Ebola case in 2014–15 as described in Manguvo and Mafuvadze [2015] and Landen [2014]). Finally, public health does not always get credit for the work it does, which can limit people's willingness to follow their advice. The successes of public health initiatives suffer from a dilution of benefit, whereby the perceived benefit is diminished because the public no longer observes the consequences of the disease (Poland and Jacobson 2000 and 2001). For example, we frequently learn about the number of people who have COVID-19 or have died as a result of getting COVID-19; we spend less time referring to the number of people who might have contracted the disease had public health not taken such a strong stand.

One of the most common heuristics is *availability*: people tend to believe that an event is more likely to occur when they can imagine or recall it easily (for examples, see Slovic et al. 1982; Folkes 1988; Betsch and Pohl 2002; Tversky and Kahneman 1973; Maldonato and Dell'Orco 2011). The availability heuristic provides important insights into our reaction to COVID-19. Our understanding of pandemics has been shaped by SARS, H1N1 and Ebola, which occurred on a much smaller scale. Because we have never experienced such a large-scale pandemic, we could not imagine it; if we cannot imagine it, it is very difficult to prepare for it. Our failure in imagination, a term once used to describe the US government's failure to anticipate another uncertain risk, 9/11 (The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence 2002), provides insights into the slow start in our response to COVID-19. Now that we have experienced a global lock-down, however, the availability heuristic will shape our response to the second wave. The key will be to avoid overreaction.

Addressing uncertain risks: information, standards, behaviour change

When addressing uncertain risks, the IRGC framework recommends taking a precautionary approach, which is not without controversy. Governments have frequently referred to the use of precaution since the disease started. There are several important questions when it comes to adopting a precautionary stance: Who provides proof that it is warranted? How reliable is the data? Who decides to adopt it? Who is left vulnerable? What constitutes an essential service and is thereby treated differently? Who gains and who pays? How aggressively is the precautionary stance enforced and for how long? The devil is in the detail. Kheifets, Hester, and Banerjee (2001) found considerable variation in how the term *precautionary principle* is used and how the concept is put into practice.

Precautionary approaches are expensive, if not altogether contradictory (Sunstein 2005); COVID-19 has demonstrated clearly what risk analysts think about all the time: there are risks if one acts, just as there are risks if one does not. Focussing narrowly on one risk neglects others. There are no risk-free options, there are only trade-offs. What will the increase in heart disease be because we closed local gyms due to COVID-19? How many kids will get in bike accidents on the road because they are not in supervised summer camps? This tension exposes a particularly problematic calculation when costs and benefits are distributed unequally. Young people seem to be at relatively low risk of serious illness but are paying a high price for job losses (Government of Canada June 10, 2020, "Outbreak Update," and Statistics Canada 2020). There are some analytical tools, such as value of life calculations, but in a popular context they are treated with skepticism and are difficult to implement (Quigley May 5, 2018). In practice we struggle to reconcile these risks.

We need to control the response as best as we can and adapt to changing circumstances as they emerge. Control can be understood according to the three elements of a cybernetic control system – information gathering, standard setting, and behaviour modification (Hood et al. 2001: 23–5). *Information-gathering* in a fluid context is captured by the concept of the knowledge commons. In a paper examining the aftermath of and recovery from the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Comfort et al. (2011) define the knowledge commons as a comprehensive, interactive, emergent system to support decision-making and organizational learning by communities in complex, changing environments. Comfort and Okada (2013: 66) conclude that an extreme event "requires an information infrastructure to facilitate the search for, and exchange of, timely, valid information." A knowledge-commons provides a powerful way of organizing information (and even a guiding principle) to aid management of extreme events. While the knowledge-commons struggles with

standards, formal leadership, and deep learning, the knowledge-commons engages seriously with adaptive capacity to develop more resilient systems. The knowledge commons conceives of a highly dynamic environment in which little is assumed and much is in flux.

Information gathering alone, however, does not control a system. *Standard setting*, which leads to making people accountable for achieving specific goals, and prompting and monitoring *behaviour change* are also crucial aspects to controlling a system. When we consider establishing standards for an uncertain risk, we adopt a precautionary approach if the outcome is potentially catastrophic and/or irreversible. Our standards should be flexible and allow us to adapt as we learn more about the risk. At the same time, we must protect crucial systems whose failure would have a massive and cascading effect. Despite these efforts, we are still left with the question of how much risk we can tolerate, and what degree of failure we are willing to accept, and who pays. To a degree this is a moving target, and context sensitive. In this case, standards are driven by the nature of the risk itself as well as by what we can afford, what technology and the law will allow and what civil society thinks is right. They can also be subject to lobbying by powerful interests and narrowly scrutinized and amplified by a pervasive media in search of conflict and controversy. There has been considerable progress made in the ethics literature including in pandemic response following SARS and H1N1, which is important in a case like COVID-19 (University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics November 2005; WHO 2007; WHO 2016; Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research with the Global Health Ethics Unit (WHO) 2019; International Bioethics Committee and World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology 2020; Government of Canada June 2020).

Motivating behaviour change: investing in foresight and fostering trust

People responsible for critical systems need foresight in order to motivate the appropriate behaviour change. Adaptive capacity is not the strong card of routine-oriented bureaucracies. The intuitive logics school of scenario planning is the most commonly used method for scenario planning (Bradfield et al. 2005), and as a tool can be applied with good effect during times of high uncertainty. Van der Heijden underpins his scenario exercises with strategic conversations and Kolb's learning loop (Van der Heijden 2005; Kolb et al. 1991). He notes, "This is the purpose of scenario work. Think in terms of asking the why question, trying to find the causes of the causes of the causes" (Van der Heijden 1996). Van der Heijden encourages us to examine the underlying causes that created vulnerability in the first place. In this sense, an uncertain risk like COVID-19 is not the cause of the problem;

it has merely exposed underlying problems, as with the instability of the gig economy (Jeon et al. 2019), homelessness (Perri et al. June 2020), and an over-burdened healthcare and long-term care system (Butler 2020 and Royal Society of Canada June 2020), for example.

Van Asselt et al. (2010) represent an advance on Van der Heijden (1996), extending the intuitive method of scenario planning into the policy realm. The scenarios exercises focus on identifying the factors that drive the organization and different plausible futures to which the organization must react. The scenario sessions explore critical uncertainties and the underlying causes of organizational vulnerabilities. Ultimately, scenario planning can identify criteria by which to evaluate new programs, policies and initiatives in light of these uncertain futures. These exercises can generate more adaptive capacity in public bureaucracies and distinguish between those things which public agents can control and those they cannot.

All of these initiatives must be underpinned by trust in public institutions and particularly trust in public health agencies. Compared to other Western countries, Canadians generally trust their government and their doctors (Quigley et al. 2017: 182 and 78); in the middle of a pandemic, this is an advantage. Nevertheless, governments and public health officials will have to continue to earn Canadians' trust. Peters, Covello, and McCallum (1997) identified three dimensions that people tend to look for in others to develop trust: knowledge and expertise; care and concern; and openness and honesty (cited in White and Eiser 2006). These concepts can be applied equally at the organizational level (Gillespie and Dietz 2009). The concept of open communication, in particular, appears repeatedly in research on developing organizational trust (Clark and Payne 1997) and encompasses free data sharing, inclusive decision-making, and collaborative work (Firth-Cozens 2004; Jeffcott et al. 2006). Absent trust, earned through openness, knowledge and concern, uncertain risks can generate volatile responses, which jeopardize the success of any plan.

Conclusion: implications for public administration research

What has been particularly revealing about the COVID-19 experience to date is how much the risk governance literature has to offer to policy design and public administration practice and research. In this sense, we do not need a wholesale change in the direction of the risk literature, but certain aspects will undoubtedly be reviewed in light of COVID-19 and advances will be made. The challenge, though, will be to better incorporate risk-governance concepts and findings from empirical studies into public administration scholarship in Canada for the host of emerging, anticipated, and unanticipated crises on the horizon.

Creating more adaptive capacity in the bureaucracy, and anticipating the unanticipated, collective risk tolerance, ethics and our application of the precautionary principle are not new subjects but the challenges with them persist and the take-up of them in public-administration research lags. Rather than focus only on ex-post reviews of what occurred after crises, more scholarship should focus on design, with estimates of the extent to which desired outcomes can be achieved in different scenarios and, this, by definition, requires becoming more familiar with and using a variety of modelling and foresight approaches (Jones 2017). All of this requires further investigation by the academic community.

International boundaries, borders, and the Coronavirus pandemic: a new era in border policy and public administration research?

Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly

This commentary explores what the biological, immunological borders of the Coronavirus mean to the borders of human communities in a context where immunization is not yet available. Are international boundary lines likely to be the best places to implement (health) policies to control the spread of COVID-19, and why or why not? The challenge posed to border policies by COVID-19 requires novel thinking about borders and about the reach of health policies to control and eradicate the coronavirus.

Below I explore various options and debates regarding a number of policy alternatives and suggest focusing on counter-intuitive policy approaches that underscore the limited effectiveness of an international boundary line lockdown, as a *front*, to stop the virus spread. Four public governance approaches are discussed and analyzed – do-nothing, virus mitigation, virus suppression, and virus elimination – which leave us with new conceptions of borders. With appropriate policy alignments constituencies may be able to implement biological boundaries within or across countries, cities or other regions of the world that are virus free. This short commentary is a plea for more research from public administration scholars in this area of border studies and, in particular, to study the types of governance and collaborations necessary to “border Coronavirus out” of Canadian communities.

Different approaches and thinking differently about COVID-19

Our context is particularly worrisome: (1) the virus reproduces at a ratio of 1 for 3, suggesting a doubling of infected individuals every five days because

(2) asymptomatic cases can shed COVID-19 up to 21 days (1 in 10,000 cases) while 90% of cases have symptoms within 3-5 days. Research in contact-tracing has confirmed that 50% of cases are infected by asymptomatic cases (Nishiura et al. 2020), which testing (both serological or nasal swab) struggles catching (Gudbjartsson et al. 2020). Countries have struggled and adopted very different strategies. Consider three examples:

- At the end of March 2020, Finland's capital region was closed to the rest of the country. Indeed, because the rest of the country is sparsely populated, hospitals across Finland were protected from the Helsinki population and particularly *asymptomatic* individuals infected with COVID-19. Only police, military officials, medical staff and other authorized individuals could travel across Finland. Social distancing enforcement was the shared burden of policing and of private businesses and public sector organizations – going to the office was forbidden, electronic keys, which allowed both entry/exit, and surveillance, registered all infringements, and fines would be automatically debited from your account. The Finnish governance of the pandemic put the whole country into lockdown and placed the border within the country by isolating communities from each other.
- The Republic of China (Taiwan) government cross-referenced health and travel databases to identify high-risk individuals and relied on immigration and health services to locate potential at-risk hosts – whether at home, the airport or seaport – to quarantine them systematically (Wang et al. 2020; Republic of China 2019, Kornreich and Jin 2020). The *Taiwan National Health Command Center* (NHCC) was placed under the authority of the *Center for Disease Control* (CDC) and, since 2003 and the SARS epidemic, the *Ministry of Health and Welfare* worked to establish multiple government databases with the *National Health Insurance* and the *Taiwan National Infectious Disease Statistics System* to integrate information systems. By 2017, the Ministry established a plan to increase health inspection capacity in ports and airports, a “smart quarantine network” involving more staff and equipment purchase (infrared temperature), and also launched an information campaign targeting all Taiwanese travelling abroad (two million live and work in mainland China). All policy interventions were whole-government actions under the coordination of the *Central Epidemic Command Center* (CECC) headed by the Minister of Health and Welfare. CECC intervened in intelligence, operation and logistics (TCECCEP 2020).
- In British Columbia, which had relatively successful early interventions and encouragement to wall our bodies from the coronavirus and opted for “buy-in” from the public rather than a compliance approach. We have been told to wash our hands with soap or antiseptics (British Columbia 2020, BCCSA 2020a; 2020b), keep your distance, wear a mask to protect others;

health care workers wear protective gear (suit, mask, shield, gloves). The mantra of “*be kind, be calm and be safe*” (McElroy 2020: 68) has accompanied the expansion of virtual health care, and when safe, in-person care, for instance, for coronavirus patients (Doctors of BC 2020). Complementing this was Canada’s closure of its southern border, by agreement with the United States.

Although not first apparent, each example points to different underlying strategies for drawing borders around countries, communities, individuals, and the virus.

Even before COVID-19, the literature on the geopolitical governance of borders was shifting from strict territorial bordering to regional and possibly global functional borders of connectivity, reflecting trends in global connectivity and global trade. Recent research submits that “borderescaping” (Brambilla 2015) is a prime concept to understand cooperation across borders and borderlands while the “vacillation” (Balibar 1998) of border policies is also debated along with suggestions that borders are in “motion” (Konrad 2015) or “mobile” (Amilhat Szary and Girault 2015), or again that because of timescale-transformations borders’ bend (Chen 2005). Certainly, Ōmae’s idea of the borderless world (Ōmae 1990) has lost prominence. In the era of COVID-19, when looking back just a few weeks, too few research projects appear from public policy research about international boundaries and pandemics (Bell 2004; Brownstein et al. 2006; Viboud et al. 2006; Colizza et al. 2007; Cooper et al. 2006; Grais et al. 2003; McLeod et al. 2008; Mensua et al. 2019; Neumann et al. 2010). The few studies published in medical and science journals underscore the alarming “*very few carefully planned strategies at the border*” and extremely few are done in or about Canada (Hanvoravongchai et al. 2010; Neis et al. 2020; Henry 2019; Harvey et al. 2014; Khan et al. 2013).

Few border gates at airports, seaports or land crossings have ever been equipped to stop viruses. Traditionally, border gates, airports and seaports are sites of control of goods and migration. They require specialized bureaucracies: the custom and immigration services. The ancestral idea of a border-wall at boundary line, such as the XIV century Toulon Wall, did not stop the plague successfully (D’Allemand 1760). Undeniably, the annual flu virus does not stop at any boundary lines. Indeed, viruses cross a biological border between two or multiple hosts, and COVID-19, a 1/10.000 of a millimeter virus, only needs to attach itself to a human cell, to penetrate it like a *Trojan horse*, to then multiply and invade the host, and then sheds, when the host coughs and speaks (for example); international boundary lines are not equipped to implement a biological border to COVID-19.

In other words, without medication or vaccination, we need to *think differently* about the governance of our border policies so we can stop COVID-19 from invading human hosts one by one. How should we proceed to bring an

entire population so called “T-cell” to learn to fight this new virus without the horrendous cost of life, of one to six percent death currently recorded across the world (Johns Hopkins University 2020) but also the extreme strain on national public and private health systems? Reaching mass immunity is not that simple and bears alarming costs (Brunet-Jailly 2020). The question then remains how do we break the chain of virus reproduction now that immunologists are telling us the virus is *deadly and spreads from people without symptoms*? And, if we insist on using international boundaries to stop a virus, we need to rethink *what state services stand guard at border gates*. It should not be the military or customs or immigration officers unless they develop medical-corps. State agencies thus need to further expand to provide specialized services at the border crossing.

Four options for “bordering” COVID-19

One hundred and fifty days into the pandemic, while billions of dollars and thousands of researchers are testing various vaccinations, there are four policy and governance options that have emerged around the world that use various algorithms to benchmark their response against the virus. All four have closed international boundaries at some point during the pandemic fight. The first one is do little and wait for *crowd-immunity* to develop. The second approach is *mitigating* the spread, the third approach is *suppressing* the spread and fourth is *eliminating* the virus. As discussed below, only *eliminating* the virus may justify using international boundary lines as the frontiers to stop virus spread unless safe bubbles are established between states or other constituencies aligning their policies.

The *crowd-immunity* (or “do-nothing”) strategy requires the least amount of resources invested in fighting the virus. It does not require the closing of the international boundary line; borders can remain open as well as trade flows; and traditional services do not need to adapt their modes of operation. Crowd immunity (D’Souza and Dowdy 2020) was discussed in most Scandinavian countries from February 2020 and in the United States, and adopted by Sweden. However, people die at a relatively higher rate than with other governance options, and life itself has a cost as well (Brown 2020, Brunet-Jailly 2020). A recent study shows that 50-60% of the “most vulnerable might lose their lives in order to attain a 70% total immunized population” (Mukherjee and Biman 2020). In such an option the virus spread is left unattended and may even be encouraged so that natural selection progressively leads to crowd immunity once enough individuals are immune (i.e. the virus hosts have enough t-cells to fight and kill the virus rather than spread it further).

The *mitigating strategy* aims to flatten the curve to slow the transmission rate and number of deaths and to protect an overflow at medical health facilities – these are the two goals set out up-front in British Columbia (Henry

2019) and Canada. It does aim at reducing the overall number of cases primarily by spreading the number of cases over time, and concurrently, at reducing the number of deaths because medical institutions are able to cope. To flatten the curve, government uses information to implement six goals: *hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, cleaning commonly used surfaces, use of surgical masks, voluntary self-isolation and voluntary home quarantine* (Henry 2019). Progressively, this approach implements “social distancing,” imposing tighter requirements over time; hence closing schools, forbidding large gatherings, forbidding travelling for non-essential services such as closing cities or urban regions to protect country-side medical facilities. Ultimately, the extreme decision of a full lock-down (e.g. India in April 2020) may lead to sealing off a country from the rest of the world. BC kept a long list of essential services open; but social distancing impacted some economic sectors much more than others: tourism for instance. This option may keep international boundaries open to certain traffic and trading activities.

Importantly, in such an option, all borders are *around human communities*, and they are not breaking the virus transmission chain between hosts. Indeed, one issue with lockdowns and social distancing is social discipline and the very real respect of social distancing – because that distance is the biological border between the death and reproduction of COVID-19. In case social distancing is difficult or impossible, for instance, in overcrowded dwellings, clusters of viruses spread can thrive; as in Singapore and India, for instance (Palma 2020; Schultz and Sameer 2020), or in and around meat plants (Reuben 2020). The success of social distancing strategies requires more than the will and discipline of individuals: it also requires a redesign of overcrowded facilities. Vigorous social distancing can be a successful strategy if it creates a border between a virus host and potential hosts. Most importantly, *mitigating* and *social distancing* cannot be implemented easily at an international boundary line without other policy instruments and prescriptions because they do not single-out virus hosts. The border is around each potential host and all members of the same community or constituency.

A *coronavirus suppression strategy* requires going beyond mitigation to track the reproduction chain between a virus host and a potential host. It requires a steady imposition of *quarantine* to (1) all infected and (2) all likely infected but asymptomatic individuals. It prioritizes protecting a community against a potential individually infected host. Each host must be interviewed to track down the origin of the virus across any possible community lines of transmission. A biological boundary line is drawn around each possible host. Tracking down the origin of a virus host, and virus spread, is not dissimilar from traditional police-inspection repertoires when symptomatic individuals are asked about previous social interactions and likely origin of the virus. Infection tracking devices/apps may be used across international

boundary lines. The European Union, for instance, has agreed to share all national COVID-19 tracking information across all 28-member states (European Commission 2020). Specific national apps are approved and invited to join in the single *European Federation Gateway Service* that allows the transmission of the diagnostic keys of infected EU citizens every two hours (eHealth Network 2020). However, if there is less than 60% take-up within a given population, the app approach is ineffective (Ferretti et al. 2020). For the European Union this means that up to 300 million people should have such apps on their tablets or cellphones. Clearly, such an option needs clear privacy protection law standards. More research and discussion are necessary (Lyon 2020), but Google and Apple have partnered to make their platforms and cellphone app friendly to contact-tracing technologies (Apple Newsroom 2020) (as of May 2020 the Bluetooth interoperability functionality was updated on my phone).

Once a community has engaged with the suppression strategy, it requires additional policy tools: (1) widespread community testing and (2) strict contact-tracing and quarantining. Indeed, elimination requires going full-out with contact-tracing, quarantining and testing; undeniably, the lockdown, social distancing, or do-nothing options are not used at all in such a strategy. Each infected host is “bordered-out” of the community thanks to a biological border: isolation (i.e. quarantining) such as in Korea (Dudden and Marks 2020). It brings the border to the virus and each individual host and breaks the chain of transmission. Such strategies have been implemented in Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong but also in South Korea and New Zealand; all have involved testing, and some form of enforced surveillance thanks to a contact-tracing app, a wrist or ankle bracelet, and quarantine (or hospitalization).

The *elimination strategy* can implement the policy at the border because it uses the crossing of the boundary line as a key way to identify high at-risk individuals. For example, in Taiwan by February 18th, 2020, all hospitals, clinics, pharmacies had the travel histories of their patients and all Taiwanese and foreign residents were monitored via their mobile phones. All those who had travelled were to quarantine for 14 days (Wang et al. 2020: 1342). Taiwan’s Ministry of Health and Welfare controls this specific aspect of the border crossing. In Taiwan, the border is both physical (entering or exiting the international boundary), electronic (mobile phone app), and biological (quarantine).

Implications for further research

The study of borders and borderlands, anchored by a number of international journals and numerous research collaborations, has attracted an ever-widening interdisciplinary group of scholars from around the world, but

public administration scholars have been under-represented in these networks. As this short commentary demonstrates, there is considerable scope for leading-edge research on the governance, policies, and administrative arrangements associated with borders. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, here are some topics which could benefit from governance and public administration researchers:

1. Which COVID-19 governance strategies were adopted by different countries or subnational jurisdictions? Which were most successful in the short, medium and longer terms? Does the assignment of lead administrative responsibility for responding to the crisis matter, especially with respect to coordinating effort and working across boundaries?
2. Looking to the medium and longer term, what will be the impact of COVID-19 on the panoply of border-related policies (e.g. custom and trade, immigration, work and tourism visas, security and intelligence, health, support for international institutions, international development)?
3. Looking beyond the immediate crisis, and taking a machinery-of-government perspective, does this augur well for new ways to configure ministerial and administrative oversight for “border governance and administration” at the national level? What are the implications for furthering federal-provincial-territorial cooperation? What about the need to work with business and nonprofit actors in different sectors?
4. Has digitalization and working across borders received additional “oxygen” from the COVID-19 experience to date? Will this cause us to further rethink the governance of borders from a policy and administrative perspective?

My hope is that this commentary will stimulate collaboration with public administration scholars on borders and borderlands within and across Canada and with border scholars worldwide.

More crises to come: managing risk and fostering resilience with the COVID-19 pandemic recovery

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Our response to the current COVID-19 health crisis is unprecedented. We have never confined the population at a global scale nor ratcheted back the economy as we did this year, for protecting people from a sanitary risk. This situation demonstrates the value health has for our societies and the immense agency of our governments. This response also carries the risk of transforming this sanitary crisis into an economic and a social one, as we

already can see the impacts of the pandemic and economic slowdown on social inequities.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 will only be one of the many forthcoming crises of this century. The degradation of the environment is now a major threat to human health and survival (Haines et al. 2014; Neira 2014; Watts et al. 2018). Climate change, only one aspect of the ecological crisis, is considered the most important threat to humanity (Watts et al. 2015). Our populations prepare to live with natural phenomena such as floods, fires, pest infestations, but also with increased risks to health, livelihoods, biodiversity, and with mass migrations and increased social fractures (Brousselle and McDavid 2020; IPCC 2019, 2018; Watts et al. 2015).

The way our governments will lead us out of the COVID-19 crisis will be critical in preparing us for the next series of crises. What would be the key elements of recovery plans that would help our society reduce the risks from upcoming crises? Can we rethink about our economy and society in a way that will reduce forthcoming risks? These questions call us to define and understand risk, which we will do in the first section of this article. We then articulate how the risk can be reduced, offering avenues for planning post-COVID-19. How we pull together in recovering from the current crisis will be crucial to strengthening our ability to respond to as well as protect ourselves from future crises.

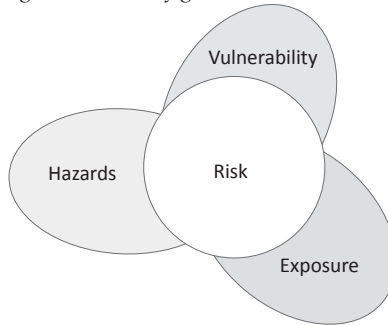
Defining and reducing risk

What made our governments take such drastic measures was the health risk COVID-19 constitutes. Health is a right and primary determinant of society's capacity to engage in activities. It requires careful consideration because it potentially has implications for different sectors of society. Risk to health is at the conjunction of three things: hazards, exposure, and vulnerability (see Figure 1) (Whitmee et al. 2015).

Without a hazard, there is no risk; however, the existence of a hazard does not necessarily mean there is risk. For example, an earthquake in Mexico does not create a risk for people living in other regions of the world. To be at risk requires a hazard and exposure to it. In turn, hazard and exposure together are not sufficient to create risk: an individual, community or population must also have *vulnerability* when exposed to a hazard. For example, each year new colds (the hazard) circulate in communities. Many people will get sick (exposure), but they will not die because they are not vulnerable to this disease. This trilogy of risk elements can also apply to natural events such as earthquakes, floods, heat waves, zoonoses, loss of biodiversity, pollution, and climate change, etc.

To reduce risk, we need to eliminate at least one of the three dimensions. *Mitigation* seeks to reduce hazards, but not all can be eliminated. With climate

Figure 1. *Understanding Risk* [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



change, for example, mitigation actions involve reducing greenhouse gas emissions globally to reduce global warming, or its pace. With environmental threats, we have the capacity to act by taking action to reduce pollution in air, soil, and water by protecting biodiversity and managing water and land differently (Brousselle and McDavid n.d.). *Adaptation* measures seek to reduce exposure, contingent on the nature of hazards. These include building dikes to prevent flooding impacts on coastal neighborhoods, staying inside houses during heatwaves, physical distancing, and washing hands during the COVID-19 pandemic. Geographic location, ways of living, history, socio-economic conditions create conditions that will decrease or increase the *vulnerability* of certain groups in populations, which has been defined as “the degree to which a system, or part of a system, may react adversely during the occurrence of a hazardous event” (Proag 2014: 370). *Resilience* is the capacity to resist and the ability to absorb and recover from a disruptive event (Proag 2014). Often, vulnerability and resilience are presented in opposition. We will not address how to reduce individual vulnerability here – a topic in itself – but we will present two key factors to reduce *collective vulnerability*: population and community resilience.

Scientific evidence suggests that more resilient populations and communities will experience the effects of crises less severely and recover more quickly; however, the determinants of resilience differ across levels of analysis. *Population resilience* involves reducing the inequalities to protect health at the population level. In times of economic crises, countries with larger investments in health and social security systems see fewer premature deaths, mental health problems, cardiovascular complications, or infectious diseases (Karanikolos et al. 2013; Stuckler et al. 2009; Stuckler and Basu 2013). In contrast, countries which choose to reduce public spending in the health sector, employment programs, or other redistributive measures, experience worse population health outcomes in times of economic crisis (Karanikolos et al. 2013; Stuckler et al. 2009; Stuckler and Basu 2013). This work confirms existing scientific knowledge showing that investing in redistributive programs

creates a protective social security web that positively affects population health during difficult times. Aiming to increase the resilience of the population necessarily involves reinvesting in measures that will reduce social inequalities, which can be done “by investing in public health and healthcare, education, early childhood programs, income security and social protection, improving living conditions such as housing, implementing policies that support building social and human capital, and bettering employment and working conditions” (WHO 2019; Brousselle and McDavid n.d.).

At the community level, vulnerability does not specifically speak to people, but to the way our communities are organized. The recent health crisis has revealed that, with years of international trade with countries, many communities have delocalized their production capacity, and that, when urgently requiring products, countries were highly dependent on other nations’ production. *Community resilience* speaks to the capacity to sustain needs of the communities in times of crisis and of thinking of critical sectors such as food, water, energy, and production capacity, on which we will rely more heavily in times of crisis. Communities and cities have a metabolism, just like living things (Kennedy et al. 2007; Bristow and Kennedy 2013). They consume resources such as food, energy, water, nutrients, and they produce waste such as garbage, pollution, toxic materials, etc. Building resilient communities means protecting their living conditions and prosperity, which means investing in key sectors – particularly in household- and community-scale renewable energy generation and storage – necessary to address climate change and ensure greater community resilience to major power outages and other shocks. Agriculture must also be reconsidered so that it is more diversified, uses the least amount of pesticides and chemical fertilizers, and more closely connects production to consumption. Increasing community resilience will also involve investing in public and active transport, supporting local businesses, and encouraging industrial sectors that are more culturally responsive, more equitable and have sustainable environmental management practices.

Reorienting economies and increasing resilience

At the time of writing (summer 2020), the COVID-19 crisis is slowing down in Canada and yet, in other countries, such as the US and Brazil, cases are increasing dramatically. The World Health Organization warns that a second phase may happen in the fall. Our governments, after implementing emergency measures, are exploring scenarios for a recovery plan and a relaunch of the economy. Considering that this crisis is taking place in a larger context of numerous and varied crises, many environmental, what would be key to

transform this pandemic into an opportunity for better preparation for the crises to come?

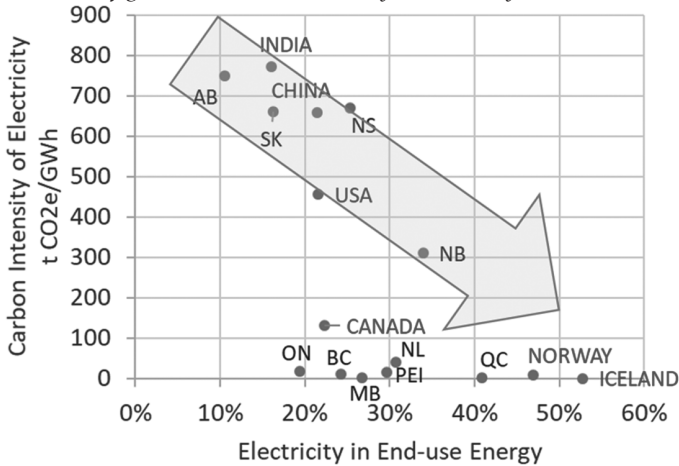
To restart and reorient economic activity, it will be important to consider mitigation and adaptation actions that would reduce identified upcoming hazards and build community resilience, as well as frame these actions in order to maximize redistributive measures. Climate change and its many related events (floods, droughts, fires, heatwaves), social consequences (migration, violent conflicts, loss of habitation, poverty), as well as pollution, are probably the most pressing challenges to address (World Health Organization 2018; Zhang et al. 2017; Watts et al. 2015).

Replacing fossil fuels with electricity from zero-carbon sources is critical for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (IPCC 2014; IEA 2014; Kennedy et al. 2018). The highest priority is investment in community-scale electricity generation, from roof-top photovoltaics with battery storage, for example. Most Canadian provinces generate low-carbon electricity (measured by carbon intensity of electricity supply – see Figure 2). However, with the possible exception of Quebec, provinces have a relatively low use of electricity in end-use energy. Most provinces will need to at least double their use of electricity to move to low-carbon economies with wide-scale use of electric vehicles and building heating using electric heat pumps. Additional electricity will necessarily come from large-scale generation (e.g. hydro-power); however, some community-scale electricity generation will be crucial for maintaining resilient communities.

The challenge with wide-scale electrification of our economies is that it reduces the diversity of energy sources, making our communities more vulnerable to shocks. We cannot entirely rely on big power lines carrying electricity from distant sources – they are vulnerable to windstorms, fire storms, ice storms, and other increasingly common shocks. Generating electricity from the roofs of homes, schools, and other buildings in our communities – and providing neighborhood-scale power storage – will be essential for mitigation and adaptation to climate change. This will entail rethinking business models for utilities (Kennedy et al. 2017) and potentially changing the jurisdictional responsibility for building power generation and storage at scale (Kennedy and Pape-Salmon 2020).

Simultaneously strengthening community and population resilience implies analyzing social impacts and designing the transition to electrification to create local employment opportunities and reduce social inequities. Switching our economy to implement a resilient electric-oriented economy is one example of the many programs and policies that could be recovery measures arising from the COVID-19 crisis, while increasing our resilience for upcoming ones. For example, there are many opportunities to reinvest in the essential functions of cities to encourage the local economy, minimize the environmental impact, reduce the production of greenhouse gases, preserve

Figure 2. *Progress of Canadian Provinces towards Low-Carbon Electrification.* [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



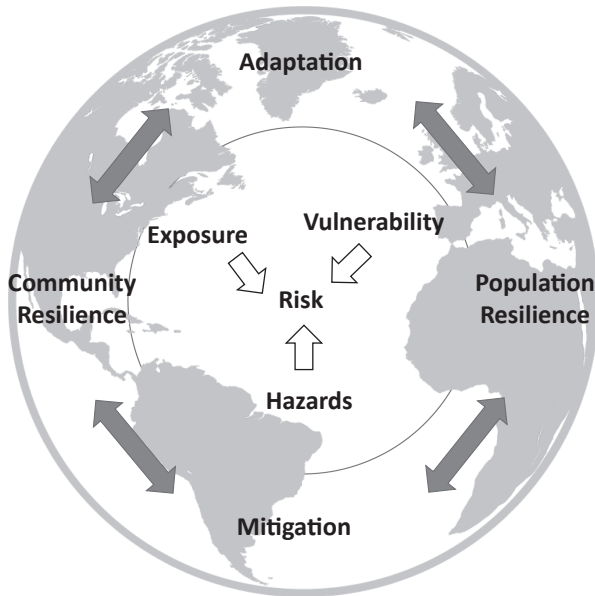
Data for Canada and its provinces is for 2017 from Statistics Canada (2019) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (2019). International data is for 2015 from IEA (2017) and IEA statistics <https://www.iea.org/data-and-statistics>, accessed 1 Jan 2020. (Note carbon intensity of electricity production is reported; PEI receives much of its electricity supply from New Brunswick, which is not reflected in the data; tCO₂e /GWh is tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent greenhouse gas emissions per Gigawatt-hour of electricity production.)

carbon sinks, protect biodiversity, and reduce pollution in all its forms (see Figure 3).

Addressing such challenges suggests rethinking our governance system for the longer term with the depletion of the environment and intergenerational equity in mind. Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi (2009) suggest different measures for switching from a growth-based economy to a well-being economy.³ In Canada, 80% of the population lives in cities, which suggests that local and regional levels of action will be critical for redesigning our economic sectors and society: coordination and support from other levels of government will be central for furthering effective and efficient interventions that benefit from economies-of-scale.

Twenty-first century governance and recovery strategies should take into account various environmental threats to human life, where they are generated, and then experienced. As the risks are global and getting realized in different locations than to where the production of contributing factors to these risks occurs, countries may feel less committed to respecting international agreements. As the prisoner dilemma predicts, countries and their populations may well fall in the worst-case situation, if supranational organizations are not enforcing regulations to benefit humanity. This suggests

Figure 3. *Keys to Reducing Risk of Forthcoming Crises* [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



that not only should public administration scholars explore new governance architectures for states, but also start rethinking geopolitical and international institutions to address the “one-planet” challenge.

With this in mind, we present two options, which require inventive thinking and policy-research. Option 1 requires our world-of-states to move into a *post-Westphalian international public law era*. New natural and ecological rule systems develop across multiple regional, pan-regional, and possibly continental levels, whereby public and private courts rely on new ecological principles (Greene 2020; Schmader 2017). This option would be informed by bottom-up local, regional national, bilateral, and transnational ecological principles, progressively weaving across the world, and understood, debated, and researched as a new international policy and governance regime.

Option 2 would give *functional rights* to specific planetary boundaries and legal personhood to natural objects. Such functional global rights would empower the natural world, maritime, territorial, fauna and flora in the spirit of Stone (1972), but also the seas and oceans, the air and water, and ultimately, planetary boundaries (Rockstrom et al., 2009; Steffen 2015). The very chemical components that allow life on earth (e.g. water temperature, water acidity, air nitrogen and phosphorus content) have a global reach. These rights would not be based on the Westphalian principle of the modern state, but on a new global legal order, similar to the contemporary global *lex mercatoria* of

free trade regimes or the *lex electronica* (the role of Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers as the operator of internet and World Wide Web). This would suggest the appearance of a new transnational legal order as understood by Jessup (1956), i.e. a legal regime interconnecting with other legal orders of states, global markets, the World Wide Web, which exclusively focuses on protecting ecological legal objects.

Conclusion

This century will be a turning point for the future of humanity. The status quo is not acceptable considering the risk for human health and survival, created by our current way of organizing our societies. COVID-19 has created the political space for allowing us to imagine our society differently. Solutions exist for addressing our environmental and health challenges, and this crisis has shown that our governments can reduce health risks, protect vulnerable communities and populations, and ensure that our societies thrive.

For political leaders and public administration practitioners, this agenda requires much more than incremental changes. Seriously addressing current and forthcoming risks implies reconfiguring the responsibilities of different levels of governments and how they intersect and coordinate – essentially rethinking the architecture of the state, especially the governance of electrical utilities. This should be informed by a huge program of forward-looking research that will consider new models for designing and implementing new policy and regulatory mixes within and across governments and sectors to further environmental and social sustainability, along with a rethinking of international policy regimes and legal systems, and evaluation systems to orient and gauge progress.

Notes

- 1 Originally attributed to fisheries scientist John Shepherd.
- 2 In 2015, the IRGC noted emerging risks. For our purposes, the 2008 reference to uncertainty is sufficient.
- 3 Among other things, the Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi (2009) report underlines the importance of taking stock and systematically assessing the many environmentally sustainable dimensions, informing the necessary conditions for human well-being, switching away from GDP measurement to include measures that would better assess well-being and quality of life, and increasing social transfers and distributive measures to reduce inequities.

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Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux : Synthèse des contributions canadiennes à la recherche

Sommaire : Pendant près de vingt ans, les chercheurs en gestion publique ont utilisé les données du Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux (SAFF) pour leur travail de recherche. Deux études ont procédé à l'évaluation de l'utilisation des données, des modèles de mesure et de la qualité des mesures du *Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey* (FEVS) du gouvernement fédéral américain, sans tenir compte des données du SAFF. Cet article analyse les études qui ont utilisé les données du SAFF canadien afin de promouvoir la recherche en sciences sociales, et tente d'encourager la discussion sur l'avenir du SAFF et son potentiel pour la recherche en matière de gestion stratégique des ressources humaines au Canada.

Abstract: For about twenty years, Public Administration scholars have used the data from the Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) for their research. Two studies evaluated the uses of data, measurement models and internal validity of the U.S. government's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), and none on the use of PSES data. The article reviews studies that used Canadian PSES data to promote social science research and seeks to stimulate discussion of PSES's future and opportunities for strategic human resources research in Canada. [The table most useful for researchers is available here in English: Table 3. *Aggregation of PSES Elements Assigned to Theoretical Constructs*.]

Les enquêtes gouvernementales constituent une source de données fréquemment utilisée dans les recherches en Administration publique. Bien que ces enquêtes aient été envisagées par les fonctionnaires à des fins précises comme l'amélioration de la performance en gestion, l'amélioration du processus de recrutement et la rétention d'employés au sein de la fonction publique, les chercheurs y ont eu recours pour étudier bien d'autres sujets et domaines. La satisfaction au travail, le recrutement au mérite, le leadership, le harcèlement et la discrimination, le soutien du supérieur, ne sont que quelques exemples des recherches ayant été réalisées à partir d'enquêtes gouvernementales. Les décideurs des gouvernements fédéraux du Canada et des États-Unis ont débuté, en 1999 et 2002 respectivement, la première d'une série d'enquêtes afin de recueillir les avis de centaines

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de milliers de fonctionnaires sur leurs conditions de travail physiques et psychologiques.

Ces sondages sont connus au Canada sous l'acronyme le SAFF, pour « Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux » (ou PSES pour « Public service employee survey ») et aux États-Unis sous l'acronyme FEVS « *Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey* ». Des chercheurs ont utilisé les données pour produire de nombreuses publications traitant d'une variété de questions cruciales pour la gestion et la gouvernance publiques. À cet effet, les études américaines de Fernandez et coll. (2015) et de Somers (2018) ont fait le point sur l'utilisation de l'enquête FEVS dans la recherche en Administration publique. Ces auteurs abordaient le fait que le FEVS a largement été utilisé sans que les études qu'il a généré ne soient évaluées ou répertoriées. Pour combler cette lacune, Fernandez et coll. (2015) synthétisent les connaissances colligées par les études ayant eu recours au FEVS en effectuant une évaluation de la codification des sujets étudiés et des méthodes utilisées. Ils proposent également quelques suggestions sur la façon dont le FEVS lui-même pourrait être amélioré pour faciliter les recherches futures. Les auteurs identifient pour la communauté scientifique les faiblesses et limites à prendre en compte pour améliorer la qualité de la recherche (Fernandez et coll. 2015 : 387). Bien que plusieurs thèmes aient été abordés par Fernandez et coll. (2015), Somers (2018) les complète en évaluant la validité des construits opérationnalisés à l'aide de l'enquête FEVS. Cette question de validité est importante, par le caractère pratique, plutôt qu'académique de l'enquête FEVS.

Alors que la création du SAFF canadien précède celle du FEVS américain, aucune étude n'a jusqu'à présent consolidé ni catalogué les recherches ayant eu recours aux données du SAFF canadien. Le but de cette recherche est double : Faire le bilan détaillé des recherches existantes ayant exploité ces données canadiennes pour l'avancement des connaissances en sciences sociales, et ouvrir la discussion sur l'avenir du SAFF et son potentiel pour la recherche en matière de gestion stratégique des ressources humaines.

Revue de la littérature

Connaissances scientifiques issues d'études de base de données

Hall et Battaglio (2019 : 10) encouragent la recherche s'éloignant d'un devis portant sur une seule organisation en procurant un élément de comparaison permettant d'élargir des théories ou de développer de nouveaux éléments conceptuels. Les grandes bases de données comme le SAFF permettent de réaliser des comparaisons entre organisations de manière large, en expliquant les variations de pratiques de gestion entre des ministères et organismes différents. Pour ceux qui s'intéressent plutôt à estimer les effets d'une initiative

précise dans une organisation, par exemple, une réforme permettant plus de souplesse dans la gestion de ressources humaines dans le *Department of Homeland Security* aux États-Unis (Hur et Perry, sous presse), ces bases de données permettent de comparer une organisation à d'autres qui peuvent servir de groupe témoin. Les bases de données des gouvernements fédéraux américain et canadien contiennent potentiellement les réponses à des dizaines de questions sur diverses facettes de la gestion. Des centaines de milliers de fonctionnaires fédéraux ont répondu à ces enquêtes pendant presque deux décennies.

Le Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey du gouvernement fédéral américain

Le FEVS a été mis en place par l'Office of Personnel Management (OPM) en 2002 pour évaluer le point de vue des fonctionnaires sur différents aspects de la gestion publique. À l'origine, cette enquête visait à épauler les dirigeants d'agence pour libérer la productivité et le potentiel de leurs équipes (Joyce 2014). Elle contribuait à une meilleure compréhension des expériences professionnelles des employés. Outre ces objectifs, les résultats de ces enquêtes fournissent de l'information sur la politique des ressources humaines à l'échelle du gouvernement, mais également sur les initiatives spécifiques pour chaque agence. Les dirigeants peuvent ainsi avoir un aperçu des domaines dans lesquels des améliorations ont été apportées, mais aussi dans quels domaines des améliorations sont nécessaires (USOPM 2017 : 1–2).

Fernandez et coll. (2015) et Somers (2018)

En 2015, Fernandez et collègues réalisent pour la première fois une critique du FEVS et une évaluation issue d'une cartographie de la littérature publiée entre 2000 et 2013. L'objectif spécifique de leur étude consistait à ouvrir un dialogue entre les chercheurs en gestion publique et l'OPM quant à l'avenir du FEVS et le potentiel de perfectionnement de cet instrument.

En 2018, Somers s'appuie sur l'étude de Fernandez et coll. et approfondit deux domaines qui n'avaient pas été analysés trois ans auparavant. Dans un premier temps, il concentre ses analyses sur les modèles et la qualité des mesures des études basées sur le FEVS (Somers 2018 : 229). Dans un deuxième temps, Somers évalue les éléments d'enquête du FEVS et opérationnalise les procédures théoriques pour déterminer leur qualité psychométrique. Les résultats indiquent qu'il existe une variabilité considérable dans la manière dont les items du système de mesure ont été utilisés. Cette variabilité s'exprime sous la forme de niveaux de chevauchement élevés d'une échelle à l'autre. Cela fait douter de la validité des mesures de certaines études basées sur le FEVS. L'état des connaissances générées par le FEVS amène les auteurs de ces deux études évaluatives à faire plusieurs recommandations

sur l'expansion des sujets couverts par l'enquête, sur la confiance dans des mesures de concept, sur l'amélioration de la construction des items et sur l'adoption d'une enquête longitudinale.

Nos propres recherches pour étendre la couverture de la cartographie de Fernandez et coll. – et par ricochet celle de Somers – pour la période 2014-2019 nous renvoient 747 mentions pour "*Federal Human Capital Survey*" ou "*Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey*", dont 90 articles qui utilisent les données dans des analyses. Quatre-vingt-dix articles avec les données du FEVS étaient donc publiés entre 2014 et 2019, alors que 42 études avaient été publiées à partir de ces mêmes données entre 2000 et 2014. Le FEVS a été et est toujours largement utilisé par les chercheurs des États-Unis et d'ailleurs.

Le Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux du gouvernement du Canada

Le SAFF canadien a été mis en place par le Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor du Canada (SCT) en 1999, pour évaluer l'opinion des fonctionnaires sur différents aspects de la main-d'œuvre, de l'environnement du travail et du leadership. Depuis sa création, le sondage a été réalisé tous les trois ans. Depuis 2018, il est mené de manière plus fréquente (Gouvernement du Canada 2018).

Ce sondage inclut tous les employés des ministères de l'administration publique centrale et d'organismes distincts. Leurs réponses sont protégées en vertu de la *Loi sur la protection des renseignements personnels* (Hickey et Bennett 2012 : 12); loi réputée restrictive par les standards internationaux (Andrew-Gee et Grant 2019). Cela résulte dans la possibilité d'effectuer des modèles de panels si l'unité d'analyse est le ministère ou l'organisme, mais l'impossibilité d'effectuer ce type de modèle si l'unité d'analyse est le fonctionnaire fédéral. Par contre, les résultats granulaires du sondage sont scrutés et discutés par les fonctionnaires à l'intérieur des ministères et des organismes sondés. Ces résultats servent de données de référence permettant de mesurer les progrès réalisés dans le milieu de travail. Les ministères et les organismes sondés discutent ensuite des constats faits suite à l'enquête avec leurs employés et élaborent des solutions aux questions soulevées (Gouvernement du Canada 2018).

Les résultats du sondage ont un usage multiple pour la fonction publique fédérale canadienne. Le SAFF fournit des renseignements sur la mobilisation des employés, la gestion du rendement, le perfectionnement professionnel, ainsi que l'équité et le respect en milieu du travail. Les résultats appuient la stratégie de la fonction publique fédérale sur la santé mentale en milieu de travail et le Cadre ministériel des résultats du SCT du Canada (Gouvernement du Canada 2018). L'usage du SAFF par la fonction publique est varié et bien détaillé. Toutefois, son utilisation ne s'y limite pas.

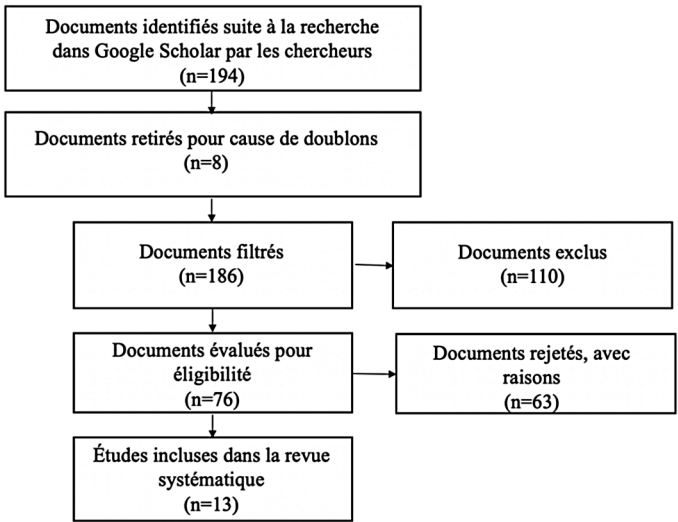
La communauté scientifique y a également recours, même si la manière dont les chercheurs utilisent ces données est encore méconnue. Cette étude vise à combler cette lacune en étudiant en détail la manière dont les recherches existantes ont exploité ces données canadiennes.

Méthodes et données

Dans le but de documenter les connaissances générées par les études utilisant les données du SAFF, nous avons effectué une analyse bibliométrique des articles, des thèses de doctorat, des mémoires de maîtrise et des actes de colloque qui analysaient des données du SAFF. Cette étape d'identification est indispensable aux étapes subséquentes d'analyse des données. Après plusieurs tentatives de termes de recherche plus restrictifs, nous avons opté pour l'expression "*public service employee survey*" ou « sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux », qui générerait le grand nombre¹ de résultats initiaux. Les recherches n'ont pas été restreintes à une période temporelle spécifique. La base de données que nous avons utilisée pour cette recherche est Google Scholar. Tel que mentionné par Fernandez et coll. (2015 : 384), Google Scholar agglutine les résultats de recherche en grandes catégories. Cette base de données à large couverture dépasse les limites des bases de données de maisons d'édition telles que Web of Science, Wiley, EBSCO et autres. Toutefois, contrairement à Fernandez et coll. (2015 : 384), nous avons ajouté les thèses, les mémoires, et les actes de colloques aux articles révisés par les pairs, mais tout comme ces auteurs (2015 : 384), nous avons exclu les livres et les rapports gouvernementaux. La Figure 1 témoigne du processus d'identification et de triage des études mentionnant et utilisant le SAFF.

Dans cette démarche d'identification, huit des résultats ont été retirés parce qu'ils étaient des doublons de documents existants, soit des traductions de versions françaises ou anglaises, soit des copies identiques, mais avec une autre appellation. Des 186 documents filtrés, 110 ont été exclus parce qu'ils étaient dans une langue autre que le français et l'anglais ou parce qu'ils n'étaient pas des articles, thèses, mémoires, ou actes de colloques. Parmi ces documents filtrés, nous avons identifié 23 livres. Des 76 documents éligibles, 63 ont été rejetés parce qu'ils ne contenaient pas une utilisation empirique des données du SAFF. Un article a été rejeté parce qu'il s'est avéré non accessible après de nombreuses démarches infructueuses.² Au final, nous avons retenu huit articles, deux thèses de doctorat,³ deux mémoires de maîtrise et un acte de colloque qui analysaient des données du SAFF. Cette démarche porte à treize le nombre d'études incluses dans cette revue de la portée. Trois codeurs ont analysé indépendamment les treize études utilisant les données du SAFF avec les grilles auxquelles Fernandez et collègues et Somers ont eu recours pour analyser des recherches basées sur les données du FEVS. Par

Figure 1. *Diagramme du flux de la recherche et du processus de triage. Adapté de Faulkner et Kaufman (2018: 72)*



la suite, un quatrième codeur a arbitré les quelques différences de codage observées en retournant dans les treize études pour harmoniser les résultats.

Résultats

Le Tableau 1 porte sur l'utilisation des données du SAFF en fonction de l'année du sondage. Ces résultats montrent que les sondages des années 2005 et 2008 sont les plus utilisés par les chercheurs.

Les premiers sondages de 1999 et de 2002 ont été utilisés uniquement par des étudiants chercheurs dans leurs travaux de mémoire de recherche ou de thèse de doctorat. Les données des sondages plus récents du SAFF n'ont pas encore été utilisées par les chercheurs universitaires.

Le Tableau 2 présente de manière détaillée les construits, les mesures, les modélisations et les sources de données des treize recherches ayant utilisé les données du SAFF. Tel que nous l'avons présenté dans ce tableau, pour six des études, les variables indépendantes principales ou secondaires ont été mesurées à l'aide d'échelles de classement résumées à partir de plusieurs items. Les échelles⁴ du SAFF ont également été utilisées pour mesurer les variables dépendantes dans dix des études. Pour les approches de modélisation statistique, nous trouvons un large éventail d'approches utilisées pour estimer les variables dépendantes, notamment la régression des moindres carrés ordinaires (Hopkins 2016; McGrandle 2019), la régression linéaire binomiale et multiple (Jones, Finkelstein et Koehoorn 2018), la régression

Tableau 1. Liste des études utilisant les données du SAFF par année

<i>Études</i>	<i>Type</i>	1999	2002	2005	2008	2011	2014	2017	2018
McGrandle (2019)	Article				X	X	X		
Marzi (2018)	Thèse de doctorat		X	X	X	X	X		
Cooper (2018)	Article				X				
Jones, Finkelstein et Koehoorn (2018)	Article						X		
Pelletier (2017)	Acte colloque						X		
Hopkins (2016)	Article					X			
Jacob et Ouimet (2015)	Article				X				
Hickey et Bennet (2012)	Article			X					
Holmes (2011)	Mémoire				X				
Julien Somerville et Culp (2011)	Article			X					
Somerville et Elliott (2011)	Article			X					
Somerville (2008) et Somerville et Dyke (2008)	Thèse de doctorat / Article	X	X	X					
Fabian (2003)	Mémoire	X	X						

logistique ordonnée pour des variables dépendantes qualitatives (Jacob et Ouimet 2015; Cooper 2018) et la modélisation linéaire hiérarchique pour les données multiniveaux (Somerville 2008; Marzi 2018).

Comparaison de nos résultats avec ceux de Fernandez et coll.

La comparaison de nos résultats avec ceux de Fernandez et coll. (2015) montre que les données du FEVS sont plus utilisées par les chercheurs que celles issues du SAFF. Suivant cette même logique, nos recherches ont généré un échantillon de 13 recherches exploitant la base de données du SAFF contre 132 pour le FEVS (42 répertoriés par Fernandez et coll. (2015) pour 2000-2013 et 90 que nous avons répertorié pour 2014-2019). La variable dépendante « satisfaction au travail » est ressortie comme étant celle la plus étudiée au sujet du Canada par les chercheurs. Cet élément semble logique dans la mesure où les sondages auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux constituent des références indiquées pour étudier la satisfaction au travail des employés du secteur public. Les autres variables dépendantes telles que la voix des employés, la mobilité intraorganisationnelle, le dilemme éthique, le harcèlement et la discrimination, la capacité de concilier entre besoins personnels, familiaux et professionnels, le changement de la culture organisationnelle, *l'empowerment* et le leadership, ne sont apparues qu'à une seule reprise dans notre échantillon.

Enfin, pour neuf des treize études, les auteurs n'ont utilisé que les données du SAFF. Quatre d'entre eux ont utilisé plus d'une version de l'enquête. Pour les quatre autres études, les auteurs ont utilisé les données du SAFF avec d'autres sources de données comme des données administratives (listes téléphoniques, chartres organisationnelles, données en lien avec le roulement de personnel), des données qualitatives (entrevues, lettres de recrutement, questionnaires) ainsi que d'autres bases de données.

Mesure

Les chercheurs qui travaillent sur des données secondaires telles que le FEVS, à l'instar de leurs collègues utilisant les données primaires, sont confrontés aux exigences de fiabilité et de validité des mesures afin de prouver la crédibilité de leurs recherches. Le défi consiste surtout à mesurer des construits théoriques à partir d'éléments d'enquête qui n'ont pas été conçus à cet effet (Fernandez et coll. 2015 : 289; Somers 2018 : 229).

Dans les études retenues, les construits théoriques ne sont pas mesurés directement. Ils sont plutôt évalués par des « opérationnalisations » qui reflètent les propriétés de construits sous-jacents (Somers 2018 : 229). Il est donc nécessaire d'accorder une grande attention au processus par lequel ces

concepts abstraits sont traduits en phénomènes mesurables. La théorie de mesure auxiliaire informe sur les principes essentiels à ce processus (Somers 2018 : 229). Une bonne théorie de mesure auxiliaire implique des niveaux de correspondance élevés entre les propriétés des construits théoriques étudiés et les indicateurs utilisés pour évaluer ces construits (Somers, 2018 : 229).

Répartition des construits et items du SAFF

Les chercheurs ayant utilisé les données du SAFF ont discuté des éléments de mesures choisies dans leurs études de manières différentes. Par exemple, Jacob et Ouimet (2015) ont discuté soigneusement des concepts choisis (comment un comportement individuel est directement déterminé par son intention comportementale et le lien avec l'autonomie), afin que les éléments du SAFF sélectionnés soient isomorphes avec les définitions conceptuelles. Somerville (2008) a justifié ses choix de mesure dans des études antérieures, créant ainsi une continuité avec les éléments des SAFF. De même, dans Marzi (2018), les variables de l'étude, notamment l'équilibre travail-vie personnelle, la satisfaction au travail et l'*empowerment*, ont été mises en correspondance avec des éléments et des échelles pour les concepts correspondants. Les éléments relatifs à l'équilibre travail-vie personnelle et à la satisfaction au travail ont été appariés avec des mesures à élément unique et avec des échelles comparables et fiables à des échelles à éléments multiples. L'échelle de responsabilisation a été créée à chaque tour de données à partir d'éléments des items des sondages. D'autres chercheurs utilisant les données du SAFF ont toutefois fourni des explications moins détaillées sur leurs théories de mesure et, dans certains cas, les éléments du SAFF ont été affectés à des construits théoriques sans explication. Dans le Tableau 3, nous avons utilisé le tableau de Somers (2018 : 231-232) dont l'objectif est de mettre à jour les dysfonctionnements dans la construction d'échelle.

Tel que ce fut le cas avec les 42 études analysées par Somers (2018), il existe des incohérences entre les études, dans la façon dont les éléments ont été regroupés pour former des échelles dans les études SAFF. L'idée ici est qu'une question du SAFF peut sembler raisonnable pour représenter en tout ou en partie un construit dans une étude. Toutefois, si la même question est utilisée pour représenter des construits différents dans plusieurs études, tous les chercheurs ne peuvent avoir simultanément raison (Ketchen et coll. 2013 : 37). Les échelles utilisées pour mesurer l'innovation et la justice procédurale étaient relativement uniformes. Toutefois, les auteurs des treize études ayant eu recours au SAFF ont utilisé plusieurs questions différentes pour évaluer d'autres construits. Des niveaux plus élevés d'incohérence entre auteurs étaient apparents notamment pour la satisfaction au travail, l'environnement de travail, l'autonomie, le leadership, le changement de culture organisationnelle et le travail en équipe. Le Tableau 3 indique que

Tableau 3. (suite)

Tableau 3. (suite)

Tableau 3. (suite)

	AUT	MO	LD	IN	EO	SA	CT	JD	JP	JI	TE	EC	FX	ET	SC	EM
54.	J'ai l'occasion d'acquérir et d'appliquer les compétences dont j'ai besoin pour progresser dans ma carrière.								x							
55.	J'estime avoir des possibilités d'obtenir une promotion au sein de la fonction publique, compte tenu de ma scolarité, de mes compétences et de mon expérience.								x							
56.	Mon unité de travail a des normes de service à la clientèle clairement définies.														x	
57.	Dans mon unité de travail, il existe des mécanismes qui permettent d'acheminer les commentaires et les plaintes des clients aux employés en mesure d'y donner suite.														x	
58.	Je suis en mesure d'adapter les services que je fournis en fonction des besoins de mes clients.			x									x		x	
59.	Si je devais proposer des moyens d'améliorer notre façon de procéder, mon(ma) superviseur(e) immédiat(e) me prendrait au sérieux.	x		x									x			
60.	Si j'étais confronté(e) à un dilemme éthique ou à un conflit entre les valeurs propres au milieu de travail, je saurais où aller pour obtenir de l'aide afin de régler le problème.	x														
61.	Mon(ma) superviseur(e) immédiat(e) discute avec moi des résultats que je suis censé(e) atteindre.		x													
62.	Je peux obtenir de la formation en cours d'emploi pour améliorer ma façon de travailler.							x								
63.	Dans mon unité de travail, nous apprenons de nos erreurs et faisons ce qu'il faut pour les corriger.							x			x					
64.	Mon(ma) superviseur(e) immédiat(e) m'aide beaucoup à me perfectionner sur le plan professionnel.								x							
65.	Je suis fier(fière) du travail effectué dans mon unité.								x						x	
66.	J'ai un mot à dire quant aux décisions et aux mesures qui influent sur mon travail.								x						x	

Tableau 3. (suite)

	AUT	MO	LD	IN	EO	SA	CT	JD	JP	JI	TE	EC	FX	ET	SC	EM
67.	Travaillez-vous présentement selon l'un des régimes de travail flexibles suivants ? ...Semaine de travail comprimée.															
									x							
68.	Travaillez-vous présentement selon l'un des régimes de travail flexibles suivants ? ...Horaire variable (c.-à-d. heures d'arrivée et de départ variables)															
									x							
69.	Travaillez-vous présentement selon l'un des régimes de travail flexibles suivants ? ...Télétravail															
									x							
70.	Mon travail actuel me permet d'établir un équilibre entre mes obligations personnelles, familiales et professionnelles.															
									x							
71.	Dans quelle mesure, s'il y a lieu, estimez-vous que les éléments suivants ont nui à la progression de votre carrière au sein de la fonction publique au cours des trois dernières années ? ...Manque d'accès à des possibilités de formation.															
										x						
72.	Dans quelle mesure, s'il y a lieu, estimez-vous que les éléments suivants ont nui à la progression de votre carrière au sein de la fonction publique au cours des trois dernières années ? ...Manque de renseignements au sujet des possibilités d'emploi.															
										x						
73.	Dans quelle mesure, s'il y a lieu, estimez-vous que les éléments suivants ont nui à la progression de votre carrière au sein de la fonction publique au cours des trois dernières années ? ...Manque d'accès à des affectations de perfectionnement.															
											x					

AUT = autonomie ; MO = motivation; LD = leadership; IN = innovation; EO = engagement organisationnel; SA = satisfaction; CT = charge de travail; JD = justice distributive; JP = justice procédurale; JI = justice interactionnelle; TE = travail d'équipe; EC = employé compétent; FX = flexibilité; ET = environnement de travail; SC = service à la clientèle; EM = empowerment.

Tableau adapté de Somers (2018: 231-232).

74 éléments des différentes versions du SAFF ont été analysés. Les résultats montrent que 28 items parmi 74 du système de vérification de l'efficacité scientifique ont été attribués à plus d'un concept théorique. Nous constatons également que parmi ceux-là, six items ont été attribués à trois concepts et plus. Dans certains cas, l'incohérence entre auteurs était problématique. Par exemple, l'item SAFF « On m'encourage à innover ou à prendre des initiatives dans mon travail » a été utilisé comme indicateur des concepts suivants : autonomie, innovation, et flexibilité. Un autre exemple, l'item SAFF « Je suis en mesure d'adapter les services que je fournis en fonction des besoins de mes clients » a été utilisé comme indicateur pour l'innovation, la flexibilité et le service à la clientèle.

Il faut aussi noter que les construits utilisés dans cette étude diffèrent légèrement de ceux présentés dans l'étude de Somers (2018). Les construits utilisés dans l'étude de Somers, sont les suivants : autonomie; motivation intrinsèque; responsabilisation des employés; leadership; engagement organisationnel normatif; implication professionnelle; innovation; justice distributive; justice procédurale; gestion de la diversité; pratiques de gestion basées sur la performance; culture organisationnelle; performance organisationnelle; satisfaction du travail et des employés, ainsi que le roulement du personnel. Bien que présents dans le SAFF et étudiés par des auteurs ayant utilisé le FEVS, les concepts d'éthique en milieu de travail, de rendement organisationnel et de respect en milieu de travail, n'ont pas encore été étudiés par des chercheurs s'intéressant au contexte fédéral canadien. La même chose peut être dite pour d'autres phénomènes comme la communication avec le superviseur et les relations patronale-syndicale.

Biais de source commune

Les chercheurs en Administration publique souhaitent de plus en plus la mise à disposition de bases de données administratives riches par leurs échantillons, mais aussi par la diversité des échelles de mesure. Toutefois, l'utilisation de ces bases de données secondaires peut conduire à des obstacles de validation externe liés au biais de source commune. Ce biais se présente lorsque la variation partagée entre deux concepts est fonction de la mesure commune et/ou de la source utilisée pour collecter les données (Meier et O'Toole 2013 : 431). Le biais de source commune produit des faux positifs lorsque des mesures perceptuelles de la même source que les variables explicatives sont utilisées pour mesurer les mêmes concepts dans d'autres contextes de recherches (Favero et Bullock 2015 : 285). À ce propos, le caractère généraliste de certaines mesures et la subjectivité de certaines réponses menacent la crédibilité des données recueillies (Meier et O'Toole 2013 : 431). Les auto-évaluations personnelles ou organisationnelles au niveau des variables dépendantes et indépendantes peuvent conduire à

des surestimations de coefficients et à des erreurs corrélées. Une recherche fondée sur des mesures qui ne sont ni valides ni fiables peut générer des résultats trompeurs et produire peu de valeur dans le monde de la pratique (Meier et O'Toole 2013 : 429). À ce sujet, les études ayant eu recours au SAFF diffèrent peu des études ayant eu recours au FEVS. Une faible proportion d'entre elles s'est prémunie de mesures pour limiter des problèmes émanant des biais de sources communes.

Trois des études analysées ont mentionné ce problème (Jacob et Ouimet 2015 : 14; Somerville 2008 : 202; Julien Somerville et Culp 2011 : 195), notamment dans les limites. Ainsi, bien que des auteurs aient mentionné cette limite, l'étude de Somerville (2008 : 202) était la seule à avoir mis en œuvre des mesures pour limiter les effets du biais de sources communes.

Discussion et Conclusion

Nonobstant un grand nombre de mentions de ce sondage, dans la présente étude, nous avons identifié un nombre limité de recherches traitant empiriquement des données du SAFF. Nous avons répertorié 194 mentions dans des documents de toutes sortes. Un exemple apparu après notre collecte de données, est Mau (2019 : 165) qui, à la suite de son étude de cas informative sur le recrutement au gouvernement fédéral, se réfère au SAFF de 2017 pour quantifier les intentions des fonctionnaires de quitter leur poste actuel. Les thèmes, théories, mesures et modélisations de ces études ont été décrits et ont permis de répertorier les connaissances générées par ces recherches.

Certains changements d'approche des chercheurs peuvent être réalisés même dans la forme actuelle du SAFF. Les éléments mentionnés précédemment ont généré une réflexion en lien avec les opportunités futures associées au SAFF et à cette étude. La portée et l'ampleur des études utilisant les données du SAFF offrent une puissance statistique et une portée qui n'existent pas dans la plupart des études dont les données sont colligées par les chercheurs eux-mêmes. Les taux de réponse du SAFF sont également supérieurs et clairement difficiles à atteindre par des chercheurs voulant sonder eux-mêmes les fonctionnaires. La question de la confidentialité des répondants ne se pose pas puisque les réponses au sondage sont protégées en vertu de la *Loi sur la protection des renseignements personnels* (Gouvernement du Canada 2018). Les données du SAFF, en bonne partie recodées, assurent la protection de l'identité des différents répondants (Hickey et Bennett 2012 : 12). Comme c'est le cas avec les données du FEVS, les données du SAFF ont été structurées de manière à ce qu'il soit impossible ou indésirable de suivre les répondants individuels dans le temps et dans les différentes sections du SAFF. Les données peuvent tout de même être utilisées à titre d'enquêtes transversales non liées, par exemple, par une régression en « différence dans les différences »,

où l'unité d'analyse serait le ministère ou organisme. Les chercheurs ayant eu recours aux données du SAFF ont jusqu'à maintenant peu souvent utilisé plusieurs versions du sondage dans la même recherche : seulement quatre d'entre eux l'ont fait. Les dernières versions n'ont d'ailleurs pratiquement pas été étudiées, et ce, même pour les études relativement récentes. Ces opportunités rendent les données du SAFF attrayantes et laissent la place à la recherche future, entre autres sur la gestion du changement, le support pour la santé mentale, et les problèmes avec la paye (possiblement en lien avec le système Phénix). Comme il a été suggéré par des chercheurs (Fernandez et coll. 2015 : 391) et par un praticien (Callahan 2015) pour le FEVS américain, nos recommandations aux gestionnaires responsables du SAFF seraient de faire davantage appel à des mesures de concepts précédemment validées, à adopter une approche par enquête longitudinale et à établir un groupe de travail de chercheurs pour assister le SCT.

Bien que les enquêtes constituent une source de données fréquemment utilisées mondialement dans la recherche scientifique, cette étude a permis de recenser seulement 13 recherches ayant eu recours aux données du SAFF parmi les 194 documents qui mentionnaient la base de données gouvernementale. Les deux premières versions du sondage ont d'ailleurs été utilisées uniquement par des étudiants dans le cadre de leur mémoire ou de leur thèse. Le SAFF est donc une source de données méconnues et bilingues, offrant de réelles opportunités pour les étudiants chercheurs à l'affût de données faciles d'accès et peu coûteuses, mais aussi pour les chercheurs soucieux de contribuer aux débats théoriques en Administration publique. Des chercheurs étrangers qui s'intéressent à des sujets pointus pourraient tester leurs hypothèses avec les données canadiennes. Un récent exemple, où deux chercheurs basés en Belgique (Wynen et Kleizen 2019) cherchent à déterminer le niveau de roulement de personnel qui a le plus de conséquences néfastes sur la performance avec les données du FEVS, illustre les opportunités de faire connaître le Canada à l'extérieur de ses frontières. En ajoutant l'expérience canadienne qui pourrait confirmer, nuancer ou même infirmer partiellement des débats théoriques, les recherches futures pourraient s'intéresser à des sujets exploités du côté américain, mais avec les données canadiennes. Par exemple, des études portant sur la diversité (Pitts 2009) sont des points de départ intéressants. La richesse des données du SAFF permet aussi aux chercheurs de s'engager dans des avenues jusqu'à présent moins exploitées. Les chercheurs pourraient aussi poursuivre des recherches à partir de questions seulement présentes dans le SAFF. Pour paraphraser un activiste et chanteur d'un groupe rock irlandais, le SAFF est un moyen d'offrir « plus de Canada » aux débats théoriques de la communauté internationale.

Notes

- 1 L'étude de Fabian (2003) n'a pas été repérée grâce à l'expression « "public service employee survey" ou "sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux" », mais avec une autre expression qui repèrerait moins de documents. Vu le nombre limité d'études basées sur les données du SAFF, nous avons tout de même choisi de l'ajouter à notre analyse.
- 2 Étant publié dans une revue de philosophie, il est peu probable que cet article ait fait usage des données du SAFF.
- 3 Ajouter l'article de Somerville et Dyke (2008) qui n'a pas été analysé individuellement, parce qu'il reprend intégralement les résultats de la thèse de doctorat de Somerville (2008). Aussi, les caractéristiques de l'article sont les mêmes que ceux de la thèse.
- 4 Remler et Van Ryzin (2014 : 105-106) définissent les échelles comme étant des mesures d'items multiples formés d'items intercorrélés qui reflètent un construit latent; alors que les indices sont des mesures composites qui ne sont pas nécessairement des hautement corrélés. Les auteurs ajoutent que la différence entre les échelles et les indices est subtile, et que cela explique pourquoi les chercheurs les utilisent souvent de manière interchangeable (p.106).

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Renseignements supplémentaires

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Multilevel governance through a strategic lens: Innovation policy delivery in Ontario

Abstract: The multilevel governance literature has matured into a widely used analytical framework for investigating policy processes that span multiple tiers of jurisdiction. However, there are still gaps in this literature. The main objective of this article is to address some of these gaps by proposing a strategic construct of multilevel governance that focuses on informal but longer-time horizons of inter-jurisdictional cooperation. This strategic approach expands the frame of analysis from prevalent emphasis in the extant literature on limited instances of interjurisdictional coordination to a greater emphasis on sustainable strategic multiscalar partnerships facilitated by municipal-level authorities and non-state actors. The article uses this strategic construct of multilevel governance to analyze the key institutional features of Canada's innovation policy delivery in southern Ontario. This study illustrates how a strategic construct provides a richer understanding of the highly adaptive and fluid processes of multilevel governance in federal systems.

Sommaire : La documentation sur la gouvernance multiniveaux a évolué en un cadre d'analyse largement utilisé pour étudier les processus d'élaboration de politiques couvrant plusieurs niveaux d'administration. Il n'en reste pas moins que cette documentation comporte encore des lacunes. Dans cet article, notre but principal est d'aborder certaines de ces lacunes en proposant un concept stratégique pour la gouvernance multiniveaux qui est axé sur une collaboration intergouvernementale informelle, mais sur des périodes plus longues. Cette approche stratégique étend le cadre analytique de la littérature existante mettant l'accent sur les cas limités de collaboration intergouvernementale, en mettant l'accent sur des partenariats stratégiques multiscalaires et durables qui seraient facilités par les autorités municipales et des intervenants non étatiques. Cet article utilise ce concept stratégique de gouvernance multiniveaux afin d'analyser les principales caractéristiques institutionnelles de la prestation de politique innovante canadienne dans le sud de l'Ontario. Cette étude exemplifie comment un concept stratégique permet de mieux saisir les processus hautement flexibles de la gouvernance multiniveaux au sein des systèmes fédéraux.

Charles Conteh is Associate Professor, Public Policy and Management, Department of Political Science, Brock University. The author acknowledges the support of Brock University's Office of Research Service and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for their generous financial support of this research. The author is also indebted to his research assistants, Courtney Aucoin, Eugene Danso, Brittany Harding and Zach Lahaie, for their energy, industry and passion in supporting this research project. The author would also like to acknowledge and thank the interviewees in the public and private sector who graciously gave their time for the interviews.

Introduction

There is a burgeoning literature on multilevel governance that has focused attention on understanding the institutional, structural and processual mechanisms of intergovernmental collaboration that have emerged over the years to address the ever growing complexity of modern policy problems (Hooghe and Marks 2003; Stephenson 2013; Cargnello and Flumian 2017; Anderson et al. 2017). This includes an insightful body of work on the Canadian federation (Harvey and Young 2012; Horak and Young 2012; Henstra 2013; Ircha and Young 2013; Andrew et al. 2014). The main thread weaving through the fabric of this literature is the recognition that most policy issues manifest a profound degree of complexity that tends to dwarf the financial resources, technical expertise, constitutional posturing and jurisdictional authority of any single level of government, thereby necessitating some form of multi-scalar joint action (Bakvis et al. 2019; Galvin 2019; Alcantara and Spicer 2016; Bradford and Wolfe 2019; Doberstein 2013; Leo and August 2009; Papillon 2012).

However, there are still several gaps in the multilevel governance literature's current construct of such interjurisdictional arrangements of joint action. The main objective of this article, therefore, is to identify and address some of these gaps. Principally, we argue that the predominant analytical focus on multilevel governance in Canada has been about a series of short-term, limited "instances" of inter-jurisdictional coordination. This characterization is born in part of the common focus in the Canadian literature on multilevel "initiatives" (such as building a big piece of infrastructure or coordinating construction of affordable housing), and a concomitant focus on the need for formal multilevel structures that can overcome coordination problems and joint decision traps with respect to such initiatives (Doberstein 2013; Harvey and Young 2012; Conteh 2013; Horak and Young 2012; Henstra 2013). If we move away from this focus, and look instead at instances of multilevel governance that involve the coordination of ongoing intergovernmental support programs, we see evidence of multi-scalar calibration taking place mainly through informal but sustainable strategic networks and activities.

The theoretical issues raised in the article are illustrated through an examination of the case of Canada's innovation policy delivery in southern Ontario. The extant literature on Canada's innovation policy has revealed issues of policy coordination across levels of government as long-standing problems (Tamtik 2016; Doern et al. 2016; Wolfe and Bradford 2013; Niosi et al. 2000). This article builds on the insights of these works by shedding light on what we conceptualize as "strategic" multilevel platforms that have emerged to address the challenges of overlapping governmental jurisdictions.

The rest of the discussion is structured as follows. The next (second) section provides a review of the extant multilevel governance literature, highlighting key themes and gaps as well proposing an analytical framework for advancing the literature. The third section provides an overview of the methodology that informed the study's design as well as data collection and analysis. The fourth section then examines through the proposed lens of strategic multilevel governance Canada's innovation policy, focusing on southern Ontario. The concluding section links the themes and issues raised in the empirical section to broader theoretical constructs of multilevel governance in Canada and other federal and multitiered systems.

Literature review and conceptual framework

Over the past three decades, the multilevel governance (MLG) literature has developed into a well-established conceptual framework for investigating policy processes that span layers of politico-administrative institutions (Bakvis et al. 2019; Stephenson 2013; Hooghe and Marks 2003). One of the key themes in the MLG literature consists of mapping and analyzing diverse sets of coordination arrangements among formally independent but functionally interdependent entities that have complex relations to another (Piattoni 2009; Howlett et al. 2017; Tortola 2017; Horak and Young 2012; Hooghe and Marks 2003).

The multilevel governance literature sets itself apart from conventional constructs of intergovernmental relations that are prevalent in the traditional federalism literature (Bakvis 2013; Cargnello and Flumian 2017). For instance, regulatory federalism is juxtaposed with multilevel governance to highlight the highly fluid and adaptive character of the latter (Asare et al. 2009). Notwithstanding the advances and accumulated insight in this burgeoning literature, there are still unresolved conceptual issues and gaps. Three areas of focus are highlighted and addressed in this discussion.

First, while most analyses have accounted for the adaptive features of multilevel governance processes in navigating the structures and tensions of federalism, they often tend to reveal issue-based and short-lived phenomena. An example of this is Alcantara et al.'s (2016) case for a construct of multilevel governance as mere "instances" of inter-jurisdictional coordination where they see such mechanisms as basically "sporadic processes" of interaction between and among territorially defined governmental actors (2016: 38). In this regard, multilevel governance as "instances" are simply moments or episodes of joint policy action. The impression one gets from such constructs is that multilevel governance arrangements are intrinsically short-lived phenomena, largely deficient in enduring institutional architectures of joint action.

A second issue in the construct of interjurisdictional joint action is that in federal systems, the analytical focus tends to be on predominantly high-level executive (federal-provincial in Canada) undertakings on joint policy ventures (Bakvis et al. 2019; Cargnello and Flumian 2017; Anderson et al. 2017; Alcantara and Spicer 2016; Papillon 2012). Consequently, local and regional municipalities, as creatures of the provinces, have not been given sufficient attention. Addressing this oversight in the Canadian federal context has been the principal focus of a growing body of literature (Doberstein 2016; Harvey and Young 2012; Horak and Young 2012; Henstra 2013; Leo and August 2009; Conteh and Panter 2017; Galvin 2019; Lucas and Smith 2019; Zeemering 2016). The present discussion builds on this body of literature.

A third area in need of further development in the current construct of multitiered joint ventures in federal systems is the tendency to focus on the activities of public sector organizations (Broschek 2010; Montpetit and Foucault 2012; Beland and Lecours 2016). This in turn has yielded constructs of interjurisdictional arrangements with a strong focus on the agency and manoeuvres of public sector organizations (Simeon 2010; Broschek 2010; Brock 2018). However, one of the promises of the multilevel governance literature is its capacity to offer an elastic conceptualization of institutions that drew attention to the highly porous boundaries of the state-society relations in liberal democracies (Hooghe and Marks 2003). A growing body of work is exploring the role of non-state actors (Bache, Bartle, & Flinders, 2016; Andrew et al. 2014; Henstra 2013; Ircha and Young 2013). The current study is in part an attempt to contribute to this development of the literature.

The strategic approach is about directing collaborative and flexible multi-stakeholder relationships in building systems capacities for the creation of public value guided by a shared agenda.

To address the existing gaps and build on the scholarly efforts highlighted above, the discussion proposes a construct of multilevel governance that focuses on a strategic approach to policy delivery in multitiered systems. The concept “strategic” denotes the existence and centrality of some form of “strategy” as a framework of governance (Poister et al. 2010). The overarching objective of the strategic approach, therefore, is to develop a continuing commitment to the mission and vision of a given jurisdiction (such as a city or region) and maintain a disciplined focus on a given set of articulated agenda. The strategic approach is about directing collaborative and flexible multi-stakeholder relationships in building systems capacities for the creation of public value guided by a shared agenda (Durand et al. 2017; Baker 2007). In particular, the strategic approach to governance focuses on creating structures

that facilitate the integration of proactive planning and implementation across a network of agencies and jurisdictions in an ongoing way to enhance the fulfillment of missions, meeting of mandates, and sustained creation of public value (Bryson 2011). The strategic approach thus calls attention to how policy stakeholders pursue organizational goals in the context of external environmental systems characterized by complexity and constant change.

Drawing from the above, the term “strategic” in this article consists of two key elements. First, it refers to longer-term horizons of goal articulation and the resulting emphasis on building enduring structures in pursuit of those goals. Actors seek to maintain relatively stable alliances while anticipating and adapting to environmental change in the pursuit of their policy goals. A strategic approach thus draws attention to relatively enduring and synchronized structures that are designed to align the objectives and activities of stakeholders over a longer-term horizon to minimize vulnerability to shifting environmental contingencies (political or economic). A second element of the proposed strategic approach to multilevel governance is its focus on the policy agency of actors and entities that are not constitutionally mandated in federal systems and yet often play considerable roles in the actual workings of multilevel joint action. Principally, such entities include local and regional municipalities and non-state actors.

A strategic approach thus draws attention to relatively enduring and synchronized structures that are designed to align the objectives and activities of stakeholders over a longer-term horizon to minimize vulnerability to shifting environmental contingencies (political or economic).

Combining the two elements above, a strategic construct of multilevel governance refers to the manoeuvres of agencies from several tiers of jurisdiction, including (and especially) the municipal level, and from within and outside the public sector, working together over more than the short term, with the aim of securing the delivery of benefits or added value that could not have been provided by any single actor or agency acting alone. Strategic multilevel governance, therefore, consists of durable multi-scalar network relationships by which actors manifest policy agency beyond their formal jurisdictional authority and organizational mandate to develop mutual products/services, share risks, costs and benefits, and provide public value in pursuit of a set of goals. Seen through this construct, the strategic approach in the context of multitiered arrangements is distinct from an operational approach in which agencies from several tiers of government are content with “sporadic” cooperation or collaboration, often preoccupied

with improving their respective program efficiency, controlling the flows of their organizational resources within a given funding cycle, and highly sensitive to vertical intra-organizational accountability structures.

To conclude, a strategic approach to multilevel governance positions scholars to fully understand enduring structures and much more complex processes of multi-scalar and multi-actor policy delivery arrangements. The rest of the discussion explores the key features of multilevel governance in the proposed framework by examining the case of Canada's innovation policy in southern Ontario. Three research questions are addressed: First, are there mechanisms of multitiered joint action that manifest longer-time horizons beyond the life-cycles of specific federal or provincial programs and governments? Second, what role, if any, do local and regional municipalities play in the structuring and facilitation of interjurisdictional arrangements of joint action? Third, how do non-state actors seek to influence the structure, trajectories and outcomes of multilevel policy delivery systems?

Research method

The article employs a disciplined configurative idiographic case study, with a focus on process tracing (George and Bennet 2005). The single case study approach provides a detailed examination of a case to test or apply analytical frameworks that may be generalizable to other cases. Process tracing, as the name implies, focuses on systematically tracking developments and underlying patterns in the relationships, structures and actions that actors employ over a given time period in pursuit of their organizational objectives.

The data for this article were collected and analyzed over a period of seventeen months (February 2018 to July 2019) by a combination of semi-structured interviews, reviews of primary (mostly government) documents, and process tracing. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty-eight individuals (retired, high-level, mid-level, and frontline officials) drawn primarily from public sector agencies (federal, provincial, local and regional), industry associations and non-profit organizations in southern Ontario. Each of the interviews took an average of one hour and consisted of questions relating to the mandates of the interviewees' organizations, their relationship with key partners in southern Ontario's innovation policy subsystem, and how the interviewees perceive the intergovernmental structures and processes as conceptualized in the study's framework of multilevel governance. Not all the interviews were directly referenced in the discussion, but together they provided considerable empirical insight that enriched the analysis of the case. The independent review of media articles and government documents (archival reports, commissioned studies and web-based departmental information) relating to innovation policy delivery in southern Ontario provides some measure of triangulation with the

semi-structured interviews. For analytical clarity within the limited scope of this article, the discussion focuses on Niagara as a typical case in southern Ontario. However, examples are drawn from other regions in southern Ontario to affirm that the dynamics observed in Niagara are also present elsewhere in the province.

Innovation policy in the Canadian federation: the case of Ontario

The discussion in this section first provides a brief conceptual and historical overview of “innovation policy” in Canada, and then examines some examples of strategic multilevel governance processes in innovation policy delivery in southern Ontario. The focus on the federal as opposed to the provincial government is largely a practical decision resulting from two considerations. First, in broad historical timelines, provincial governments’ innovation policy initiatives and their respective ministries’ mandates have largely mirrored those of their federal counterparts. Second, and more importantly, the present discussion largely focuses on illustrating the multilevel dynamics of the federal government’s innovation policy initiatives.

By definition, innovation policy principally consists of the efforts of governments to facilitate the transformation of their economy to fit the imperatives of global competitiveness (Niosi et al. 2000; Fagerberg 2018). These imperatives are driven by breakneck changes in technology and constantly shifting national and global markets conditions (Asheim et al. 2019). Innovation policy largely involves government-facilitated investments in building the core competences of an economy’s capacity to generate new industry-relevant knowledge which can be translated by firms and industries into cutting-edge products, services and processes that will create new jobs, generate taxable revenue and raise the general level of citizens’ economic and social wellbeing (Lundvall 1992; Nelson 1993; OECD 2019). Governments have employed a plethora of tools in pursuit of innovation policy. A review of such tools in Canada has been done elsewhere (Niosi et al. 2000; Gertler, Wolfe, and Bradford 2016; Doern et al. 2016) and is beyond the scope of the present discussion because the main concern is to examine the multilevel institutional character of Canada’s innovation policy delivery.

Innovation policy has a relatively long history in Canada. Niosi et al. (2000), for instance, has detailed the historical development of Canada’s national innovation system dating back to Confederation and spanning the decades throughout the twentieth century. Canada’s pursuit of innovation has made a profound contribution to the country’s prosperity in the postwar period and is proving to be one of the defining factors of its global competitiveness as the current era of unprecedented knowledge-intensive economies unfolds (Niosi et al. 2000; Doern et al. 2016). A number of scholars have

shed light on the geographical contours of Canada's regional innovation systems across the country (Niosi et al. 2005; Gertler, Wolfe, and Bradford 2016; Galvin 2019). Others have provided an institutional overview of Canada's national innovation system, including details of federal and provincial innovation policies and the mandates of the respective agencies (Tamtik 2016; Doern et al. 2016; Niosi et al. 2000). A few studies have gone further to examine the intergovernmental relations (or lack thereof) of Canada's innovation policy environment (Tamtik 2016; Bradford and Wolfe 2013).

While the above scholarship constitutes a rich body of accumulated insight on Canada's national and regional innovation systems, how the delivery of innovation policies is shaped by the institutional architecture of Canada's federal system still needs further articulation. The present discussion is a modest attempt to contribute to this endeavor by using the framework of strategic multilevel governance. Covering the magnitude of activities undertaken by a wide range of federal and provincial departments and agencies delivering innovation programs is beyond the scope of this article. The present discussion focuses instead on the activities of a select number of programs to illustrate the strategic mechanisms of multi-scalar innovation policy delivery in southern Ontario.

Strategic multilevel governance, therefore, consists of durable multi-scalar network relationships by which actors manifest policy agency beyond their formal jurisdictional authority and organizational mandate to develop mutual products/services, share risks, costs and benefits, and provide public value in pursuit of a set of goals.

One of the most influential of Canada's innovation policy initiatives over the past three decades has been the federal government's Network of Centres of Excellence (NCE) program. This program is a joint initiative of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), under the oversight of the Ministry of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development (ISED), which it inherited from its predecessor, Industry Canada (Government of Canada 2018a). Since its establishment in 1989, the NCE program was designed to help create geographically distributed networks of innovation clusters that are locally embedded within metropolitan areas across the country (Government of Canada 2018a; Clark 2013).

Although the NCE program states as one of its principal goals to support locally embedded innovation clusters, its relationship with provincial

governments' initiative is not apparent in any of its formal Program Guide documents,¹ nor any of its widely referenced documents on "Funding Agreements, Administration Guidelines, and Policies."² This goal is all the more interesting because innovation clusters are geographically embedded entities, operating within the territorial jurisdictions of provinces (Interviews).³ Moreover, economic development is generally a preoccupation of provincial governments who often jealously guard their constitutional authority to manage their respective economies. Even more interesting is that the NCE program is designed to be delivered in close partnership with (or even housed within) universities, and the latter are largely funded by, and subject to, the oversight of provinces.

In addition, the province of Ontario has its own almost identical flagship Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) program (Ontario Centres of Excellence 2018). The OCE has existed since the late 1980s when seven independent centres were created. These centres were eventually amalgamated in 2004 to take on the current organizational structure under the banner of the Ontario Centres of Excellence Inc. Like its federal counterpart (with nearly identical names but no formal stipulations of cooperation between the two programs), the OCE has actively worked with industry, academia and not-for-profit organizations to support collaborative research and development initiatives, aid with the commercialization of technology initiatives, promote the training of new and established researchers and fund strategically essential policy initiatives (OCE 2019). In short, the federal government's NCE program and the Ontario government's OCE program have no formal federal-provincial mechanisms of joint action. They operate under different political and jurisdictional currents, and they run programs with different funding cycles from each other. The result of these realities from the standpoint of local actors geographically embedded within the respective regional innovation ecosystems was a perception of fragmentation in the innovation program delivery systems of the two orders of government (Interviews).

For example, in the region of Niagara, the two postsecondary institutions, Brock University and Niagara College, as well as other stand-alone research centres like the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre (VRIC) receive a number of innovation funding under various programs of federal government's NCE initiatives (Niagara Region 2018). At the same time, each of these research centres is supported by the provincial government's OCE initiatives (Interviews). Meanwhile, both Niagara postsecondary institutions also receive funding for their innovation-related research and development (R&D) activities from the Economic Development Department of the Niagara Regional Municipality. What this picture of Niagara's innovation ecosystem reveals is a *mélange* of institutes and centres receiving a medley of innovation funding from federal, provincial and regional government sources. The main challenge, however, for local actors in Niagara's innovation ecosystem

is the apparent bedlam resulting from the vertically fragmented nature of the funding architecture or lack thereof (Interviews).

The Niagara example above mirrors similar challenges uncovered from observations of the innovation ecosystems in the regions of Hamilton, Waterloo and Windsor in southern Ontario (Interviews). Underlying these challenges of a multi-layered delivery system is that the alignment of R&D activities within a spatially integrated framework of knowledge-generation, dissemination and commercialization is crucial to the competitiveness of innovation hubs. These activities from the standpoint of local actors should form part of their geographically embedded strategies of industrial restructuring and economic reinvention.

To address these constraints and challenges, local actors in Niagara, Hamilton, Waterloo and Windsor resorted to informal mechanisms to align the strategic priorities of their regional innovation ecosystem with the realities of Canada's multitiered jurisdiction. A seminal development that provided a unique opportunity for local and regional actors dates back to 2009 when the Ontario government created the Ontario Network of Excellence (ONE) (not to be confused with the Ontario Centre of Excellence - OCE) (Government of Ontario 2017). ONE, which was later rebranded in 2013 as the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs (ONE), was designed to serve as a regionally embedded and client-focused network of innovation systems across the province. Seventeen ONE members (consisting of a mixture of academic, industry and municipal organizations) were established across the province's cities and regions to function under the banner of Regional Innovation Centres (RICs).

While the express purpose of the RICs were to create or strengthen functional and close-knit networks of regional innovation ecosystems across the province, these networks evolved into platforms for actors to mobilize their efforts to influence innovation program alignment across tiers of government. To return to the Niagara example, Innovate Niagara, the region's Regional Innovation Centre (RIC) created under the 2009 initiative started consolidating some of the main actors in the region (Innovate Niagara 2018). These actors include BioLinc (a Brock University-based innovation accelerator), Walker Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (WAMIC - a hub operated by Niagara College), and the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI - a Brock University viticulture research institute). Other actors include Spark Niagara (an information communications and technology innovation incubator), and the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre (VRIC - a horticulture research and innovation centre). Also added to Innovate Niagara's platform are a constellation of industry actors such as the Niagara Industrial Association (NIA), the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce (GNCC) and a number of other business and trade associations.

Furthermore, Innovate Niagara structured the composition of its Board of Directors to facilitate and reflect the organization's core mission of serving as a lynchpin bringing together the key actors in the region's innovation ecosystem (Innovate Niagara 2018). Its membership consists of the Vice President of Research at Brock University, the Associate Vice President, Research & Innovation at Niagara College, the Niagara Region's Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Acting Director of Economic Development, and the Director of Economic Development and Government Relations at St. Catharines, Niagara's largest city.

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In short, through the nascent platform under the leadership of Innovate Niagara, a cluster of local non-state actors along with officials from the Region's Economic Development Department started initiating regularized consultations with funding agencies – principally NCE and OCE – from upper-tier jurisdictions. Innovate Niagara leveraged its close connection with OCE to incorporate the latter's field officers into its emergent regional innovation policy platform where Niagara's long-term regional economic development strategies championed by the Regional Municipality are deliberated and operationalized (Interviews). For example, this was done not only by inviting OCE's field officers to participate in the regular Innovate Niagara meetings but also opening their physical spaces for co-location with these field officers, thus providing an opportunity for close-knit contacts and mutual alignments on a daily basis. In a similar vein, the centres, institutes and innovation commercialization officials from Brock University and Niagara College leveraged their existing connections with NCE and OCE officials to align Niagara's innovation needs and priorities with the funding programs of these agencies. For instance, these two post-secondary institutions increasingly apply for funds by aligning their applications with the region's strategic economic development priorities in key sectors like agri-food, manufacturing, tourism and transportation and logistics (Interviews).

Similarly, the Niagara Region's Economic Development Department officials extended regular invitations to the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade's (MEDJT's) field officials in the region to the same platform where Niagara's economic development and innovation strategies are deliberated. These strategic efforts by local actors

together resulted in a gradual transformation from disjointed project funding from upper-tier agencies (which are mostly preoccupied with controlling resource flows within their varying funding cycles as dictated by vertical intra-organizational accountability structures) to one of multi-scalar alignments with Niagara's economic development priorities (Interviews).

The Niagara example of strategic multilevel joint action championed by a network of non-state local actors and municipal economic development officials was observed in the efforts of Communitech and its partners in the Region of Waterloo, the Innovation Factory and the city of Hamilton, and WE-tech and the Region of Windsor (Interviews). These platforms position not only local municipal EDOs to exert policy influence beyond their *de jure* authority, but also mobilize non-state actors to penetrate the porous boundaries of the state and influence the character of multilevel policy delivery systems. Local and regional municipalities along with a constellation of local actors step up their policy agency to address the challenges of funding misalignments.

The result of these outreaches by several local players to their main contacts in upper-level agencies and ministries is that local platforms were created to serve as strategic conduits for building longer-term horizons in the innovation policy delivery architecture of the two upper-tiers of government. An example of this is seen in the fact that rather than sporadic instances of decision coordination among funding agencies, the field officers of the various upper-level agencies work within more enduring structures that allow them to align their respective funding programs to fit into the respective regions' long-term economic development strategic goals. To cite a more concrete example, NCE aligns its funding decisions more closely with Innovate Niagara's business start-up initiatives. Similarly, MEDJT officials in Niagara have been directing their funding based on discussions and decisions emanating from the joint platform (Interviews). Not surprisingly, these locally embedded platforms of multilevel joint action have been able to weather recent political and policy storms.

For instance, the 2018 Ontario general election brought to power the Progressive Conservative Party led by Premier Doug Ford, ending a fifteen-year period of continuous Liberal Party rule that has built up much of the recent innovation policy architecture in the province (including the OCE). The newly elected Premier was quick to demonstrate his ideological distaste for much of the innovation policies of his predecessors, eventually cutting nearly half of the OCE's funding which resulted in massive staff layoffs.⁴ In addition, the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJT) saw a 20% reduction in its budget, with cascading effects through the province's innovation programs (Interviews).

More significantly, the perception of crisis within the province's innovation policy subsystem served to further galvanize the nascent networks of innovation ecosystems to become more proactive in their effort to strengthen

the mechanisms of multilevel joint action (Interviews). As a response to the emergent crisis of innovation funding cuts, local constellations of municipal EDOs and their non-state partners were incentivized to consolidate enduring platforms of multi-scalar coordination to minimize vulnerability to shifting environmental contingencies. For example, there was a spike in the frequency of meetings among these actors, with ONE members taking it upon themselves to mobilize new resources to fill the vacuum left by the provincial funding cuts (Interviews). The goal is to guard their regional economic development strategies against what they perceive as shifting sands of political and policy vacillations.

A further indication of the enduring character of these strategic efforts to influence the multilevel governance processes can be seen in recent months after major changes were introduced to the federal government's innovation policy delivery system following a comprehensive program review (Government of Canada 2018b).⁵ The federal government announced plans in December 2018 to restructure and modernize its innovation policy framework. This change led to a gradual transfer of funding for the NCE Program to the New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF). This restructuring also saw the introduction of major initiatives that now largely define the current landscape of the federal government's innovation program. These programs are the Innovation Superclusters Initiative (ISI), the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF), Innovative Solutions Canada (ISC), the Clean Growth Hub (CGH) and the Accelerated Growth Service (AGS). Exploring the details of each of these programs is beyond the scope of the discussion; however, a highlight of some of their implications for strategic multilevel joint action in southern Ontario is in order.

The ISI initiative, for instance, is designed to support five "superclusters" spanning a wider geographic radius than conventional economic clusters (Government of Canada 2019). One of the superclusters—the Advanced Manufacturing supercluster—is housed in Ontario under the leadership of NGen,⁶ based in Hamilton. In principle, NGen's main mandate is to serve an ecosystem spanning all of Canada. However, as a relatively new supercluster, its predominant focus has been on consolidating network ties within the manufacturing heartland of southern Ontario with the goal of expanding outward to other areas of the country. NGen's strategic aim is to bring the worlds of manufacturing and technology together, serving as a platform for connecting companies, researchers and nurturing partnership opportunities in the advanced manufacturing sector.

A significant point worth noting is that the creation of NGen coincided with the turbulent political and policy environment for Ontario's innovation actors discussed earlier. This context infused NGen's mandate and operations with a sense of urgency right after its creation to strategically facilitate multilevel mechanisms of joint action (NGen 2018; Interviews). Even though

it operates as a private sector consortium, NGen's close partnership with the federal government by virtue of its five-year delivery contract with the latter has positioned it to build institutionalized mechanisms of sustained dialogue and consultations with Innovation Canada (the branch of ISED responsible for the overseeing the Supercluster Initiative). This special relationship with ISED also granted NGen virtually unhindered access to other federal innovation program agencies such as Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP) and the Federal Economic Development Initiative for southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) (Interviews).

Moreover, because of its geographic embeddedness within the southern Ontario region, NGen enjoys close partnership with the Ontario government's Regional Innovation Centres (RICs) and other innovation hubs with whom it shares the same strategic goals for region. For instance, NGen is not only physically co-located with McMaster Innovation Park, a university-based hub within Hamilton's innovative ecosystem, but it also has close alliances with RICs like Communitech in Waterloo, MaRS in Toronto, Innovation Factory in Hamilton and Innovate Niagara. Its close connections with the RICs means that NGen has a strong (even if informal) connection with the provincial government's OCE and the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Moreover, NGen's activities across the geographic belt of southern Ontario are closely supported by local and regional municipalities which are eager to attract R&D investments the federal government's Supercluster program into their respective municipalities. A private sector-led consortium like NGen has thus been positioned by virtue of its strong federal, provincial and local institutional ties to serve as yet another conduit for building on earlier strategic multilevel program alignment initiatives and consolidating them within southern Ontario.

To illustrate this further, part of the federal government's 2018 restructuring that led to the creation of the superclusters also resulted in the consolidation of the Accelerated Growth Service (AGS) and Concierge Service (Government of Canada 2018c), both of which are now housed within Innovation Canada. It should be noted briefly that the AGS and Concierge are one-stop platforms for coordinating the federal government's innovation programs and agencies. Although the AGS and Concierge initiatives do not by themselves represent a multilevel arrangement (since they focus only on federal agencies), their consolidation under the oversight of Innovation Canada provided NGen yet another strategic opportunity to facilitate its access to a number of federal innovation agencies. The consolidated AGS and Concierge Service means an expedited one-stop conduit for NGen and its local partners in southern Ontario to pursue multilevel processes of joint action.

NGen is thus stepping into the role of "lynchpin" for strategically synchronizing and embedding some of the new federal innovation policy initiatives

within the southern Ontario industrial belt. In addition, the federal government's integrated federal flagship innovation platforms now requires the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), the Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP), and the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) to be more closely aligned in their funding decision (Wolfe 2019). Like the consolidation of the AGS and Concierge Services, this integration does not constitute any meaningful advance in multilevel governance because it is restricted to federal agencies and programs. However, as a supercluster under the ISI initiative, NGen can and does leverage this integrated federal platform in its pursuit of more synchronized multilevel mechanisms of innovation program delivery in southern Ontario (Interviews).

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A good indication of the above is that FedDev Ontario shifted from a predominantly vertical intra-organizational process in its funding decision-making to one of increasingly aligning some of its operational decisions to the broad mandate of the NGen supercluster (Interviews). This appears to be a logical step for FedDev because one of its three core funding streams—the Regional Innovation Ecosystem stream—shares many similar attributes with the strategic goals of the NGen supercluster (Government of Canada 2018c). Similarly, the IRAP program, a decades-long innovation program of the National Research Council (NRC) focused on supporting small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across Canada, now operates in a new institutional environment within southern Ontario over the past decade (Interviews). Even though there were sporadic instances of cooperation with other agencies in earlier decades, IRAP was mostly focused on controlling resource flows within a given funding cycle as dictated by vertical intra-organizational accountability structures within NRC. The strategic multilevel manoeuvres of the RICs since their creation in 2009 along with the multi-scalar efforts of NGen since 2018 have fundamentally altered the institutional landscape of IRAP's operating environment.

The result of all the above is a transformation in the program delivery of organizations like IRAP and FedDev from their largely organization-centric operational activities preoccupied with pursuing their organizational goals. For instance, IRAP's Industrial Technology Advisors (ITAs) now not only co-locate their field offices within some of the regional innovation hubs in southern Ontario but also more closely integrate their advisory services and funding decisions with the long-term strategic priorities of the innovation

ecosystems in which they serve (Interviews). In a nutshell, there is now a strategic intentionality in IRAP and FedDev's efforts to closely align their funding and operating decisions with the strategic innovation goals facilitated by the emergent platforms championed by local and non-state actors in the respective regions. What the above examples illustrate is that over the past decade the concerted efforts of a constellation of local municipal and non-state actors across several regions of southern Ontario have responded to the challenges and frustrations of navigating a plethora of federal and provincial innovation programs by designing informal but enduring platforms for synchronizing such programs to be more holistically aligned with their long-term regional economic strategies.

In closing, an overview of Canada's innovation policy ecosystem would reveal the absence of formalized structures or processes of institutional or policy alignment between the orders of government (Galvin 2019; Tamtik 2016; Doern et al. 2016; Niosi et al. 2000). However, upon closer examination of the case of southern Ontario, one observes informal but enduring mechanisms of multiscalar joint action that serve as correctives to the institutional ataxia of Canada's federal system. A strategic approach to multilevel policy delivery is thus evident in southern Ontario in two critical ways. First, it has given rise to longer-term horizons of joint action and a resulting emphasis on building enduring structures and committing resources to achieve them. Second, the policy agency of local and regional municipalities and their non-state actors is manifested well beyond their *de jure* authority in the formal structures of Canadian federalism. These examples are not sporadic instances of cooperation but enduring mechanisms of joint action that are tailored to the specific needs of a mosaic of regionally embedded economic clusters.

Conclusion

The multilevel governance literature has proven useful for addressing the pragmatic imperatives of profound departures from the formal strictures of federal Constitutional provisions and institutional designs. However, as argued earlier, there are still gaps and areas in need of further development in our current construct of such interjurisdictional arrangements of joint action. To address these gaps, the discussion proposed a strategic construct of multilevel governance. The discussion in the preceding section has attempted to answer three key research questions by highlighting some examples from the case of Canada's innovation policy delivery in southern Ontario.

Niagara, as a typical case, was the main focus of the discussion, but passing references were made to similar practices in other regions of southern Ontario, which because of the limited scope of the article could not be given the same detailed analysis. To recap, the first question asks: are there

mechanisms of multitiered joint action that manifest longer-time horizons beyond the life-cycles of specific federal or provincial programs and governments? The answer, as illustrated, is that such arrangements can be enduring and long-term.

The second research question was what role, if any, do local and regional municipalities play in the structuring and facilitating of interjurisdictional arrangements of joint action? The answer could be seen in the proactive policy agency of local and regional municipalities in Niagara and other areas of southern Ontario facilitating such interjurisdictional mechanisms of joint action. The third question asks how do non-state actors seek to influence the structure, trajectories and outcomes of multilevel policy delivery systems? The answer was found in the examples above of actors like Innovate Niagara, NGen and others.

Upon closer examination of the case of southern Ontario, one observes informal but enduring mechanisms of multiscalar joint action that serve as correctives to the institutional ataxia of Canada's federal system.

In terms of substantive policy contribution, the findings in this research build on the insight of earlier studies (Galvin 2019; Tamtik 2016; Gertler, Wolfe, and Bradford 2016) that have examined the intergovernmental dimensions of Ontario's innovation ecosystem. Central to this insight is how the strategic vision and manoeuvres of these networks of local and non-state actors at the grassroots of innovation ecosystems have synchronized and consolidated the conventional contours of intergovernmental relations from the bottom up.

In closing, the aim of this discussion has been to prompt new thinking about long-term strategy in multilevel governance. It also attempts to build on a growing body of literature highlighting the importance of local municipal and non-governmental action in policy development in multitiered jurisdictions like Canada. The discussion used the notion of strategic multilevel governance as an analytical framework that is meant to describe an empirical practice. As noted earlier, multilevel governance in Canada has been about a series of short-term, limited "instances" of inter-jurisdictional coordination. This characterization is a manifestation of the common focus in the Canadian literature on relatively short-term multilevel "initiatives" and an attendant focus on the need for formal multilevel structures that can overcome joint decision traps with respect to such initiatives. In moving away from this focus and looking instead at instances of multilevel governance that involve the coordination of ongoing intergovernmental support

programs, we see evidence of coordination taking place mainly through informal but longer-term strategic networks and activities.

There is one important caveat worth noting for the purpose of generalizability across policy fields. It could be the case that informal networks as analyzed in this article are not equally important to multilevel coordination in all policy fields (see, for example, Henstra 2013 and Doberstein 2016). Future studies could thus use the analytical framework developed in this article to investigate the presence, or lack thereof, of such networks in other policy fields in Canada and other multitiered systems. In this regard, the analytical framework developed in this article could serve to generate possible future hypotheses and questions for research in other policy areas and delivery systems in Canada and beyond.

Notes

- 1 NCE Program Guide. https://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/ReportsPublications-RapportsPublications/ProgramGuides-GuidesProgrammes_eng.asp
- 2 Funding Agreements, Administration Guidelines, and Policies. https://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/ReportsPublications-RapportsPublications/FundingAgreements-EntentesFinancement_eng.asp.
- 3 As noted in the Research Methods section the paper, semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty-eight individuals drawn primarily from public sector agencies (federal, provincial, local and regional), industry associations and non-profit organizations in southern Ontario. To respect the confidentiality of the interviewees, the intext references will only cite them as "interviews."
- 4 The Globe and Mail. 2019. Ontario cuts funding to startup, innovation programs. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/article-ontario-cuts-funding-to-startup-innovation-programs/> Published May 8, 2019. Accessed July 2019.
- 5 Budget 2017 announced a horizontal review of federal business innovation programs with the goal of simplifying their delivery to address a systemic fragmentation that makes it difficult for businesses to find the support that they need. <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/corporate/reports/inventory-federal-business-innovation-clean-technology-programs.html>.
- 6 NGen. 2018. "Next Generation Manufacturing Canada Advanced Manufacturing Supercluster Five-Year Strategy" <https://www.ngen.ca/> (Accessed January 2019).

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Partisan politics and fiscal policy in the Canadian provinces

Abstract: This article evaluates the impact of partisanship on provincial fiscal policies over business- and electoral-cycles between 1981 and 2016. There were partisan differences between left-wing governments (the New Democratic Party and the Parti Québécois), on the one hand, and conservative ones, on the other. The evidence is particularly strong for business-cycles, where left-wing parties pursued much more countercyclical strategies than conservatives. In contrast, there was little difference between most Liberal administrations and conservative ones. Left-wing fiscal policies nevertheless lost their distinctiveness during the last third of the study period. The article concludes by discussing possible explanations for this change.

Sommaire : Cet article évalue l'incidence de l'esprit partisan sur les politiques budgétaires provinciales au cours des cycles économiques – et électoraux – entre 1981 et 2016. Il y a eu des différences partisans entre, d'une part, les gouvernements de gauche (comme le Nouveau Parti démocratique et le Parti Québécois), et les partis conservateurs, d'autre part. Les preuves sont particulièrement fortes en ce qui concerne les cycles économiques, durant lesquels les partis de gauche ont promu beaucoup plus de stratégies contracycliques que les conservateurs. En revanche, nous avons noté très peu de différences entre la plupart des administrations libérales et conservatrices. Néanmoins, les politiques budgétaires de la gauche ont perdu leur spécificité durant le dernier tiers de la période étudiée. Nous concluons par une discussion sur les explications possibles de ce changement.

Introduction

This article examines whether fiscal policy in the Canadian provinces, especially the extent and timing of deficits or surpluses, is affected by which party governs. This question has been addressed by international scholars, but has not received the attention it deserves for the provinces.

For public opinion and much media commentary, the budget balance is an important measure of how competently a government manages its affairs. Persistent deficits eventually are unsustainable, and are widely judged an unjustifiable charge on future generations. Chronic surpluses invite demands from the public and media for tax cuts or new programs. For public officials, the budget balance strongly influences whether new initiatives under consideration by them and their ministers will be judged affordable by treasurers and central agencies or, conversely, whether the latter actors will consider sought-after economies to be worth the attended risk

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of disappointing important electoral constituencies. For economists, fiscal policy, which focusses to an important degree on the budget balance, has important implications for the economy as a whole. The Keynesians among them advocate deficits in a recession; abundant growth and rising inflation call for a surplus (see below). Neoclassical economists typically eschew fiscal interventions, but usually acknowledge that the budget balance matters for the economy.

An important international literature asks whether governments differ in their preferences for surpluses and deficits not just because of variations in their competence, pressure for new programs or the curtailment of old ones from outside or within government, or the views of economists, but because of distinctive ideological orientations. It asks whether parties of the left and right favour distinctive approaches to fiscal policy, especially budget balances.

National governments are the focus for most of this research. In most countries only they can run balances that are large enough to be economically consequential. This is not true in Canada, however, where the provinces have considerable fiscal discretion. Throughout the period studied here, provinces and their municipalities controlled over half of all Canadian public revenues, if one combines their own-source revenues with transfer payments from Ottawa over which the federal government now exercises very limited control (Haddow 2016). Their constitutional responsibilities for health insurance, education, social assistance and infrastructure offer provincial authorities ample opportunities to adjust spending levels significantly; and their right to raise any direct tax gives them access to financial resources that, practically speaking, rival Ottawa's. It should not be surprising, then, that research discussed below has identified an important influence for partisanship on overall expenditure and revenue levels in the provinces (Pickup 2006, Haddow 2016). However, this analysis has not been extended to the consequences of partisanship for the features of the budget balance treated here.

Throughout the period studied here, provinces and their municipalities controlled over half of all Canadian public revenues, if one combines their own-source revenues with transfer payments from Ottawa over which the federal government now exercises very limited control.

Five specific questions about provincial fiscal policy are addressed in this article. Do parties of different ideological stripes conduct fiscal policies differently at different points in a business-cycle, that is, depending on whether

the economy is in recession or experiencing robust growth? Second, do parties pursue distinctive fiscal policies in different years of electoral-cycles? The latter term refers to the time between one election and the next. Third, which of these partisan variations is strongest? Whether partisan influences on business- and electoral-cycles have strengthened or weakened over time are the other questions addressed.

There are no extant studies of whether provincial parties manage business-cycles differently in Canada; only one older article briefly addresses the intersection of partisanship and provincial electoral-cycles in relation to deficits. This article therefore fills important gaps in the literature by using contemporary data to examine these questions for the provinces since 1980, and also asks whether partisanship's influence has changed over time. There also appears to be no scholarship that compares the strength of partisan differences for business- and electoral-cycles.

To anticipate, this article reports that there were no significant differences over 35 years in the management of deficits across business- and electoral-cycles between most Liberal administrations and conservative ones. In contrast, governments led by parties of the left, i.e., the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Parti Québécois (PQ), were (i) more likely than conservative ones to conduct countercyclical fiscal policies; that is, left parties ran larger deficits during recessions, then stimulated less during periods of strong growth. They were also less likely than conservative governments (ii) to run larger deficits as an election approached, a strategy that might be expected to enhance a government's chances of being re-elected. The distinctiveness of left and conservative governments (iii) was greater in relation to business-cycles than for electoral-cycles. This result is noteworthy because partisan business-cycles have not previously received attention in research on the provinces. Nevertheless, while differences between left and conservative governments were striking during the first two-thirds of the study period, these (iv) business- (v) and electoral-cycle partisan variations both disappeared after 2003. The purpose of this article is to document these patterns, not to account for this change. Its conclusion nevertheless addresses possible explanations and proposes further relevant research. The next section reviews relevant scholarship. Later ones discuss data and methodology, then present and discuss findings.

Partisanship in relation to business and electoral cycles

Scholars long have speculated about whether left- and right-wing parties affect the economy differently. Some focus on partisanship's influence on long-term patterns (for instance, Bartels 2008, Simon and Tatalovich 2014). The research of relevance to this study has a shorter-term focus, concentrating

on the relevance of *partisanship for managing fiscal policy at different points in business-cycles*, the motivation for questions (i) and (iv) identified above. Fiscal policy involves the use of spending and taxation levels by government to manipulate the overall level of economic activity. Business cycles are conventionally defined as including one period of rapid economic growth and another of recession or negative growth; in Canada, they have been found to last between one and 10 or 12 years (Cross and Bergevin 2012). Budgetary deficits and surpluses are important fiscal policy tools available to governments for manipulating the macroeconomy during these cycles. Traditional stabilization theory suggests that deficits stimulate demand in the short-term, which reduces unemployment in a recession and aids the process of economic recovery; but once full employment is approached, deficits risk promoting undesirable levels of inflation. Keynesian theory therefore recommends a countercyclical strategy, which entails running deficits during recessions, when unemployment is high, but surpluses when strong economic growth has returned.

If the political left favours low unemployment more than the right, as is often thought likely because of the left's particular concern for the well-being of workers, the former should pursue a countercyclical strategy more aggressively than the latter. The left would run larger deficits during recessions to reduce unemployment, but balance the government's books by achieving larger surpluses than the right when the economy approaches full employment (Carlsen 1997, Cusack 1999). Carlsen's examination of OECD nations (1997) found that the left ran larger deficits than the right in years of higher than anticipated unemployment. Cusack (1999) tested partisanship's influence at different points in the business-cycle with an interaction term between measures for partisanship and unemployment. A significant result for the partisanship variable would indicate a difference between deficit levels for left and right parties when unemployment is zero; a significant result for the interaction term would indicate that left and right parties set different deficit levels in response to unemployment. He found that both were the case: the budget balance was significantly more positive under left governments than right ones when unemployment was low, but the left adopted a significantly more stimulative stance in response to high unemployment. Yet Cusack (1999) also detected important intertemporal differences. While quite strong for 1961-72, the association between left partisanship and responsiveness to unemployment weakened considerably for 1973-79 and 1980-91, i.e., after the onset of globalization (also see Cusack 2001). Müller et al.'s recent study (2016) nevertheless suggests that partisan differences in countercyclical preferences persist for OECD countries.

The theory of electoral-cycles¹, the second focus of this article, addresses the behavior of governments between elections. Administrations

may anticipate a greater chance of remaining in power if unemployment is low and growth high when an election is immanent. Nordhaus therefore expected “unemployment and deflation in [a government’s] early years followed by an inflationary boom as elections approach” (1975: 185). Incumbents would run deficits as an election neared to stimulate growth and employment. They would reverse this policy after the vote to restore the budget balance. Accordingly, the theory leads us to expect the balance to become more negative as we move closer to an election. In this original formulation, electoral-cycles were expected to be practiced equally by all parties. Subsequent international scholarship reached no consensus about the extent and nature of electoral-cycles (for representative studies, see Blais and Nadeau 1992, Clark 2003 and Franzese and Jusko 2006).

If the political left favours low unemployment more than the right, as is often thought likely because of the left’s particular concern for the well-being of workers, the former should pursue a countercyclical strategy more aggressively than the latter. The left would run larger deficits during recessions to reduce unemployment, but balance the government’s books by achieving larger surpluses than the right when the economy approaches full employment.

Frey and Schneider (1978) extended this theory by proposing that *electoral-cycles might diverge between parties of the left (Democrats) and right (Republicans)* in the U.S., the basis for questions (ii) and (v) addressed here. They surmised that governments’ fiscal policies are motivated by their preferred ideology when elections are not immanent or when politicians are confident of re-election. They posited that Republican presidents prefer to be less stimulative than Democratic ones. But when incumbents are unpopular, they will stimulate the economy before an election regardless of their partisan preferences. Because governments often are unpopular before elections, we can expect the following pattern over many electoral-cycles: parties will differ less during an election period than when one is further away; left parties will stimulate more than the right in the latter case. Alesina (1989) proposed an alternative theory that yielded similar expectations. According to his theory, too, the left should be more stimulative after an election, but interparty differences should abate as the next election approaches.

Several articles since the late 1990s have examined the intersection of electoral-cycles and partisanship for the Canadian provinces. Petry et al.

(1999), who review earlier work, focussed on expenditures. They determined that right provincial governments (including Progressive Conservatives [PCs] and Social Credit) spent less than left (NDP or PQ) ones in non-election years, but not during elections. Two studies by Tellier examined provincial electoral-cycles. She found (2006) that all parties spend more as elections approach if they are unpopular; but when popular, ideological positions matter, with the left spending more. Tellier (2009) subsequently studied the impact of electoral-cycles and partisanship on revenues, but not their interaction. Among these provincial studies, only Kneebone and McKenzie (2001) examined deficits in relation to electoral-cycles. This is the variable most relevant to the macroeconomic concerns of Frey and Schneider (1978) and Alesina (1989) with pre-election stimulus and is therefore our focus here.² They determined that Liberal governments increased deficits, and Social Credit reduced them, in non-election years; there was no effect for NDP or PC administrations.

Because governments often are unpopular before elections, we can expect the following pattern over many electoral-cycles: parties will differ less during an election period than when one is further away; left parties will stimulate more than the right in the latter case.

Other recent provincial studies examined partisanship's fiscal impact, but without addressing either electoral- or business-cycles. Pickup (2006) identified a conditional impact for partisanship on spending. Haddow (2016) found a strong influence for left (NDP and PQ) and centre (Liberal) incumbency on own-source revenues, compared to the right (including PCs), in the long- but not the short-term. Simon and Tatalovich (2014) determined that left provincial governments run more negative budget balances than right ones. However, the effect was small, and disappeared in a fixed effects estimation that focussed on developments within provinces.

In summary, international evidence has not settled whether partisan variations exist in relation to business- or electoral-cycles. Political influences on public finances in the Canadian provinces receive significant attention, but the phenomena of interest to this study have not. There appears to be no extant provincial study of the relationship between partisanship and business-cycles (the focus of question i). The most recent study of partisanship's interaction with electoral-cycles in relation to deficits is almost twenty years old (question ii). The comparative strength of these two partisan dynamics (question iii) appears to have not been examined in existing work.

This article fills these gaps with contemporary data, and asks whether partisan influences have varied in strength over time (questions iv and v).

Data

The dependent variable (DV) for estimations is the provincial budget balance (surplus or deficit) as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (*balance*); the budget balance equals government revenues minus government expenditures; this figure is positive if the budget is in surplus, negative if in deficit. Statistics Canada changed the series used to report provincial fiscal data in 2008, replacing the Financial Management System (FMS) with the Canadian Government Finance Statistics (CGFS). These Statistics Canada series have long been the main source of provincial fiscal data used in Canadian research. Moreover, it is very likely that these data series are highly compatible; merging them for our purposes therefore should raise no important problems of comparability of data from before and after 2008. (Appendix B discusses this question further.) Data for this and all other variables run from 1981 to 2016.

International scholars typically measure partisanship, our most important independent variable (IV), in one of three ways. The first, Comparative Manifestos Project data (e.g., Raess and Pontusson 2015), is not available for provincial parties. One alternative is a single ranking of parties from right to left. Another uses dummy variables for each family of parties. I use the latter, frequently employed in provincial studies (Kneebone and McKenzie 2001, Tellier 2006 and 2009, Pickup 2006 and Haddow 2016). There are several objections to right-left rankings. The simplest ranking involves a binary distinction between left and right parties (Petry et al. 1999, and the least-favoured option in Kneebone and McKenzie 2001); but this eliminates the possibility of distinguishing among parties within each category (in the latter case, between Liberal and NDP). An ordinal ranking instead relies on numerical estimates, often by experts. Yet provincial studies usually adopt evaluations of federal parties (Simon and Tatalovich 2014), which may not be robust for provincial use. Recent systematic scholarship on differences among parties focusses on the federal level, but suggests that it might also be unwise to rank provincial ones on a stable left-right spectrum. Cochrane (2015) argues that ideological differences between the PCs and Liberals emerged after 1980. These parties once differed little, consistent with the traditional “brokerage” theory of federal parties, while the NDP was to their left. Thereafter, the Liberals moved to the left of the Conservatives, while the Liberal-NDP gap diminished. Johnston (2017) broadly concurs regarding these changes. The position of provincial parties may be similarly non-linear and variable, though these authors agree with most others that the NDP and PQ are (more or less) left of other major parties.

This article therefore uses dummy IVs to report incumbency for three party families; their relative positions are estimated, not assumed, for our entire period and for three sub-periods. Following Tellier, the *conservative* family consists mainly of PC parties, *centre* includes most Liberal Parties, and *left* encompasses the NDP and PQ. *Conservative* is the omitted reference category in estimations. Two parties have governed in only one province: Social Credit in British Columbia (B.C.) and the Saskatchewan Party. Because each has been identified as a conservative alternative to the NDP (Blake 1996, Rasmussen 2015) they are coded as *conservative*. I depart from Tellier once: often seen as inheriting Social Credit's position as a free market party in B.C. (Summerville 2015, Blake 1996), that province's Liberals also are coded as *conservative*. This does not affect results substantially. Alternative estimations with the B.C. Liberals coded as *centre* produced very similar results, and are available from the author. Incumbency is assigned to the outgoing party in an election year.

Unemployment rises in a recession. For the theory of partisan business-cycles, the left is then more concerned to lower unemployment than the right. Once the economy approaches full employment, in contrast, the left adopts a less stimulative stance than the right. Accordingly, following Cusack (1999), the degree to which centre and left parties conduct a more countercyclical fiscal policy than conservative ones is estimated with an interaction term between their party dummies and the provincial unemployment rate (*unemployment*).

A similar arrangement is used to assess partisan variations in electoral-cycles. The variable for the latter (*election*) equals 0 in election years and increases by one for each preceding year until the year after the preceding election. Thus, 1 = one year before the election, 2 = two years before, 3 = three years before, and 4 = four years before. Ratio scales of this type have been used as IVs in electoral-cycle scholarship (Frey and Schneider 1978, Tellier 2006). Some authors instead employ dummy variables to distinguish election from non-election periods (Kneebone and McKenzie 2001), or multiple dummies for each year in the cycle (Blais and Nadeau 1992). However, the former option sacrifices important information about the length of time between each non-election year and the next election; the latter is less parsimonious as it would require five IVs to measure all electoral-cycle effects.

Using a ratio scale permits the use of interaction terms between *election* and partisan variables. These interactions, with *centre* and *left*, will indicate whether these parties' deficits become larger, relative to *conservative* ones, as one moves backwards from the election year.

Comparative political economy scholars argue that policy outcomes are strongly affected by economic conditions and public finances (Lindert 2004, Wilensky 2002; most studies discussed above use economic control IVs). Accordingly, all estimations include IVs for provincial GDP per capita

(*gdp*), *growth* and *inflation*. Provinces' willingness to incur deficits may be affected by their existing level of net public debt as a share of GDP (*debt*). Provincial governments depend importantly on payments from the federal government, which are larger for poorer provinces. These also are measured as a share of provincial GDP (*federalTransfers*). Inclusion of these IVs, and *unemployment*, will also help control for variations in the DV caused by business-cycle fluctuations. The use of temporal fixed effects (see below) controls further for otherwise unobserved cyclical influences.

Several international articles detected variations in outcomes over time. Cusack (1999) identified a reduction in partisanship's impact on business-cycles and linked this to globalization. In contrast, Raess and Pontusson (2015) found that the association between left incumbency and stimulus increased during recessions after 2000. These conflicting results are consistent with divergent views of economic globalization's impact in the wider scholarly literature. For many, this phenomenon – characterized by increased international trade, foreign investment and capital flows, and declining capital controls – has curtailed the room for domestic politics, including partisanship, to affect policy (Busemeyer 2009). Other observers (such as Garrett 1998) instead propose a “compensatory” view of globalization's impact; in this scenario, international integration has evoked state activism to address its consequences, including sharply-defined partisan alternatives. Finally, yet another group of researchers report that globalization's impact on partisanship is contingent, depending on how fast globalization is progressing and on the time-period studied (Potrafke 2009).

Postindustrialism might also reduce the role of inter-party differences. It refers to an interconnected set of societal changes including (i) increased service sector employment, (ii) changing gender roles in the economy and (iii) a rise in the dependent-age population. Pierson suggested that partisanship is less important in its wake (1996). Yet others argue that partisanship remains a potent force in the face of postindustrialism (Huber and Stephens 2015).

One therefore cannot be confident about how globalization or postindustrialism affects partisanship. Only a few international studies discussed above, and no provincial one, examined whether the impact of partisanship changed over time. Yet it is clearly important to do so, and to evaluate the role of globalization and postindustrialism in this regard. Of the developments linked to economic globalization, only trade is measured at the provincial level in Canada; yet many international studies identify it as the most important globalization influence (for instance, Busemeyer 2009). All estimations therefore include controls for province-level international (*internatTrade*) and domestic (interprovincial) (*domesticTrade*) trade as a percentage of provincial GDP. Models also include IVs for the aspects of postindustrialism mentioned above: the service sector workforce as a share of all employment (*postIndEmployment*), the female share of total employment

(*femaleEmployment*) and the population under 16 and over 64 as a percentage of total population (*dependency*). (Appendix A reports formulae for all variables; Appendix C reports sources for all IV data.)

Methods

All models include a Lagged Dependent Variable (LDV) and both unlagged and lagged versions of IVs. The one exception is *election*, whose impact, by theory, should be immediate. In the literature, this is termed an Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) (1/1) model. In choosing this specification, this article follows the advice of Beck and Katz (2011) that research on Time-Series Cross-Section (TSCS) data (where the temporal dimension exceeds the cross-sectional one) start with a general specification, including more temporal terms, and test restrictive alternatives against it. If the general version is found superior, it should be retained. Compared to restrictive models that included only contemporaneous or lagged IVs, the ARDL (1/1) specification obtained better scores from Akaike information criterion (AIC) and Bayesian information criterion (BIC) tests.³ An ARDL set-up has the additional advantage of modelling the effect of IVs on the DV as a gradual one. This slower adjustment has been widely observed in comparative political economy scholarship (Huber and Stephens 2001, Haddow 2016). For ease of interpretation, tables presented below nevertheless report one coefficient and standard error for each IV. These indicate the linear combination of coefficients for the contemporaneous and lagged versions of each IV, and their joint significance.⁴

The questions addressed here have to do with differences over time in how parties within the same province address business- and electoral-cycles. Estimations therefore include provincial (cross-sectional) fixed effects (FE), which focus the estimation on variations within each province, not between them. To control for unobserved shocks (such as exogenous events that affect budgets in one year), estimations also include temporal FEs. To conserve space FE coefficients are not reported, but are available from the author.

Tests with models specified in this way, and including all variables identified above, reported considerable heteroskedasticity and cross-panel dependence. Models therefore are estimated with Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and Panel-Corrected Standard Errors (PCSEs); this estimator is robust to both issues (Beck and Katz 1995). Panel-by-panel inspection of the residuals determined that the LDV adequately addressed serial correlation, suggesting that models are well-specified.⁵ Combining an LDV with FEs can bias models if the time dimension is short, but this should not be a problem for these estimations, whose temporal dimension equals 35 (Beck and Katz 2011). Including an LDV has the additional advantage that it measures

whether the budget balance is path-dependent, with preceding values conditioning current ones.

The following five questions, adumbrated at this article's beginning, are addressed below: (i) Do left or centre governments respond to business-cycles with more countercyclical fiscal policies than conservative administrations? (ii) Do left or centre parties run larger deficits than conservative ones when elections are distant, but not when they are immanent? (iii) Which cyclical pattern is stronger? In the wake of globalization and post-industrialism has the strength of either partisanship's intersection with (iv) business- or (v) electoral-cycles changed over time?

Results

This section addresses each of these questions. Table 1 reports results from regression models that measure partisan influences on fiscal policy in relation to business- and electoral-cycles for our entire 35-year study period (questions (i) to (iii)). Table 2 does the same for three sub-periods, permitting us to assess whether these influences strengthened or weakened over time (questions (iv) and (v)). The impact of different independent variables (IVs) on a dependent variable (DV) can be compared by using standardized coefficients, which measure the association of IVs and DVs in standard deviations (SDs). These are discussed below for IVs of particular interest. They are not presented in tabular form to conserve space, but a table is available from the author.

As a preliminary step, model 1 in Table 1 reports an estimation with all IVs except the party interactions with *unemployment* and *election*. This provides a baseline for comparison with subsequent estimations. Model 2 adds interactions of *unemployment* with *centre* (*centxUnemployment*) and *left* (*leftxUnemployment*). It allows us to address question (i) by revealing whether centre and left parties pursued more countercyclical fiscal strategies than conservative ones over our full 35-year study period. Turning our attention to electoral-cycles, model 3 does the same for question (ii) by adding interactions between *election* and *centre* (*centxElection*) and *left* (*leftxElection*) to model 1. It tells us whether these parties' budgets became more stimulative, compared to conservative ones, as one moved away from an election year. Model 4 combines both pairs of interactions, letting us know which is strongest, which is the focus of question (iii).

The baseline estimation (model 1) reveals that budget balances vary considerably with electoral-cycles. The budget balance becomes more negative as an election year approaches (*election* = .203). The pattern is significant at $p < .01$. This is consistent with the expectations of earlier electoral-cycle scholarship. The remainder of this section discusses evidence from these

Table 1. *Provincial Budget Balances, 1981-2016*

Dependent Variable: <i>balance_gdp</i>				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
LDV	0.425*** (6.38)	0.403*** (6.04)	0.438*** (6.61)	0.417*** (6.23)
gdp	0.0000486 (1.63)	0.000046 (1.57)	0.0000484* (1.65)	0.0000464 (1.60)
growth	0.605 (1.11)	0.665 (1.24)	0.588 (1.08)	0.644 (1.20)
inflation	0.168** (2.31)	0.174** (2.44)	0.143** (1.97)	0.151** (2.11)
federalTrans	16.89* (1.94)	21.62** (2.44)	17.03** (1.97)	21.32** (2.41)
debt	0.009 (0.50)	-0.003 (-0.19)	0.005 (0.33)	-0.004 (-0.26)
unemployment	-0.188** (-2.01)	-0.190** (-2.02)	-0.169* (-1.81)	-0.173* (-1.83)
internatTrade	-2.286* (-1.89)	-2.377** (-2.01)	-2.239* (-1.85)	-2.319** (-1.96)
domesticTrade	-3.898* (-1.72)	-5.917** (-2.54)	-3.507 (-1.58)	-5.361** (-2.30)
postIndEmployment	12.81 (1.46)	12.52 (1.44)	10.98 (1.26)	11.04 (1.27)
femaleEmployment	33.98** (2.40)	41.60*** (2.81)	34.44** (2.41)	41.22*** (2.77)
dependency	3.863 (0.39)	2.081 (0.18)	3.875 (0.40)	2.107 (0.18)
centre	-0.297 (-1.30)	-1.070* (-1.64)	-0.056 (-0.16)	-0.724 (-1.07)
left	-0.442** (-2.37)	1.560** (2.36)	0.339 (1.06)	1.985*** (2.93)
election	0.203*** (3.76)	0.214*** (3.97)	0.295*** (3.75)	0.294*** (3.80)
centx		0.051		0.042
Unemployment		(0.81)		(0.66)

Table 1. (Continued)

Dependent Variable: <i>balance_gdp</i>				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
leftx Unemployment		-0.253*** (-3.11)		-0.225*** (-2.78)
centx Election			-0.155 (-0.93)	-0.144 (-0.85)
leftx Election			-0.459*** (-3.00)	-0.381** (-2.49)
_cons	-25.24*** (-2.85)	-26.34*** (-2.89)	-24.49*** (-2.73)	-25.63*** (-2.78)
N	350	350	350	350
R ²	0.718	0.727	0.724	0.731

z statistics in parentheses; * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.
NBi: All IVs except *election* were estimated with 0 and 1 lags. This table reports their summed coefficients and joint significance.
NBii: All models were estimated with two-way fixed effects.

tables in separate sub-sections for each of our five questions, treated in the order of their introduction above.

Question (i): Partisanship and Business-Cycles: Model 2 in Table 1 reports very different results for the left and centre party groups. *LeftxUnemployment* is negative and significant at $p < .01$. In the presence of a left government, rising unemployment associates with a budget balance that falls by more than it does for a conservative administration, an outcome that should reduce joblessness to a greater extent.

When left parties govern, a one standard deviation (SD) increase in unemployment associates with a 42.7 percent larger negative shift in the budget balance (measured in SDs of the latter variable) than when conservatives govern. Only three other IVs in this model have larger standardized coefficients; and each of these reports lower z scores than *leftxUnemployment* in model 2. In addition, the main *left* IV is significantly positive, indicating that, consistent with a more ambitious countercyclical policy, left governments run more positive balances than conservatives when *unemployment* = 0, the hypothetical case of zero unemployment. In contrast, *centxUnemployment* is not statistically significant in model 2; *centre* is marginally significant, at $p < .10$, but it is negatively-signed, suggesting that centre party budgets

Table 2. *Provincial Budget Balances, Three Sub-Periods*

Dependent Variable: <i>balance_gdp</i>				
	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
LDV	0.380*** (5.63)	0.440*** (6.60)	0.451*** (6.90)	0.522*** (8.22)
gdp	0.0000589* (1.84)	0.0000511 (1.61)	0.0000438* (1.93)	0.0000344 (1.52)
growth	0.724 (1.34)	0.724 (1.33)	0.110 (0.21)	0.172 (0.32)
inflation	0.148** (2.08)	0.115 (1.60)	0.173** (2.32)	0.122 (1.63)
federalTrans	17.14* (1.91)	18.10** (2.07)	4.739 (0.61)	4.910 (0.72)
debt	0.002 (0.13)	0.003 (0.16)	0.024 (1.44)	0.025 (1.58)
unemployment	-0.154 (-1.41)	-0.136 (-1.32)	-0.105 (-1.07)	-0.125 (-1.42)
internattrade	-2.519** (-2.04)	-2.01* (-1.67)		
domestictrade	-4.803* (-1.86)	-5.080** (-2.14)		
postIndEmployment	14.17* (1.70)	10.66 (1.28)		
femaleEmployment	37.39** (2.45)	42.29*** (2.76)		
dependency	6.929 (0.55)	12.03 (1.02)		
cent81_90	0.752 (0.60)	0.816 (1.25)	1.156 (1.00)	0.773 (1.16)
cent91_03	-2.070 (-1.54)	0.014 (0.03)	-1.867 (-1.48)	0.244 (0.50)
cent04_16	-0.651 (-0.39)	0.010 (0.02)	0.328 (0.20)	0.330 (0.66)
left81_90	1.823	0.825	3.196**	1.237**

Table 2. (Continued)

Dependent Variable: <i>balance_gdp</i>				
	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	(1.28)	(1.53)	(2.25)	(2.36)
left91_03	1.854*	0.262	1.466	0.268
	(1.91)	(0.60)	(1.52)	(0.62)
left04_16	0.687	0.390	-0.512	0.522
	(0.62)	(0.80)	(-0.49)	(0.99)
election	0.241***	0.309***	0.262***	0.336***
	(4.42)	(3.99)	(4.70)	(4.23)
centx Unemployment81_90	-0.084		-0.117	
	(-0.68)		(-1.00)	
centx Unemployment91_03	0.108		0.109	
	(1.08)		(1.19)	
centx Unemployment04_06	-0.001		-0.094	
	(-0.00)		(-0.46)	
leftx Unemployment81_90	-0.250*		-0.329**	
	(-1.83)		(-2.42)	
leftx Unemployment91_03	-0.318***		-0.271**	
	(-2.61)		(-2.26)	
leftx Unemployment04_06	-0.068		0.105	
	(-0.42)		(0.65)	
centx Election81_90		-0.379		-0.406
		(-1.23)		(-1.20)
centx Election91_03		-0.112		-0.231
		(-0.47)		(-0.92)
centx Election04_06		-0.329		-0.412
		(-1.28)		(-1.50)
leftx Election81_90		-0.933***		-0.799***
		(-3.68)		(-3.14)
leftx Election91_03		-0.483**		-0.495**
		(-2.36)		(-2.47)
leftx Election04_16		-0.153		-0.322
		(-0.71)		(-1.29)

Table 2. (Continued)

Dependent Variable: <i>balance_gdp</i>				
	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
_cons	-28.60*** (-3.14)	-29.67*** (-3.09)	-4.522*** (-2.59)	-3.813** (-2.60)
N	350	350	350	350
R ²	0.743	0.746	0.719	0.721

z statistics in parentheses; * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

See notes for table A.

are somewhat less counter-cyclical than conservative party ones at full employment.

Thus, in relation to question (i), we have strong evidence that left and conservative governments differed substantially in their fiscal policies over 35 years, with left incumbents much more likely to pursue a countercyclical strategy; there is no such difference between centre and conservative governments.

We have strong evidence that left and conservative governments differed substantially in their fiscal policies over 35 years, with left incumbents much more likely to pursue a countercyclical strategy; there is no such difference between centre and conservative governments.

Question (ii): Partisanship and Electoral-Cycles: Results for left parties also are emphatic in model 3, which addresses partisanship's connection to electoral-cycles. *LeftxElection*, the interaction between left incumbency and the election IV, is negatively-signed, suggesting that left budgets become more negative, relative to conservative ones, as we move away from an election year. This association again is significant at $p < .01$. The correlation nevertheless is weaker substantively than was the case for business-cycles: the standardized coefficient for *leftxElection* is .206. Left government budgets become negative by about one-fifth more of an SD than do conservative budgets as

election (the length of time before a vote) increases by one SD. Model 3 shows no significant result for any IV that pertains to centre governments.

Regarding question (ii), then, we again find strong evidence of a difference between left and conservative governments for our entire period. As partisan electoral-cycle theory anticipates, these parties diverge more in their fiscal stance as we move further away from an election year. But this impact is not as large substantively in our estimations as it was for business-cycles. There is no important variation between centre and conservative administrations in relation to electoral-cycles.

As partisan electoral-cycle theory anticipates, left and conservative parties diverge more in their fiscal stance as we move further away from an election year. But this impact is not as large substantively in our estimations as it was for business-cycles.

Question (iii): Which Partisan Effect is Strongest? Model 4 reports that each association for left incumbency identified above remains strong in the presence of the other; but it also confirms that the left's countercyclical fiscal strategy is more distinctive, compared to that of conservative administrations, than is left governments' response to the electoral-cycle.

In this model, *leftxUnemployment* remains significant at $p < .01$, with a standardized coefficient of $-.379$. In its presence, *leftxElection* remains statistically significant, but now at $p < .05$, with a standardized coefficient of $-.172$. Both associations remain strong, statistically and substantively, but the difference between left and conservative fiscal policies clearly is more pronounced in relation to budget-cycles than for electoral ones (question iii). Consistent with results for the preceding estimations, *centxUnemployment* and *centxElection* again are nonsignificant.

Measuring Change in Partisan Effects over Time: Has the distinctive impact of left governments changed over time? Table 2 reports results for four estimations that allow us to address questions (iv) and (v): respectively, these ask whether partisan business- and electoral-cycles have become more or less important over time. Models 5 and 6 re-estimate models 2 and 3 by replacing the IVs for left and centre governments, and for their interactions with unemployment and electoral-cycles, with versions for three sub-periods: 1981-1990, 1991-2003 and 2004-2016. This periodization was chosen so that each sub-period includes a recession (1981-82, 1991-92 or 2008-09), an associated year when the average budget balance deteriorated by at least one percent (1982, 1991 or 2009) and a year in which the balance improved by at least that much (1987, 1994 or 2004).⁶ Periods therefore embody considerable variation on the dependent variable and are reasonably comparable.

Period versions of partisan independent variables (IVs) were calculated by multiplying them by one for a sub-period, and zero otherwise.⁷ Thus, *left81_90* tells as how much *left* incumbency associates with the budget balance between 1981 and 1990, *left91_03* does this for the years from 1991 to 2003, and so forth. Period-specific interactions between partisan IVs and *unemployment* (for model 5) and *election* (model 6) were created in the same way.

Questions (iv): Partisanship and Business-Cycles Over Time: Model 5 results reveal a striking hiatus between our first two periods and the third. *LeftxUnemployment81_90* and *leftxUnemployment91_03*, which respectively report the difference between left and conservative government countercyclical stances for 1981-90 and 1991-2003, are negative and significant. Their linear combination indicates that before 2004 a standard deviation (SD) increase in *unemployment* in the presence of *left* reduced the budget balance by .670 of an SD more than was the case when conservatives governed. This association is significant at $p < .01$. In contrast, the standardized coefficient for *leftxUnemployment04_16*, which reports the same left-conservative difference for 2004-2016, is $-.057$; this is less than one-quarter as large as for either earlier period and far from statistical significance ($p = .678$). A pronounced difference in the extent of countercyclical budgeting between left and conservative governments before 2004 is no longer evident thereafter.

The difference between left and conservative governments in relation to electoral-cycles was pronounced before 2004 but, as with business-cycles, this difference largely disappeared thereafter.

The difference between left and conservative approaches to countercyclical policy existed only during the first two-thirds of our study period; it disappeared after 2003 (question iv). No coefficient is statistically significant for *centre* or its interactions with *unemployment* in model 5. Centre and conservative countercyclical strategies did not differ importantly in any period.

Questions (v): Partisanship and Electoral-Cycles Over Time: In model 6, *leftxElection81_90* and *leftxElection91_03*, which respectively report the difference between left and conservative responses to the electoral-cycle for 1981-1990 and 1991-2003, also are negatively signed and statistically significant. Yet *leftxElection04_06*'s standardized coefficient again is less than one-quarter that for either earlier period and is nonsignificant.

The difference between left and conservative governments in relation to electoral-cycles was pronounced before 2004 but, as with business-cycles, this difference largely disappeared thereafter (question v). Model 6 again reveals no significant difference between conservative and centre administrations for any period.

Conclusion

The estimations reported above show (i) that left provincial governments pursued more countercyclical fiscal policies than conservative ones over our entire 35-year study period. For this same period, left governments (ii) also did not share the right's inclination to run larger deficits when an election was immanent. The partisan business-cycle effect is stronger than the partisan electoral-cycle one (iii), an important finding since provincial partisan interactions with business-cycles have not been studied before. In contrast, no significant differences were evident between the fiscal strategies of centre and conservative governments. Finally, the differences between left and conservative fiscal policies in relation to both (iv) business-cycles and (v) electoral-cycles disappeared in the last 13 years examined.

The questions addressed above are the primary focus of this article. The remainder of this conclusion asks why the partisan effects reported above disappeared after 2003. This discussion is provisional, and requires further research.

Globalization and postindustrialism are not responsible for the post-2003 change. Models 7 and 8 in Table 1 report period-specific estimations for partisan business- and electoral-cycles without the globalization and postindustrialism IVs that were included in models 5 and 6. If these phenomena reduced partisanship's impact, removing these controls should enhance left incumbency's cyclical interactions. Yet, while period interactions for *left* have larger coefficients for 2004-16 in models 7 and 8 than in models 5 and 6, both *leftxUnemployment04_16* and *leftxElection04_16* remain nonsignificant. *LeftUnemployment81_90* has a larger coefficient and is more highly significant, at $p < .05$ rather than $p < .10$, in model 7 than in model 5. Globalization and postindustrialism may therefore have constrained partisanship's effect in the 1980s, but *left's* interactions with *unemployment* for later periods, and for all periods with *election* (model 8), never support this conjecture.⁸

A more plausible candidate for explaining post-2003 change in relation to business-cycles is that unemployment was lower than earlier, and its cyclical variations much more modest. Average provincial unemployment fell from 10.9 percent for 1981-90 and 10.3 in 1991-2003 to 7.9 percent for 2004-16. Its standard deviation (SD) dropped dramatically, from 1.32 and 1.41 in the first two periods, to 0.52 in the last. Cyclical variations in unemployment therefore were far smaller after 2003. Even if left governments remained more concerned about unemployment than other administrations in these years, less pronounced cyclical variation in unemployment would have called for smaller efforts to attenuate it during downturns, and correspondingly slighter steps to restore fiscal balance during economic peaks. Inter-party variation in countercyclical commitments therefore would have declined even if ideological differences between parties did not.

It is also possible that declining mean unemployment levels played a role. Left governments may be motivated to run larger deficits when certain numerical levels of unemployment are reached; and this number would have become less common after 2003 because unemployment now was lower. However, we do not know what this threshold figure might be, and therefore cannot measure its effect. Even if changing unemployment patterns explain much of the decline in left incumbents' distinctive fiscal impact across business-cycles, moreover, it is not evident that they account for the loss of left governments' similarly distinctive pattern for electoral-cycles after 2003.

Steps toward filling this gap, admittedly a large task, might tell us whether, in addition to changing unemployment patterns, diminishing ideological differences between left and non-left parties eroded a once robust relationship between left partisanship and fiscal policy in the Canadian provinces after the turn of the century.

Another potential source of this post-2003 alteration is a broad-based change in provincial party systems. Parties termed left here may have become less ideologically distinct. Comparative research on provincial party systems could help with this question. Currently, we lack a provincial equivalent to the Comparative Manifestos Project and systematic cross-provincial comparison of party systems using the empirical tools deployed in international comparisons. Steps toward filling this gap, admittedly a large task, might tell us whether, in addition to changing unemployment patterns, diminishing ideological differences between left and non-left parties eroded a once robust relationship between left partisanship and fiscal policy in the Canadian provinces after the turn of the century.

Notes

- 1 These are frequently called political business-cycles in the literature. They are termed electoral-cycles here to distinguish them from economic business-cycles, discussed above.
- 2 Clearly, pre-election spending can stimulate, but is less likely to do so if it does not increase the deficit, i.e. if it is accompanied by tax increases.
- 3 It is unusual in TSCS research to include more than one lag of each IV. It is unlikely that political variables will have their main effect two or more years later. More lags also increase multicollinearity (Beck and Katz 2011).
- 4 Our concern is with the combined effect of both versions of each variable, i.e. its instantaneous impact plus its lagged one. The coefficient for this combination equals the sum of the separate coefficients. However, the combination's statistical significance level typically is very different than the separate versions', as each of the latter controls for the other. It is their

combined significance that is of interest. Separate results for both versions are available from the author.

5 All tests were performed on models 1 to 3, as reported below.

6 Cross and Bergevin (2012) identify recession years.

7 Cusack estimated period differences similarly (1999).

8 Results are analogous, and coefficients for the third period always nonsignificant, if each globalization and postindustrialism IV is dropped individually or if the two IV groups are dropped separately.

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Appendix A: Variable Formulae

balance = Government surplus or deficit/ gross domestic product (GDP)

centxElection = centre x election

centxUnemployment = centre x unemployment

debt = Net provincial public debt/ GDP

dependency = (Population under 16 + population over 64)/ total population

domesticTrade: Interprovincial exports + interprovincial imports/ GDP

election = 0 for an election year, 1 for one year earlier, 2 for two years earlier, 3 for three years earlier, and 4 for four years earlier

federalTrans: federal transfer payments to the provinces/ GDP

femaleEmployment = female employment/ total employment

gdp = GDP/ total population

growth = Differenced *gdp_pc*. This figure was multiplied by 10

inflation = Differenced implicit price index

internatTrade: International exports + international imports/ GDP

leftxElection = *left* x *election*

leftxUnemployment = *left* x *unemployment*

postIndEmployment = 1 - (industrial employment/ total employment). Industrial employment = employment in forestry + manufacturing + mining

Appendix B: Sources for Budget Balance Data

1981-7: Statistics Canada, *Public Finance Historical Data, 1965/66 – 1991/92*, catalogue no. 68-512; 1988-2007: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, table 101-00039; 2008-2014: table 101-00147. The 1981-7 and 1988-2007 series are from the Financial Management System (FMS). Table 101-00147 is based on the Canadian Government Finance Statistics (CGFS). All series combine provincial and local expenditures, net of transfer payments between them. FMS data are for the 'surplus/deficit'; CGFS figures are for 'net operating balance'. When positive, these figures indicate a surplus.

FMS data are for the April 1 to March 31 fiscal year; CGFS data are for calendar years. The latter series nevertheless tracks the former very closely. The correlation coefficient for their budget balance measures, as a share of GDP, is .928 in 2008, the one year when they overlapped. Graphs of budget balances for individual provinces indicate no visible temporal disjunction in the series for any province in 2008. (These are available from the author upon request).

Because of their widespread use and high comparability, these Statistics Canada series are employed here in preference to alternative data developed by Kneebone and Wilkins (2016). Their article was published when there was no Statistics Canada series for provincial finances after 2008/09 that was comparable with earlier series. For our purposes, the release of fully-consolidated CGFS data in 2017 addressed this problem. Kneebone and Wilkins also note that their data is not comparable between provinces (2016: 2-3). Unlike the data employed here, which is used extensively by researchers, their methodology appears to have been used in only one journal article, co-authored by one of its creators, covered by the *Web of Science* citation index (Dutton, Forest and Kneebone 2018).

Appendix C: Sources for Other Data

GDP, international trade and interprovincial trade: CANSIM, table 384-0038. *Employment, including female employment and employment by economic sectors; unemployment rate*: table 282-0008. *Population under 16 and over 64, and total population*: table 510-001. *Implicit price index based on GDP at market prices*: table 384-0039. *Federal transfer payments*: 1981-2007: table 384-0004; 2008-2016: file 385-0042. *Net provincial public debt*: 1981-1987: table 101-00055; 1988-2007: table 101-00053; 2008-2016: table 101-00147. *Election timing and incumbency by conservative, centre and left parties*: *Canadian Elections Database*, canadianelectiondatabase.ca. Incumbency is assigned to the outgoing party in an election year.

Shannon Dinan
Alain Noël

Quebec's resilient redistribution model: Activation policies in the 2010s

Abstract: Compared to the rest of Canada, Quebec has an ambitious and redistributive social model, which includes an elaborate set of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP), with higher expenditures as a percentage of GDP, an encompassing coverage, and collaborative, multipartite governance arrangements. Since the 2008 recession, however, most OECD countries have implemented retrenchment measures, market enforcement, and individual action plans to their ALMP. Using provincial, federal, and OECD data and reports, this article maps the recent evolution of Quebec's ALMP in light of these trends. Quebec's model appears largely resilient, despite declining expenditures and modest concessions to conditionality in social assistance.

Sommaire : Comparativement au reste du Canada, le Québec est doté d'un modèle social de redistribution ambitieux, qui comprend un ensemble détaillé de politiques actives du marché du travail (PAMT), offrant des dépenses accrues en pourcentage du PIB, une couverture généreuse, et des accords de gouvernance en partenariat multipartites. Depuis la récession économique de 2008, cependant, la plupart des pays de l'OCDE ont adopté des mesures d'austérité, renforcé le rôle du marché, et introduit des plans d'action individualisés dans leurs PAMT. À partir de données et de rapports des provinces, du gouvernement fédéral et de l'OCDE, cet article analyse l'évolution récente des PAMT du Québec à la lumière de ces tendances. Le modèle québécois semble se maintenir, malgré la réduction des dépenses et quelques concessions réintroduisant des conditions pour l'accès à l'aide sociale.

Quebec has often been described as having a different social and welfare model compared to the rest of Canada, one that is more ambitious, costly, and redistributive. Quebec has encompassing and generous family policies (Godbout and St-Cerny 2008), an elaborate and multipartite framework for labour market policies (Wood 2018: 183), a relatively effective poverty reduction strategy (van den Berg et al. 2017), and a uniquely developed social economy sector (Arsenault 2018). The difference between Quebec's and

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other provincial welfare states, estimates Rodney Haddow, is comparable to that separating the OECD's main welfare regimes (2014: 735).

This difference is a relatively recent phenomenon, dating largely from the late 1990s, when the Quebec government put together its own version of the social investment model (Noël 2013 and 2017). The social investment strategy is an approach that considers social policy as a productive factor that can be used to raise the "stock" of human capital, ease the "flow" of life-course and labour market transitions, and provide "buffers" against old and new social risks (Hemerijck 2017). Concretely, this perspective translates into: a strong focus on family support and services to facilitate work-family conciliation; investments in education, training, and labour market activation programs; and the promotion of flexible and market-oriented employment relations (Morel et al. 2012: 355-56).

In this article, we focus on the second set of policies, and notably on active labour market policies (ALMP), widely seen as a key instrument to develop an educated and skilled labour force, ready for a rapidly changing economy. Along with the expansion of childcare services, which was very important in Quebec, the development of activation policies was undoubtedly the most prominent dimension of the social investment turn. In the OECD, however, the commitment to invest in activation measures has wavered since the mid-1990s, at least in terms of spending (Noël 2018a). Policy orientations have also evolved, to give place to more market-oriented approaches. In an exhaustive review of reforms in the last two decades, Amílcar Moreira and Ivar Lødemel write of a second wave of reforms in the 2010s, characterized in some countries by a stronger enforcement of market rules and in others by more individualized approaches (2014).

What about Quebec? Were the reforms of the late 1990s in active labour market policies sustained and improved over the years? Or did the general turn toward austerity following the 2008 economic recession contribute to shrink ALMP expenditures and commitments (Noël 2018b)? Did Quebec reform its programs or did it simply maintain the course set in the 1990s? And what do these evolutions tell us about what has become of Quebec's redistribution model, after close to 15 years of a Liberal government that gave priority to balancing the budget?

In this article, we review the reforms implemented during those years and use detailed government spending data to respond to these questions. For lack of comparative spending data across the provinces, we consider OECD and Canadian trends, and rely on detailed program expenditures to assess Quebec's situation. We do not seek to determine whether ALMPs work or to explain why they change or not, but simply to track their evolution over time to address the questions just raised about the resiliency of Quebec's new redistribution model.

We find that Quebec followed general OECD trends that translated into lower spending levels and more market-oriented reforms, but did so with moderation, in a context marked by continuity and by an absence of major controversies among social partners, except perhaps regarding the governance of social assistance. Expenditures decreased and there were increases in conditionality for specific claimants, but the main orientations were maintained. We also find, with a simple regression model, that ALMP responded to the evolution of the unemployment rate, but not to that of social expenditures. In a context of austerity, ALMP programs appeared relatively sheltered from general budgetary trends. These findings suggest that, twenty years later, the framework built in partnership in the late 1990s appears alive and well, if somewhat modified, as does Quebec's overall redistribution model.

Quebec followed general OECD trends that translated into lower spending levels and more market-oriented reforms, but did so with moderation, in a context marked by continuity and by an absence of major controversies among social partners.

The first part of the article presents the changing governance of activation policies in OECD countries, to establish the broader context in which Quebec's policies can be assessed. The second part does the same for Canada, outlining the importance of the federal framework for the development of active labour market policies in Quebec. We then turn to the Quebec case, to consider the foundations established in the late 1990s, the reforms in subsequent years, and spending trends. The implications of our findings are discussed in the conclusion.

The changing governance of activation

The welfare state as it emerged in the 1930s and 1940s was primarily concerned by the protection of income, for the old, the young, the unemployed, or the sick. There were employment services and some training programs to facilitate labour market participation, but in most countries these activities remained subsidiary. Conceptions evolved in the 1990s, with an increasing emphasis on "active" social policies, as a way to reconcile the need to protect income with the efficient working of the labour market, and probably as a response to the prevailing neo-liberal emphasis on market mechanisms (Bonoli 2013: 1-2).

As key elements of the social investment strategy, activation policies remove obstacles (by providing childcare services, for instance) or enhance a person's capacity to join the labour force, through training, financial

incentives, or otherwise. Childcare belongs to family policy and is beyond the scope of our investigation, which is concerned specifically with active labour market policies, the set of instruments used to address and reduce unemployment (Nelson 2013). These labour market policies include various types of incentives for workers and employers, job subsidies, training programs, and employment services (Dinan 2019).

The literature on active labour market policies has focused on four related issues: change over time, and in particular the ups and downs of public commitments to spend on ALMPs; the content of actual policies and the gradual emergence of new instruments and approaches; the effects of intervention on the level of employment for different categories of the population; and the political determinants of the turn toward active labour market policies.

Regarding change over time, there is a broad consensus on the renewed interest of governments in the 1990s, but one that did not lead to a spectacular breakthrough and was not always sustained in the twenty-first century. In his book on active social policies, Bonoli notes that most OECD countries have increased their expenditures on active labour market policies between 1985 and the 2008 financial crisis (2013: 35). This transition, however, was not uniform and it remained short of spectacular. The shift was most pronounced in the conservative welfare states of continental Europe. In Germany, for instance, public expenditures went from 0.5% to 0.8% of GDP between 1985 and 2007 (2013: 30). Nordic countries, which pioneered ALMPs in the 1970s, mostly maintained their commitments, at levels above those of the rest of the OECD. English-speaking welfare states hardly embraced this general movement and continued to count on the market more than on the state to create jobs. Mediterranean countries made some progress, but from a very low starting point.

Overall, as can be seen in Figure 1, there was a steady but modest evolution in ALMP expenditures. Average spending went from 0.40 % of GDP in 1980 to a peak of 0.84 % in 1994, with a gradual decline and levelling afterwards, to reach 0.62 % of GDP by 2015. The mid-1990s peak was associated with high unemployment rates, which almost automatically boosted ALMP expenditures. If we controlled for unemployment, the spending trend would be gradually upward but flatter, at least until recent years, when signs of retrenchment appeared (Bonoli 2013: 32; Moreira and Lødemel 2014). By comparison, expenditures for family policies, which include spending on early childhood education and care, increased more substantially, going from an average of 1.64 % of GDP in 1980 to 2.24 % in 2015.

One should keep in mind that for these countries in 2015, total social expenditures counted for an average of 23.5 % of GDP. At 0.62 %, the commitment to active labour market policy remained a minor, almost invisible component of the welfare state.

The policy instruments favored by governments also evolved over time, going from a reliance on direct job creation in the 1980s to a growing focus

Figure 1. *Means of Active Labour Market Policy and Family Policy Expenditures as a Percentage of GDP, OECD Countries, 1980-2015*



Note: The countries included are those considered in Beramendi et al. 2015, namely Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
Source: OECD 2019.

on market-enhancing, supply-side interventions such as public employment services, incentives for employers and employees, and training (Bonoli 2013: 32). Since 2008, argue Moreira and Lødemel, the choice of instruments also entailed a stronger reliance on market rules and more personal, individualized approaches (2014). Market-based mechanisms included more conditional income transfers, new incentives to work, and a turn toward private-sector service providers. Individualized instruments were associated, in particular, with the widespread introduction of personal action plans designed to guide

individual beneficiaries from income support to the labour market. In some countries, such as France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, the emphasis was placed on the strengthening of market mechanisms; in others, such as Germany and Denmark, more attention was paid to the improved provision of individual plans (Moreira and Lødemel 2014). Almost everywhere, the last decade was one of retrenchment more than expansion.

Almost everywhere, the last decade was one of retrenchment more than expansion.

Interestingly, for all the investments devoted to enhancing active labour market policies, the evidence about their consequences for labour market integration remains difficult to establish. At the micro-economic level, existing research points to positive effects after two or three years for programs that emphasize human capital development, and positive short-term effects for job search assistance (Card et al. 2010; Nordlund and Greve 2019: 375). From a macro-economic standpoint, Nelson and Stephens point to a positive impact of activation policies on employment levels and the quality of employment (2012). Be that as it may, the causal connection between policies and outcomes remains uncertain. For poverty reduction, for instance, there may be a positive impact, but probably not a strong one (Burgoon 2017: 166; Vandenbroucke and Cantillon 2014).

Active labour market policies are better understood as components of broader social models anchored in a country's politics. As such, they contribute to define, in a given context, what is fair or not, what works and is efficient, and what citizens' expectations can be with respect to social policy and labour market outcomes (Clasen and Clegg 2012). Quebec's active labour market policies, in this perspective, are anchored in a broader political package put together in the late 1990s and, as such, they are likely to be resilient, especially since their cost is modest and their visibility low compared, say, to health and education expenditures. Resilience refers to the maintenance of basic institutions and practices in the context of a serious challenge (Bouchard 2013). To this question of resilience, we can now turn, starting with the Canadian context.

The federal framework

Canada belongs to the family of liberal welfare state regimes, characterized by their residual logic and emphasis on means-tested benefits. It is also a federal welfare state where legislative powers are divided between the federal and the provincial and territorial governments.¹ The division of powers is explicitly defined, with little overlapping jurisdictions. It leaves the provinces with full legislative competence on most social policy questions, including health

care services, education, training, social assistance, social services, and many aspects of family and pension policies. The federal government is left with old-age security and employment insurance as sole unchallenged responsibilities.

Provincial governments receive important financial transfers from Ottawa, for social or for other purposes, and these transfers are an important instrument of influence for the federal government. But compared to other federal entities across the world, Canadian provinces maintain strong financial autonomy. For one thing, they rely heavily on own-source revenues, to an extent unparalleled elsewhere (Blöchliger and Nettley 2015). In addition, the bulk of federal transfers are unconditional. Equalization payments are formula-driven and carry no conditions, and the main social transfers come as block grants with mostly symbolic conditions.

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Labour market policies constitute a domain where both orders of government intervene and interact, because the federal government controls employment insurance whereas provincial governments are responsible for employment services and social assistance. The provinces' unchallenged jurisdiction on education also makes them unavoidable in the creation and implementation of training programs.

To make matters more complex, the federal government also plays a role in the funding of social assistance. From 1966 to 1995, these transfers took the form of cost-sharing through the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP). After 1995, they became largely unconditional block grants, primarily distributed on a per capita basis.

Federal unemployment benefits are provided through the employment insurance program (EI), financed by employer and worker contributions. The 1996 Employment Insurance Act divides unemployment benefits into two types. First, there are income support measures, commonly associated with passive measures, which are cash transfers with no or few conditions. Second, there are active labour market measures meant to bring beneficiaries to acquire new skills or experience or to enhance their efforts to integrate the labour market, known in Canada as Employment Benefit and Support Measures (EBSM). While the federal government funds these EBSM programs, it is not solely responsible for their implementation, which is delegated to the provinces through bilateral agreements. Programs for EI clients

are financed through Labour Market Development Agreements (LDMA) and programs for non-EI clients through Labour Market Agreements (LMA). Similarly, the federal government has labour market agreements for specific target groups, not addressed here. Canada's labour market policies are therefore decentralized and coordinated by both the federal and provincial governments (Vandenbroucke et al. 2016: 64). With these agreements, the federal government consents to fund policy initiatives based on agreed programs and targets. These arrangements mean that, although the federal government funds activation, the programs offered vary from province to province. Service delivery also varies across provinces, with different mixes of public and third-party service providers (OECD 2015: 65).

To avoid excessive heterogeneity, the federal government created EBSM categories that provincial governments can use as a guide to design their programs. Active labour market policies are divided between employment benefits and support measures. Employment benefits are "only available to eligible participants (active and former EI claimants) and generally involve long-duration interventions with clients" (Canada Employment Insurance Commission 2005: 34).² Not eligible for employment benefits, non-EI beneficiaries can qualify for support measures, because these are not EI funded. Employment support generally takes the form of short-term interventions ranging from half a day to a few weeks. These policies account for a non-negligible amount of EBSM funding. According to the OECD, expenditures for such support measures represented 7.7% of EBSM funding in 2012-2013 (2015: 75).

EBSM activation funding includes eight activation policies, inspired by both English-speaking and European social models (van den Berg et al. 2008). Spending and participation for activation measures increased after the 1996 EI reform (van den Berg et al. 2008: 326). Much of the rise in the number of interventions was related to short-term measures, such as employment services, rather than long-term programs.

Unemployed Canadians are expected to be relatively autonomous and search for jobs using public employment services, which provide basic aid. Further conditions can be applied and vary according to individual cases. Studies indicate, however, that monitoring and sanctions remain weak in Canada (OECD 2015: 156; Venn 2012). Comparisons of the strictness of unemployment and behavioural eligibility criteria in OECD countries concur that Canada ranks among the least severe (Immervoll 2012; Langenbucher 2015). This lack of monitoring may lead to symbolic politics, in which conditionality is affirmed but not necessarily implemented or enforced (Clegg and Palier 2014).

Conditionality was different for social assistance beneficiaries under the Canada Assistance Plan. This federal funding allowed provinces to create work activity projects, but they could not refuse aid to those who declined

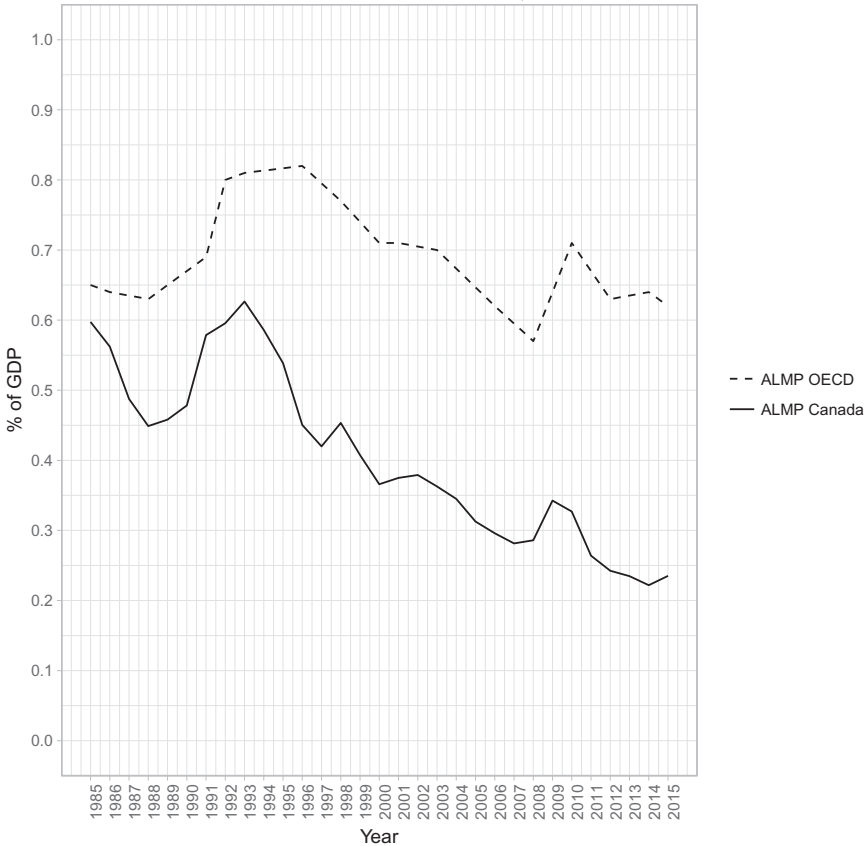
to participate (Boychuck 2015: 37). This constraint may have had the effect of limiting activation conditionality as strict provincial work conditions would disqualify a program from cost-sharing. With the shift to block-funding in 1996, eligibility conditions tended to become stricter and beneficiaries were more pressured into employability programs (Banting and Myles 2013: 23). Difficult economic conditions (Boychuck 2015) and retrenchment in the federal employment insurance program (McIntosh and Boychuk 2000) also facilitated benefit reductions and stricter eligibility criteria in some provinces. This was the case, in particular, for social assistance. In their analysis of moral hazard in the multi-tiered regulation of unemployment and social assistance activation, Vandenbroucke et al. argue that, although EBSM were created to reduce costs, provinces had little incentives to activate EI recipients, for which they did not pay income support (2016: Annex Canada 11-12). They were, however, fully responsible for social assistance and no longer received shared-cost funding from the federal government. Provinces thus had a stronger incentive to activate persons receiving social assistance.

From the standpoint of expenditures, Canada's activation regime can be described as "weak" (OECD 2015: 125). As can be seen in Figure 2, between 1985 and 2015, the country always spent below the OECD average on active labour market programs, and the decline of its commitment over time was more pronounced than that of the OECD average.

In Canada, expenditures for both active and passive policies remain comparatively low, with the country spending 0.83% of GDP on labour market policies in 2012 as compared to an OECD average of 1.58%, with less than a third of this envelope going to active measures (OECD 2015:146). Both passive and active labour market expenditures decreased between 1985 and 2015.

Low levels of spending relative to other OECD countries notwithstanding, Canada has a long history with activation. Wood argues the country already participated in the "activation turn" promoted by international organizations between the 1960s and the 1980s (2018: 45). Furthermore, the 1996 employment insurance reform was at least partially motivated by the objective of encouraging beneficiaries back into the workforce (van den Berg et al. 2008). Recent data from the OECD shows that Canada spends the largest proportion of its activation budget on training (2015: 149). Reports from the OECD have also deemed Canada's employment services to be "work-first" in nature (2015: 153). This orientation is often associated with liberal welfare state regimes, where, activation is focused on "inciting individuals to seek work, providing quick information and matching services, as well as investing in short-term vocational training," compared to universalist approaches that are more egalitarian, provide better services, and sustain higher quality jobs (Barbier 2005: 115).

Figure 2. *Active Labour Market Policy Expenditures as a Percentage of GDP, Mean of OECD Countries and Canada, 1985-2015*



Source: OECD 2019.

It is in this liberal, rather ungenerous context that Quebec's active labour market policies were developed and implemented.

The Quebec model under stress

In the mid-1990s, the Quebec government undertook a major overhaul of its social and redistribution policies. Reforms slowed down after 2003, with a new Liberal government that gave priority to balancing the budget, and put many social policies, including activation programs, under stress (Noël 2018a). These pressures notwithstanding, our findings indicate that the Quebec model remained relatively solid.

In 1998, in the context of a general reform of its redistribution model, the Quebec government created Emploi-Québec as a one-stop shop for employment services that would meet the needs of all EI recipients, social assistance beneficiaries, and uncovered unemployed persons in a relatively seamless way (Noël 2012 and 2013). Governed in a multipartite fashion, with business, unions and community and education sector representatives, the new agency integrated and improved existing measures, and subdivided activation policies into specific measures and themes (MESS 1999: 25-26). The budget for these activation measures came from the *Fonds de développement du marché du travail* (FDMT) and included federal funding. Over time, however, the early commitments made by the Quebec government may have leveled off, and perhaps declined (Noël 2017: 263). The drive to balance the budget, in particular, and a generally good employment situation, may have eroded ALMP funding (Noël 2018b). Figure 3, which shows the percentage of variation in program spending from one year to the next indicates how restrained the growth of program spending was between 2008 and 2016, until the strong recovery of the election-year budget of 2017-2018. This tight fiscal context is likely to have favoured retrenchment in ALMP spending.

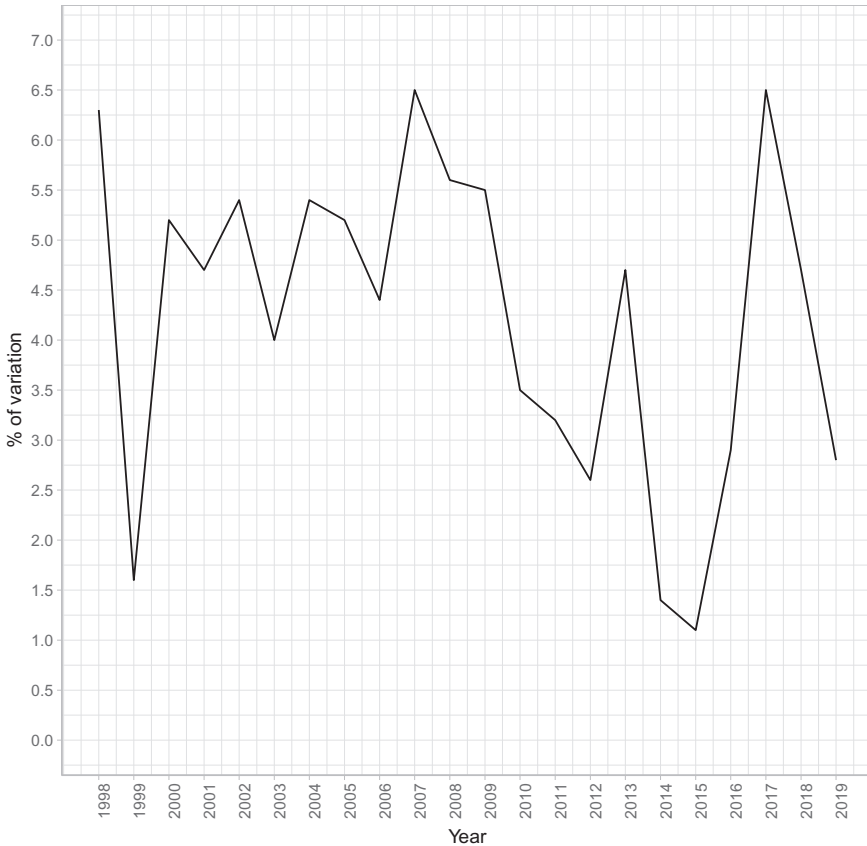
Overall spending trends suggest that Quebec has not undertaken a major reorientation of its activation policies in the 2010s.

ALMP expenditures collected from annual reports and from data provided by Emploi-Québec show indeed an overall decrease in active labour market spending. Likewise, measures for specific programs display significant variation, but not always in a market-conforming direction. Conditionality has been introduced for new social assistance claimants, with the creation of the Objectif Emploi program, but spending on financial incentives and public employment services also increased. Furthermore, recruitment incentive spending remains important through job subsidies to the private sector. To better assess the evolution of Quebec activation policies in recent years, we will first consider public expenditures, and then practices and reforms.

Spending

Overall spending trends suggest that Quebec has not undertaken a major reorientation of its activation policies in the 2010s. The government has rather maintained the same general model, with alterations at the margins. The changes implemented, nonetheless, indicate a gradual erosion of the initial pattern. The austerity policies adopted after 2008 did lead to a decline in activation spending, and they favored an increase in conditionality for specific claimants.

Figure 3. *Percentage Variation in Program Spending, Quebec Government, 1998-2018*

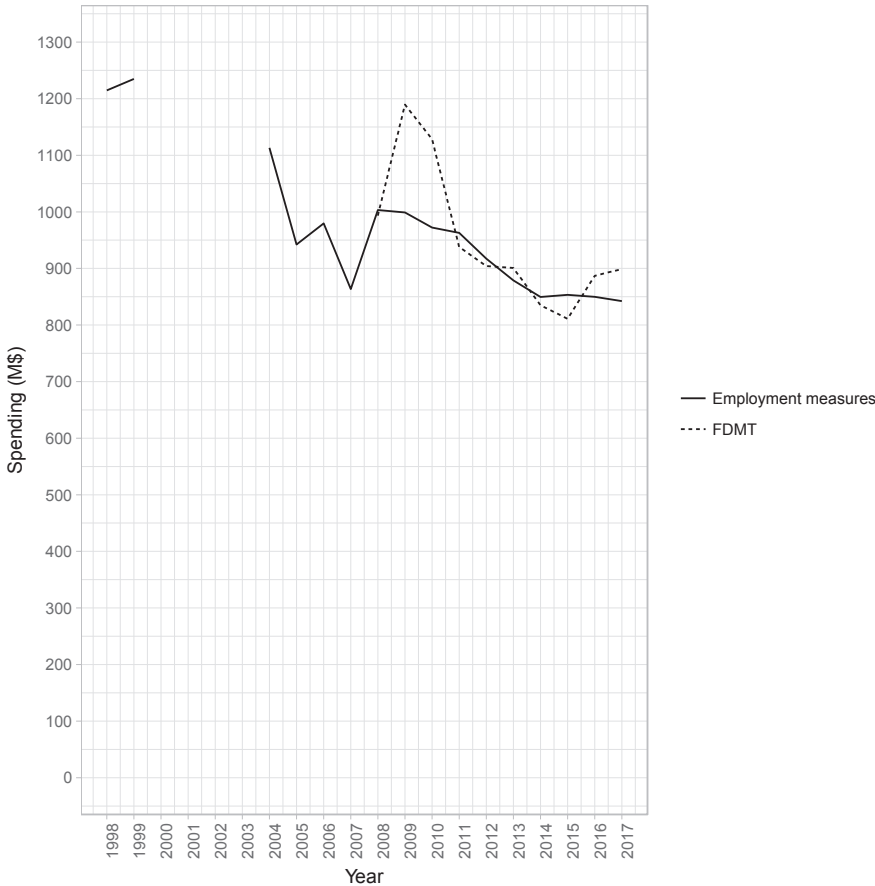


Note: Data for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 are previsions. Source: Ministère des Finances, Quebec's Budgetary Statistics, 2018.

Activation spending in Quebec can be measured in two ways. First, the ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity considers the expenditures it devotes to active measures that increase employability. Second, Emploi-Québec keeps track of the revenues it manages through the FDMT, which includes transfers from the federal government. These two measures (expenditures on employment measures and FDMT revenues) may vary slightly because of accounting differences but, as Figure 4 indicates, the general trends are the same.

In constant 2018 dollars, expenditures for employment measures declined before the 2008 economic recession and have continued to do so since then. Spending increased during the recession, but this was not a lasting change.

Figure 4. *Quebec Activation Spending, in Constant 2018 Dollars (Millions), 1998-2017*



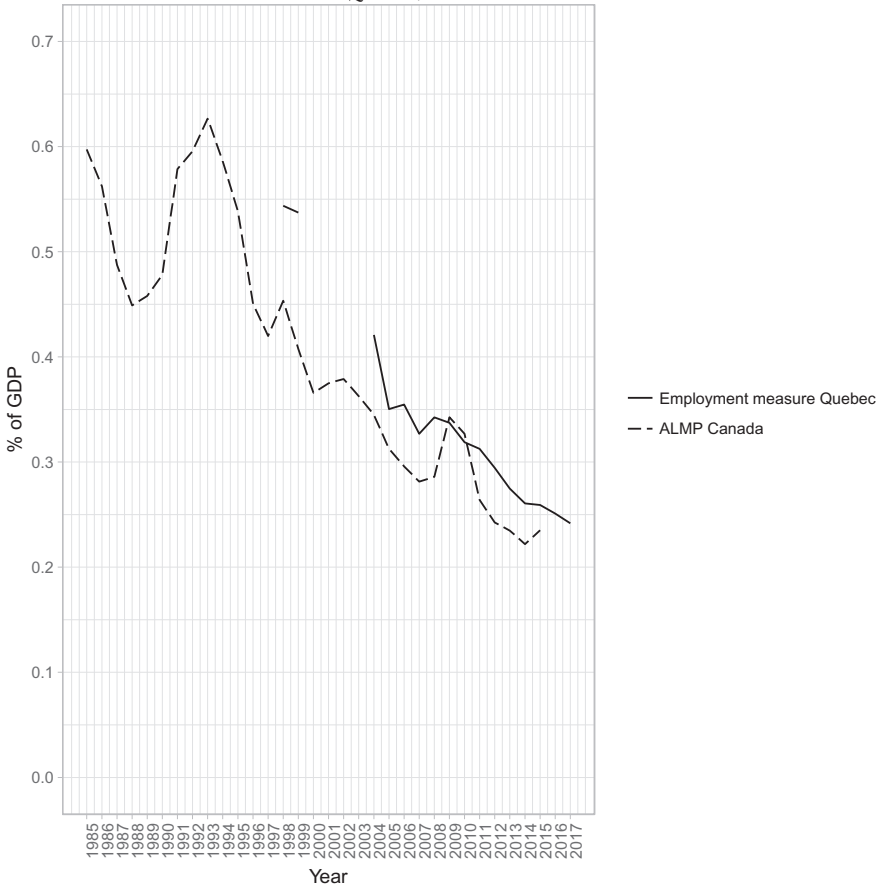
Note: Data are from April to March for each year. Spending is adjusted to 2018 prices using the Consumer Price Index for Quebec (CANSIM 326-0020).

Sources: Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, Annual Reports 1998-2018 and Emploi-Québec.

Active labour market policy spending following 2008 shows a similar trend. FDMT spending decreased by 10.5% between 2008 and 2018. All in all, as can be seen in Figure 5, which uses the more encompassing employment measures series, Quebec followed Canada's downward trend between 1998 and 2015, but almost always remained above the country's level.

Labour market policies are cyclical, and labour market changes may partially explain the observed variations (Bonoli 2013: 29). To assess this possibility, we tested simple time-series for Canada and Quebec, with a Prais-Winsten model (with a Cochrane-Orcutt transformation and a two-step

Figure 5. *Active Labour Market Policy Expenditures as a Percentage of GDP, Canada and Quebec, 1985-2015*



Note: Data for Quebec are from April to March for each year.

Sources: OCDE 2019; Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, Annual Reports 1998-2018; Statistics Canada Tables 14-10-0327-01 and 36-10-0222-01.

procedure), for expenditures as a percentage of GDP and the unemployment rate. In a separate test, we also considered the evolution of social expenditures as a percentage of GDP to see whether the development of ALMP expenditures was tied to that of the welfare state more generally. Sources for ALMP expenditures have been mentioned already; we relied on Statistics Canada for unemployment rates (Table 14-10-0327-01), on the OECD for social expenditures as a percentage of GDP in Canada (OECD 2019), and on the data for health and social services expenditures in the provinces compiled by Kneebone and Wilkins (2019), adjusted with Statistics Canada data

for provincial GDP at market prices, current prices (Table 36-10-0222-01). Table 1 presents the results for Canada (1985-2016) and Quebec (1998-2017). For Quebec, we interpolated four missing ALMP observations for 2000-2003 with STATA's *ipolate* command. Results for 2004-2017 are similar.

In both cases, the unemployment rate has the expected positive effect on ALMP expenditures. In Canada and Quebec, as elsewhere (Bonoli 2013: 29), activation efforts respond to the unemployment situation. In the Canadian case, the overall level of social expenditures is also a good predictor of ALMP spending, but not in Quebec, where the relationship is actually negative. This suggests that, in a context of declining budgets, ALMP expenditures in Quebec remained relatively sheltered.

Not only was ALMP spending not negatively affected by general budgetary trends, but the overall orientation of ALMP programs did not change. In the context of broader social and labour market reforms, Quebec created new categories of programs in 1998 (MESS 2000: 25-26).³ Some of the individual programs have been modified or removed over time, but their general orientation did not change. Table 2 presents a classification of FDMT by activation incentives, according to the lever for labour-market integration and enforcement mechanisms (Dinan 2019), to better identify spending patterns. Figures 6 and 7 present 2008-2018 participant levels and expenditures, by activation type.

On average, Quebec spends most on upskilling incentives. This spending mainly comes in the form of training for the unemployed.⁴ Upskilling remained Quebec's most expensive activation program in 2017-2018. Like its generous childcare policies, this trend is consistent with the view of Quebec

Table 1. *Time-Series Analysis of the Determinants of ALMP Expenditures, Canada 1985-2016 and Quebec 1998-2017*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Quebec</i>	<i>Quebec</i>
Unemployment	0.0344*** (0.00937)		0.0448** (0.0170)	
Social expenditures		0.0304*** (0.00838)		-8.390*** (2.652)
Constant	0.105 (0.0771)	-0.254 (0.162)	-0.0063 (0.134)	1.175*** (0.265)
Observations	31	31	19	19
R-squared	0.317	0.312	0.289	0.371

Standard errors in parentheses

***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1.

Table 2. *Participants and Funding in Quebec Activation Programs, Average for 2008-2018*

<i>Activation incentive type</i>	<i>Average annual active participants (individuals and businesses)</i>	<i>Average annual funding (constant 2018 M\$)</i>
Upskilling	70,122*	445.38*
Employment services	427,969*	256.06*
Subsidized employment	30,193	174.29
Company training	8,316*	61.56*
Fiscal incentives	11,525	36.04
Administrative services	8,102	30.51

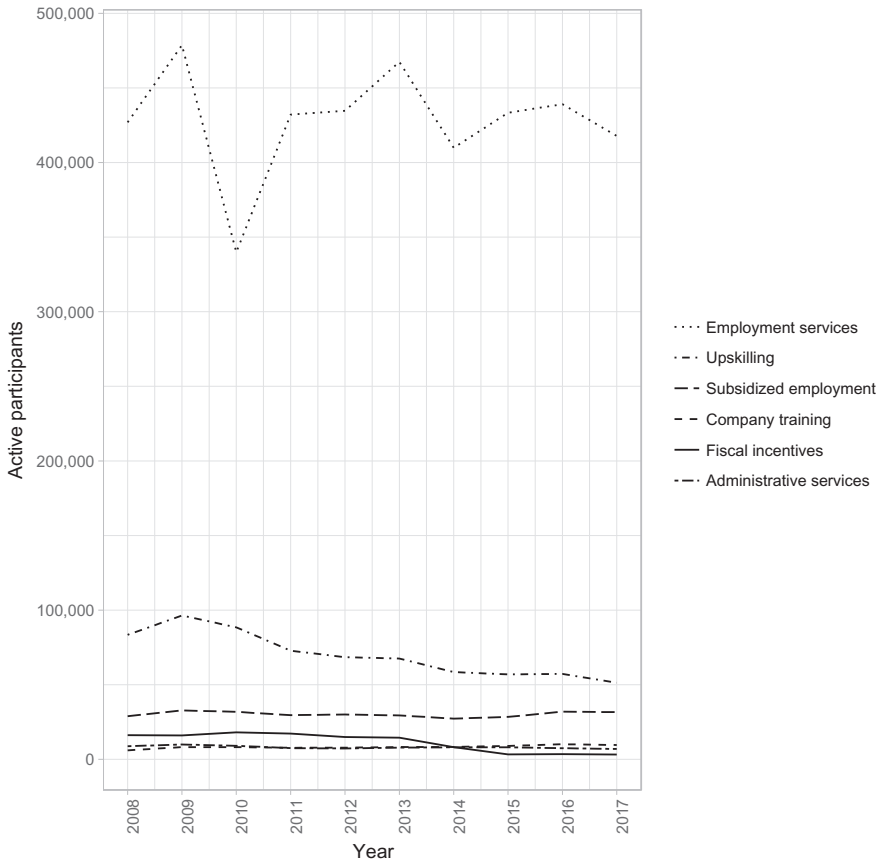
*These calculations include measures belonging to two types (*Formation des travailleurs en emploi* and *Projets de préparation en emploi*); the average annual participants and funding for these measures is thus counted twice in the table.

as adhering to the social investment model. At the same time, spending on training for the unemployed has decreased by approximately 25% since 2007, and participant counts have fallen by nearly 40%. These changes may be due primarily to cyclical economic conditions. Indeed, Quebec's unemployment rate decreased by 1.5 percentage points during this period. It may be, therefore, that individuals no longer require additional skills upgrading to find work in the context of nearly full employment.

The second most expensive activation incentive on average is employment services. Expenditures for employment services increased by 11% during the period. This activation type also counts for the highest level of active participants. High participation has continued despite the current low unemployment rate in Quebec. For instance, two measures, employment activities⁵ and employment services,⁶ accounted for 78% of all active interventions between 2008 and 2018. In this way, although significant funding is allocated to upskilling, the vast majority of Quebec's activation is devoted to employment services. One reason for this is likely to be the low cost per participant for these measures. This trend concerning employment services is consistent with what is observed in other English-speaking welfare states, where this type of activation has increased while overall ALMP spending went down (Immervoll 2012).

The third most important, and unexpected, activation type in Quebec is subsidized employment. Contrary to other countries (Bonoli 2013), employment subsidy incentives in Quebec are not designed for the public sector. Instead, they apply to all businesses and target the general unemployed public, as well as the disabled, visible minorities, and immigrants with permanent residence status. In this way, these subsidies are more akin to

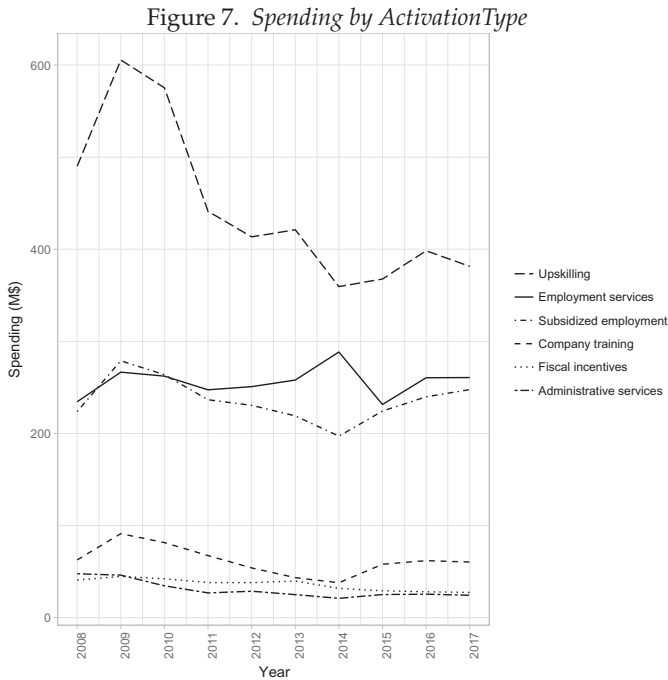
Figure 6. *Participants by Activation Type*



Note: Data are from April to March for each year.

Source: Emploi-Québec.

recruitment incentives than to public work schemes. FDMT and employment measure expenditures underestimate the importance of this incentive type because they do not include all low-income worker tax credits. Of the tax credits provided by the Quebec government, only a small measure that directly targets individuals on social assistance returning to work is incorporated in this funding. This represents a fraction of spending on tax credits for low-income workers.⁷ This emphasis on employment subsidies was not anticipated because the activation literature has found a general decline in direct job creation and recruitment incentive spending (Moreira and Lødemel 2014). Quebec does not adhere to this trend.



Note: Data are from April to March for each year.
Source: Emploi-Québec.

Practices

Quebec overhauled its activation policies when it created Emploi-Québec in 1998. Since then, governments have maintained the same broad activation orientations and governance practices. For instance, as part of its 2004-2010 Plan to Fight Poverty, Quebec highlighted the role of activation measures to reduce poverty and social exclusion and insisted on moving away from passive measures (MESSF 2004: 37, 43). This plan specifically avoided a “punitive” approach to activation that would have unduly reduced benefit levels. The emphasis was placed instead on the implementation of active measures in collaboration with social partners and on a “make work pay” approach that entailed providing additional financial aid to the working poor. These themes were reaffirmed in the 2010-2015 and the 2017-2023 poverty plans with work being described as the best source of welfare and social inclusion (MESS 2010; MTESS 2017). Emphasis also continued to be placed on financial incentives for work, such as tax credits.

There have been additional reforms. In 2017, the progressive implementation of an improved minimum income scheme for long-term social

assistance claimants with severe obstacles to employment was announced (MTESS 2017). Overall, though, encouraging labour market integration remained a focal point and a host of measures continued to promote work as a way to increase revenue for the working poor, through means-tested exemptions and tax credits. In this way, Quebec's overall activation strategy remained largely aligned with the earlier trend away from conditionality and sanctions. These orientations also corresponded with "make work pay" schemes that allow individuals to maintain benefits while they earn specific income levels.

Reforms

In 2016, Quebec adopted a law that modified the governance of activation measures, and it enacted a social assistance reform that reinforced conditionality. A new social assistance program, *Objectif Emploi*, introduced an explicit mutual obligations rhetoric for first-time social assistance claimants deemed able to work. The program indirectly targeted persons under the age of 29, who represented 60% of new claimants (Commission de l'économie et du travail 2016). This reform made individual action plans mandatory for new claimants and applied a range of sanctions in cases of non-compliance. This reinforcement of conditions brought Quebec closer to the market-enforcement trend in activation, but was also compatible with the individualization observed elsewhere (Moreira and Lødemel 2014: 290).

At the same time, these changes can be seen as consistent with Quebec's often affirmed orientation in favour of work. Ever since the creation of *Emploi-Québec*, work conditions have continually been added (Dufour et al. 2003; Groulx 2009: 37). Even so, the 2016 social assistance reform led to significant public debates, and it brought social partners to express clear disagreements. Unions and community organizations generally saw the changes as significant and stood against the use of sanctions (Commission de l'économie et du travail 2016). They argued the reform was incoherent with Quebec's general social inclusion strategy. Groups representing youth and immigrant interests also worried the new rules unfairly targeted these individuals without providing the necessary resources to overcome systemic problems and lead to durable employment. On the contrary, employer associations generally supported the bill and requested better skill matching.

The same bill also proposed changes in the governance of labour market policies. Multiple actors wondered how these modifications, which reduced the autonomy of *Emploi-Québec* and broadened the role of the *Commission des partenaires du marché du travail* (CPMT), would affect policy implementation. The CPMT includes employer representatives, trade unions, and persons from the education and community sector, as well as from government organizations, and it promotes skill development and recognition.

The bill proposed to allow the Commission to participate more actively in policymaking. Unions, however, argued these changes would reduce the CPMT's role to a consultative one. They also feared Emploi-Québec would no longer be able to act as an autonomous partner and saw the bill as contrary to Quebec's partnership model founded in the 1990s. The exact significance of these reforms remains uncertain.

Conclusion

English-speaking countries with liberal, market-oriented welfare states were not strong adherents to the ALMP movement that began in the 1980s, and Canada as a whole remained a typically liberal welfare state. The Quebec government, a provincial state in a decentralized federation, was nevertheless able to create, in the late 1990s, a coherent set of activation policies that emphasized upskilling, employment services, and employment subsidies. These reforms have been consolidated, and Quebec maintains a wide variety of activation programs for the unemployed, whether they are employment insurance or social assistance beneficiaries, or persons without income support. In this regard, Quebec evolved differently compared to its liberal welfare state counterparts.

Quebec, however, is not immune to change. As in other welfare states, activation spending has declined in the 2000s and 2010s. The types of activation that receive the most funding are also evolving, with a decreasing emphasis on upskilling and a growing use of low-cost employment services. This evolution is related to the decline of unemployment and, possibly, to the austerity policies privileged by the Liberal government after the 2008 recession. It may also reflect an ever-present ideological preference for measures that sustain employment and favour the "deserving" poor (the working poor, families, persons with a disability) (Larocque 2018). Conditions for first-time social assistance claimants have become stricter, in line with general trends toward the marketization and individualization of activation. One should note that, so far, most new claimants have accepted to prepare an individual plan and very few penalties have been implemented. Between April 2018, when *Objectif Emploi* was launched, and December 2018, financial penalties were imposed to only 0.6 % of newcomers (21 out of 3459 persons) (Porter 2018). On the ground, among those working with young persons receiving social assistance, opinions range from those concluding the reform changed nothing, to those considering it provided a useful new tool to support labour market integration efforts (Porter 2019). Time and more research will be necessary to determine who is right.

Finally, the multipartite governance model that helped found Quebec's reforms in the 1990s remained intact and effective. In the 2013 federal budget, the Conservative government of Stephen Harper introduced a new program, the Canada Job Grant, to replace existing labour market funding arrangements with a measure more closely tied to the needs of employers. Provincial governments resisted this change, but eventually conceded, except Quebec, where the social partners expressed their unanimous support for the status quo. It was difficult for Ottawa to impose a program giving more say to employers against the very will of Quebec businesses. In the end, the federal government backed down and signed a special agreement with Quebec, allowing the continuation of the Quebec model (Noël 2015). When Objectif Emploi was adopted in 2016, social partners, especially trade unions, expressed concerns about proposed changes to the governance model for active labour market policies. Yet, the proposed modifications were difficult to evaluate. Only time will tell whether they amount to a real turn.

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To sum up, Quebec activation policies in the 2010s were not immune to the overall OECD trend toward retrenchment, marketization, and individualization. In a context of low unemployment and austerity, the Quebec government reduced its expenditures on active labour market policies, favored low-cost programs such as employment services, and placed a new emphasis on conditions and penalties, at least for new social assistance claimants. At the same time, traditional programs such as employment subsidies were maintained, the multipartite governance arrangements were sustained, and the social investment emphasis on activation was reaffirmed. All in all, Quebec's distinct redistribution model remained in place.

The long-term implications of the sudden change in economic circumstances associated with the COVID-19 pandemic remain unclear. Rising provincial government debt may create further pressure for spending reductions and austerity measures. The dramatic increase in unemployment and eventual ending of federal labour market subsidies may also make activation, and social policies more generally, more relevant than ever. Future research should investigate the avenues the government decides to take and how they impact social and labour market policy in Quebec.

Notes

- 1 The following discussion leaves aside the territories, which have much smaller populations, less elaborate bureaucratic structures and policy instruments, and a significantly stronger dependence on federal transfers.
- 2 With long-term assistance, the government refers to benefits that last for more than a few weeks and “involve financial assistance either to employers, third parties, or individuals to prepare clients for employment” (Canada Employment Insurance Commission 1999: 34).
- 3 Quebec identifies five categories: training programs, employment integration, employment maintenance, employment stabilization, and employment creation. The first two categories target individuals and provide public employment services, training, and employment subsidies. Employment creation specifically targets autonomous workers via financial assistance and training. Finally, employment maintenance and stabilization measures target employers through financial and human resource assistance.
- 4 Formation des personnes sans emploi.
- 5 Activités d’aide à l’emploi.
- 6 Services d’aide à l’emploi.
- 7 The ministry of Employment also provides tax credits for low-income workers and low-income workers with an incapacity. Budgetary reports show that, between 2013 and 2019, total funding for these measures varied between \$292-376 million (Ministère des Finances 2019: B11). Only 4.4-6.6% of this funding is included in FDMT and employment measure spending for those returning to work from social assistance (Ministère des Finances 2019: B21).

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R. Paul Wilson

The work of Canadian political staffers in parliamentary caucus research offices

Abstract: Since 1970, recognized political parties in the Canadian House of Commons have received funding for caucus research offices. Staffed by political partisans, research offices provide policy, communications, research and administrative support to party leaders and their parliamentary caucuses. This research note examines the evolving organization, work and function of these offices. It demonstrates, first, that the tendency towards centralization, evident in Canadian politics for decades, is clearly reflected in research offices' primary support for leaders rather than individual caucus members. Second, research offices are integral to parties' strategic communications and marketing efforts, and this, especially in government, often eclipses their policy contribution. Third, while the government party views caucus researchers as a useful supplement to public service and ministerial office resources, opposition parties rely heavily on their caucus research offices as their dominant source of staff capacity.

Sommaire : Depuis l'année 1970, les partis politiques reconnus dans la Chambre des communes du Canada ont reçu des fonds pour les bureaux de recherche des caucuses. Les bureaux de recherche, qui embauchent du personnel partisan, apportent du soutien pour les politiques, les communications, la recherche et l'administration aux chefs de partis et à leurs caucuses parlementaires. Cette note de recherche étudie l'évolution de l'organisation, du travail et de la fonction de ces bureaux. Premièrement, elle prouve que la tendance vers la centralisation, qui est manifeste dans la politique canadienne depuis des décennies, se reflète clairement dans le fait que le soutien principal des bureaux de recherche va aux chefs de parti, plutôt qu'aux membres du caucus. Deuxièmement, le fait que particulièrement au sein du gouvernement, les bureaux de recherche fassent partie intégrante des communications stratégiques et des campagnes de marketing des partis, porte souvent ombrage à leur contribution en matière de politiques. Troisièmement, alors que le parti au pouvoir considère les analystes de caucus comme une aide utile au service public et aux bureaux ministériels, les partis d'opposition comptent beaucoup sur leurs bureaux de recherche des caucuses en tant que source principale de personnel.

Introduction

Apart from the governing party's access to non-partisan public servants and to partisan ministerial political staff, parliamentary caucus research offices

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represent one of the most important resources available to support the leaders and elected caucus members of officially recognized parties (those holding at least 12 seats) in the Canadian House of Commons. However, they have seldom received scholarly attention. Edwin Black, a political scientist, wrote an account of his time as Robert Stanfield's first research director (Black 1972). Otherwise, with some exceptions (Spicer 1974; Mitchell 1979; Jeffrey 2010; McGrane 2019), they are infrequently noticed outside the community of parliamentary practitioners. Yet these staffers, working in close proximity to party leaders, are well placed to exert significant influence on party policy as well as communications strategies and tactics.

The purpose of this research note is to shed light on the evolving organization, work and functions of parliamentary caucus research offices. It begins by providing background on the origin of these offices as well as the internal and external variables that influence their work, including the mediatized context of modern politics and, most importantly, a party's status as government or opposition in the House of Commons. After detailing the study's methodology, the note then outlines the organization and structure of research offices and provides an empirical account of the main types of work that research office staffers characteristically undertake, focusing in particular on policy analysis, communications, opposition research and administration/human resource management. It does so by drawing on examples from parties in different periods in order, following Maley, to identify "the possibilities that exist within the scope of the role" (2015: 47). The research note concludes with some final observations and identifies an agenda for further research.

Background

In November 1968, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced his commitment to allocate public money to assist opposition party leaders. The funding was not intended for "political organization or narrow partisan purposes" but rather "directly as an aid for parliamentary work" to enable opposition leaders "to avail themselves of some technical facilities, to resort to the services of economists, sociologists, jurists, and to alleviate their difficult duty in criticizing the government's legislative measures...." (Canada. Parliament. House of Commons 1969: vol. 3, 2790-92). Both the Progressive Conservative and NDP leaders pledged to use the money to serve their entire caucuses and not just their own priorities and suggested that government MPs should likewise receive research support (Canada. Parliament. House of Commons 1969). This created a smooth political path for the government to extend similar funding to their own Liberal caucus beginning in February 1970. Five decades later, these publicly funded caucus research offices continue to

Table 1. *Research Office Activities in Government and Opposition*

<i>Research Activity</i>	<i>Government Party Office</i>	<i>Opposition Party Office</i>
Policy content analysis/advice in Parliament	Seldom	Always
Policy content for extra-parliamentary party	Sometimes	Often
Strategic communications	Always	Always
Issues management	Sometimes	Always
Media/press relations	Sometimes	Always
Stakeholder relations	Sometimes	Always
Opposition research	Always	Always
Administration/HR management	Always	Always

support the leaders and elected caucus members of officially recognized parties (those holding at least 12 seats) in the House of Commons.

Trudeau, a scientific rationalist in his approach to policy analysis (Doern 1971), envisioned that research offices would be staffed by expert policy analysts. However, the public policy process is complex and encompasses the diverse experience of a wide range of practitioners in varying institutional locations in and around government and with different and even competing goals (Mayer, van Daalen and Bots 2004; Colebatch 2006; Colebatch, Hoppe and Noordegraaf 2010). This includes “political auxiliaries” (Colebatch 2006: 310). Whether expert or not, political staffers employed in research offices can provide policy analysis and policy advice. However, as political partisans they are not disinterested analysts, and the nature of their work is broad and varied. In addition to policy analysis, caucus research offices also provide communication-related services. The media (in particular national press gallery journalists) are more than simply a means for parties to communicate information to voters. Because they select, present, frame and interpret political events (Koch-Baumgarten and Voltmer 2010), they have a direct impact on parties’ activities and policy positioning since political actors internalize media logic when considering tactics and policy positions (Crozier 2007; Strömbäck 2008; Lawlor 2018), and become preoccupied with public relations, issues management and marketing (Lees-Marshment 2001; Marland 2016). Caucus research offices help leaders and MPs to function in this mediatized environment.

This work of research offices is highly contingent on a variety of internal and external variables. The most significant variable is a party’s standing in the House of Commons. Opposition parties rely more heavily on their caucus research office resources than does the party in government. Similar to Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots (2004) who characterized policy analysis

activities within the executive, Table 1 provides an overview of the main categories of caucus research office work according to how frequently they are undertaken in opposition versus government.

Other important factors include party tradition, the leader's style as well as his or her strategic needs, caucus dynamics, including MPs' level of experience, their relationship with the leader and level of internal cohesion, and timing in the electoral cycle—in particular, the proximity of the next election and the party's state of readiness. Taken altogether, the balance between these variables determines the work undertaken by caucus research offices at any point in time.

Methodology

This paper relies on personal interviews as its principal data source. Interviews are an effective way to obtain data from within a closed and suspicious community of political elites (Marland and Esselment 2018) and are a well-established research method for examining politicians, public servants and political staffers (for example, Savoie 1999; Craft 2016; Marland 2016; McGrane 2019). Semi-structured interviews, each lasting from 30 to 90 minutes, were conducted in person or by telephone between May 2017 and May 2019 with 22 current or former political staffers who had, at some point, worked in a caucus research office associated either with the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party or the New Democratic Party (NDP), the three officially recognized parties in the Canadian House of Commons in the 42nd Parliament (2015-2019).

Participants were identified through purposeful and referral sampling. Most interviews were recorded with the participant's consent and were later transcribed and analysed for key themes. Several individuals agreed to a second interview for follow up questions. Two additional participants provided comments only by email. In total, 7 participants were Liberals, 12 were Conservatives (or from one of their antecedent parties), and 5 were from the NDP. These numbers included 18 men and 6 women.

The majority of respondents chose to speak on an unattributed basis; however, some are identified with their consent. Seven staffers were employed in their office at the time of the interview; only one of these agreed to be identified. Former staffers had served at different times over the past several decades, with the majority having experience in the 1993 to 2015 period but two with experience reaching back into the 1980s. As a second data source, the paper draws on staff lists posted on the Canadian Government's Electronic Directory Service (GEDS) which were cross-referenced with data available through online sources including *The Hill Times* and LinkedIn supplemented with organizational charts and personnel lists provided to the author. Finally, the paper also draws on the experience and personal files

of the author, who served as director of the caucus research office for the Reform Party, and subsequently Canadian Alliance, from 1996 to 2001. As full disclosure, the author also worked for the Conservative government from 2006 to 2011, serving as director of policy to four ministers including Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Organization and structure of caucus research offices

Budgets and organization: from caucus to leader

Since 1970, funds have been allocated to each recognized party for a national caucus research office according to a formula based on, although not strictly prorated to, party representation in the House of Commons. This funding is to support MPs “in the fulfillment of their parliamentary functions” (Canada. Parliament. House of Commons 2018: 11-8) and therefore purportedly benefits all MPs within each caucus and not just party leaders. Funds are generally restricted to paying salaries and contracts, and caucus research office budgets do not allow for expenses related to travel and hospitality.

Opposition party leaders also receive additional parliamentary funding for their own offices. This money is not available to the leader of the governing party who, as prime minister, controls the significantly larger PMO budget which is funded through the Privy Council Office’s annual appropriation. The budgets for opposition leader’s offices are more flexible than for research offices and may be used for travel and hospitality as well as for employee salaries and contracts for goods and services.

Table 2 shows each party’s budget allocation for research and (for the two opposition parties) leader’s offices as set prior to the start of the 2019-2020 fiscal year (and of course subject to adjustment based on the results of the October 2019 general election). The table also shows the approximate number of staffers employed in each office. Within the rules set by the House of Commons Board of Internal Economy, parties may make their own decisions about how offices are structured and administered. Party leaders must each delegate a Member of Parliament to take administrative responsibility for the office (Canada. Parliament. House of Commons 2018), but leaders may choose to act in this role themselves. The extent to which research offices are centralized around party leaders or serve MPs in the party caucus more broadly depends on many factors, including the leader’s personality and political situation within caucus, the immediate political context (such as whether the party is in opposition or government, and whether the government has a parliamentary majority or minority) and each party’s own traditions.

Table 2. *Parliamentary Budget (2019-2020)¹ and Staff for Leaders' Offices and Research Offices (2019)²*

	Government ² (Liberal)		Official Opposition ² (Conservative)		New Democratic Party	
	Budget	Staff #	Budget	Staff #	Budget	Staff #
Leader's Office	Not applicable	Not applicable	\$4,612,550	11	\$2,145,360	0 ³
Research Office	\$3,098,220	37	\$2,889,980	63	\$1,763,630	47 ³

Compiled by the author.

¹Budget allocation for fiscal year 2019-2020 as published on Sept. 14, 2018. Source: Canada. Parliament. House of Commons 2018: 11-4, 11-8.

²Government (Liberal) and Official Opposition (CPC) staffing figures from GEDS (May 3, 2019), checked against *The Hill Times*, LinkedIn and party source material supplied to author.

³NDP officials indicated that GEDS was out of date on May 3, 2019, showing 0 leader's office staff and 10 research office staff. The number of 47 NDP research staffers is taken from party information as of November 2018 supplied to the author.

The Liberal Party caucus chair traditionally held responsibility for Liberal Research Bureau (LRB) (Jeffrey 2010: 43). This continued after Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's majority victory in 1993. Kevin Bosch, a long time Liberal researcher, observed that at the time the large Liberal caucus "wanted their own research and their own people that they could turn to" instead of being dependent on ministers' offices. Derek Ferguson, a former journalist who was appointed director after the 2004 election, described LRB as "an independent entity" under Prime Minister Chrétien and "not an offshoot of PMO." The election of Stan Keyes, an outspoken opponent of Chrétien, as caucus chair (Clark 2002) only increased the office's autonomy.

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This changed under Prime Minister Paul Martin's minority government (2004-2006). Although LRB still nominally reported to the caucus chair, it was, according to Ferguson, "functionally amalgamated" with PMO in order to prepare communications material on government initiatives for the Liberal caucus. In opposition after the 2008 election, the office was perceived to be "too independent" and poorly connected with communications and issues management efforts (Persichilli 2009). LRB, therefore, began reporting directly to the leader's chief of staff and became integrated with the leader's office. This led to tension (LIB 2) but facilitated communications coordination between government and MPs. Back in government since the 2015 election, LRB has officially reported to Prime Minister Trudeau and not to the caucus chair. As a Liberal staffer commented, "Ultimately I feel that we are accountable to our caucus members....but I would say it is probably more centralized than it was in the past" (LIB 1). Another bluntly described it as "leader centric" (LIB 4).

Perhaps because the Conservative Party and NDP were, unlike the Liberals, accustomed to being in opposition and lacking the resources available to the government, their research offices have typically been more centred on the leader and, when in opposition, have been integrated along with the leader's office into a single organization under the leader's control.

The Progressive Conservative (PC) Party's first research director, Edwin Black, explained that he was hired by the leader, keeping in "constant contact" and having "direct and immediate access" to him (1972: 31, 34). This remained the model for the PC party except in the aftermath of Joe Clark's

loss as prime minister and return to opposition. Geoff Norquay, PC Research Director from 1981 to 1984, recalled that he “served equally two masters”—the leader and the caucus, much of which had formed “a circular firing squad” around Clark. Except for this, close integration was the rule. Under the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper (2006-2015), the caucus research office, styled Conservative Resource Group (CRG), collaborated extensively with PMO on communications. The CRG director attended the daily PMO Department Heads’ meeting to ensure message integration. Back in opposition after 2015, CRG has been functionally and administratively subsumed under the title of the Office of the Leader of the Opposition (OLO). As a senior staffer explained, both the research and leader’s office budgets are used to fund one office (CPC 2), and all personnel report to the leader’s chief of staff.¹

Ultimately, the research office has a strategic role on behalf of the leader that individual MPs, immersed in their particular duties, cannot play.

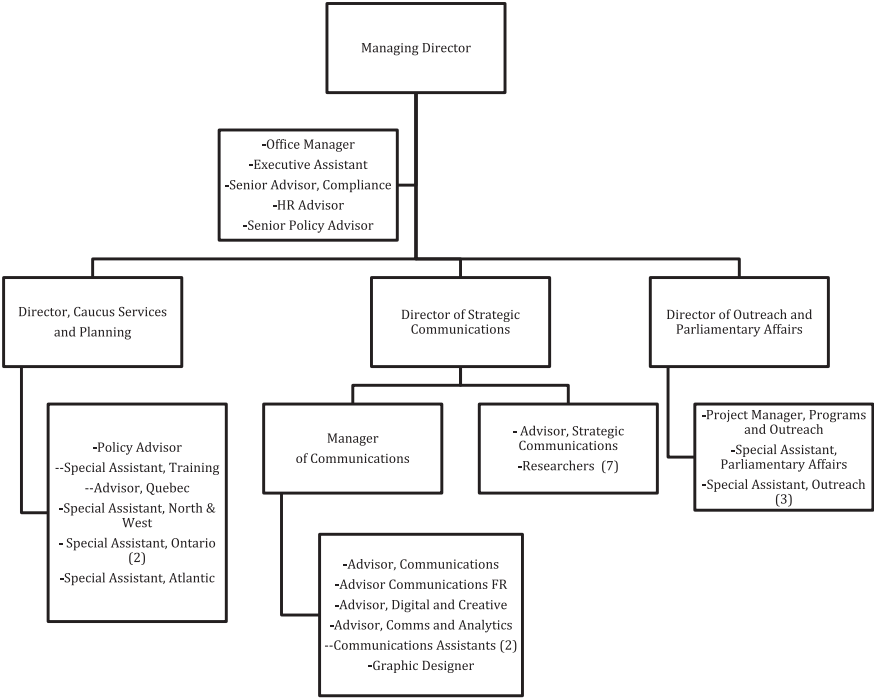
The NDP Research Office is known as NDP Caucus Services, although, as with the Conservatives, it is fully integrated with the leader’s office. Karl Bélanger, a veteran NDP staffer who served under four party leaders including as principal secretary to Thomas Mulcair, explains how the central parliamentary office is “kind of a hybrid.” It incorporates both the research office and the leader’s office staff, and Bélanger explained how they have consistently tried “to break down silos and to make sure that the entire office was working as a whole toward common goals.” Kevin Dorsey, a long time NDP researcher (1998-2010), explained that trying to serve the leader personally and the leader’s priorities as well as caucus led to “tension from time to time” when MPs would ask “Is it caucus services or is it the leader’s office? Because if it’s caucus services I’m not feeling served.”

Ultimately, the research office has a strategic role on behalf of the leader that individual MPs, immersed in their particular duties, cannot play. One NDP staffer explains that: “we have to see the whole chess board. That’s our job. We have to see several moves ahead, we have to see what our opponents are doing, we have to see what our folks are doing. And then we have to be able to weigh in with meaningful advice and contributions to the decision maker that allow us to be successful on that board” (NDP 2). Only staff in a central office working closely with the leader can do this.

The work of caucus research offices

What tasks do research offices perform? Figures 1 and 2 show the author’s reconstruction of research office/leader’s office organizational charts for the

Figure 1. *Liberal Research Bureau Organizational Chart, May 3, 2019*





Source: Compiled by author from GEDS, May 3, 2019 with reference to The Hill Times and LinkedIn and with information provided by party.

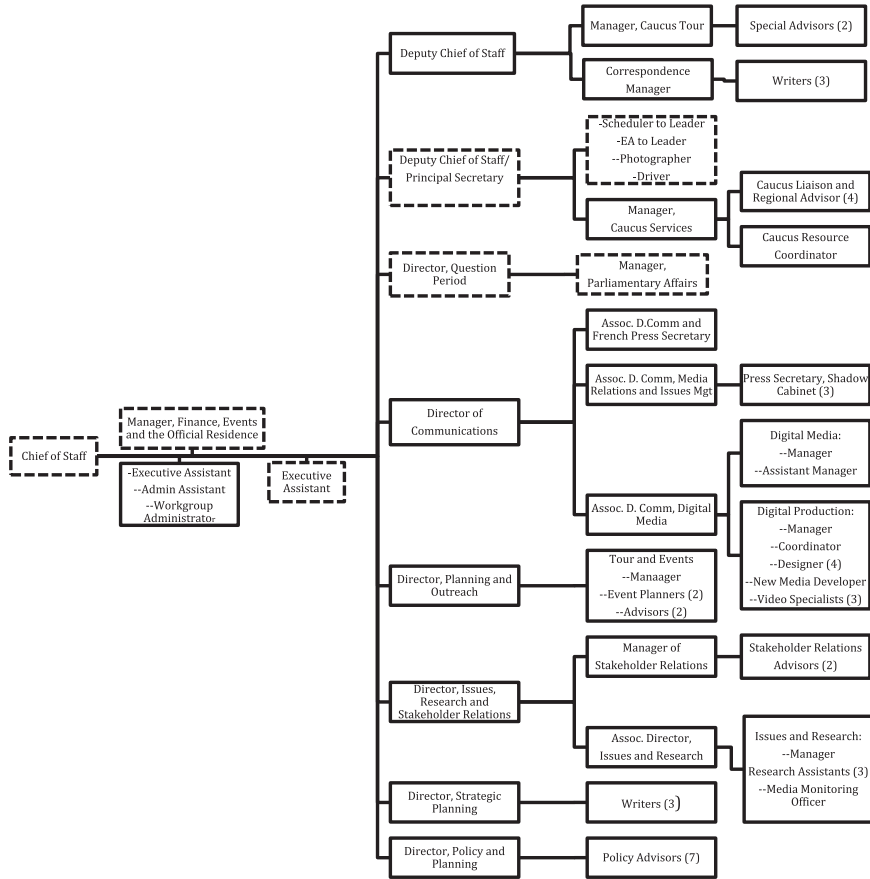
Liberals and Conservatives in May 2019. Figure 3 derives from an organizational chart obtained from the NDP dated November 2018. These document the point-in-time structure and resource allocation of these offices. However, office structures are fluid and contingent. Party traditions matter, but so also do other factors such as each party’s parliamentary strength and strategic goals, budget capacity, quality and expertise of available personnel, the leader’s relationship with MPs, and the time remaining until the next election campaign. Nevertheless, there are certain functions all research offices tend to perform, and these will be discussed under the following categories: policy analysis; communications (including strategic communications, media relations and stakeholder relations); opposition research; and human resource administration.

These activities cross organizational lines. A good example includes “regional desks,” which are staffed by advisors who serve as a point of contact for the party’s MPs in assigned provinces or regions. Figures 1-3 show that the Liberals employed five special regional assistants, the CPC five caucus liaison and regional advisors, and the NDP seven outreach officers. Staffers in such

Figure 2. *Conservative Party: Combined Organizational Chart (May 2019). Office of the Leader of the Opposition. Conservative Research Bureau*

Office of the Leader of the Opposition 

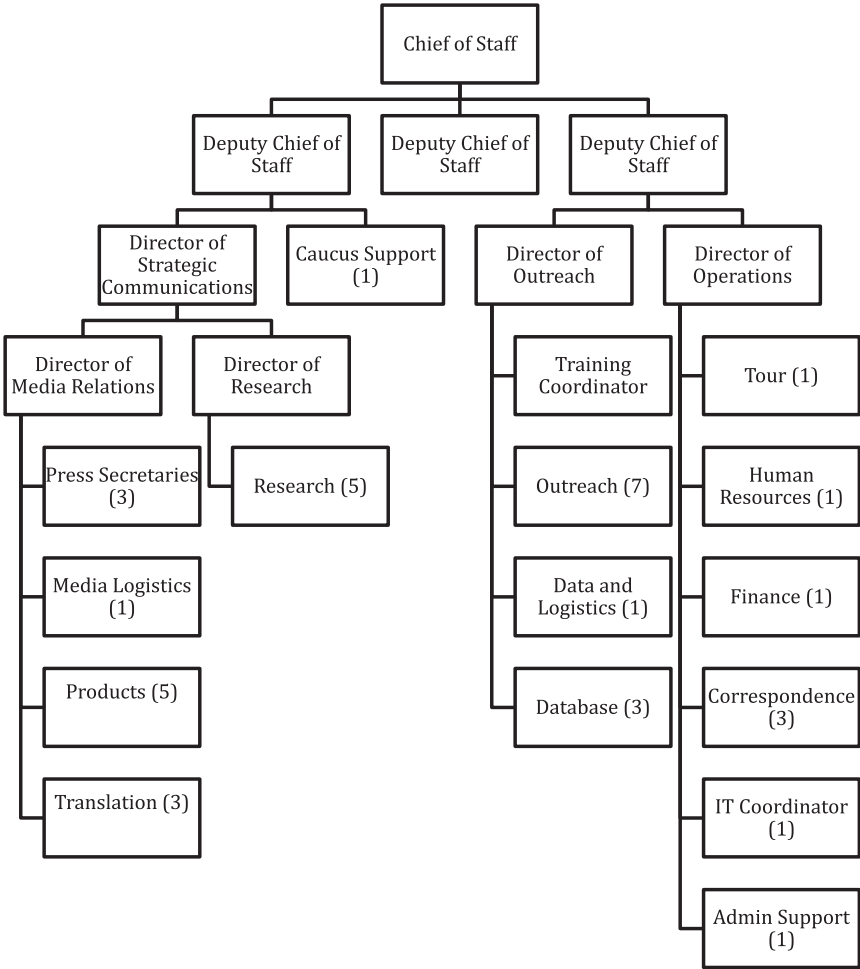
Conservative Research Bureau 



Source: Compiled by author from GEDS, May 3, 2019, with reference to The Hill Times, LinkedIn and party information provided to author.

positions typically attend regional caucus meetings and perform a wide range of services such as helping MPs to deal with regional media, drafting communications products, coordinating tour and announcements, and providing briefing notes on regional aspects of party policy. These jack-of-all-trades staffers build and maintain important connections between the leader and regional MPs, representing strategic direction and the leader’s perspective to the caucus and bringing MPs’ concerns and priorities forward in return. Many of their specific activities, however, fit under the functions discussed below.

Figure 3. *NDP Organizational Chart, November 2018*



Source: Compiled by author based on information obtained from party sources.

Research staff and policy analysis

Parliamentary research offices can exercise influence on party policy. This is especially true for opposition party research offices who, because of resource discrepancies, play a wide-ranging policy role. In government, by contrast, policy work at the staff level is dominated by ministerial offices, and so the policy role for research offices is more closely tied to their work in crafting and communicating messages. Research offices also support leaders with policy development for the extra-parliamentary party, including with election platforms, although again this is more common in opposition than in government.

Policy analysis in opposition: the “counter bureaucracy”

Lacking the public service expertise available to ministers, opposition leaders and critics rely more heavily on their parliamentary research offices, which consequently engage in a wider range of policy activities than their counterparts on the government side (Glenn 2018). Black called opposition researchers the “counter bureaucracy” (1972: 26) for the shadow government. To the extent that opposition parties have policy capacity, this is often where it will reside. Figure 2 shows how the Conservative OLO included a unit for policy and parliamentary affairs with a director and seven policy advisors who were each assigned responsibility for multiple government departments and agencies, between them covering the entire federal government. This is a typical configuration for an opposition research office.

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Effectiveness depends on the number of advisors as well as each advisor’s background and competence. Since veteran staffers with better experience and higher academic credentials are more expensive than junior employees, budget realities force a trade-off. However, even expert policy analysts are hard pressed to monitor four or five large government departments single-handedly. Yet some capacity is better than none, and research office policy advisors allow the opposition to track more government activity than could MPs on their own. This can involve preparing background research on government bills and initiatives or for opposition supply day debates, monitoring standing committee meetings and suggesting witness lists and potential lines of questioning, and assisting critics to develop policy positions on behalf of the party. Further, central policy analysts permit more—and more critical—engagement with interest groups, and give MPs greater self-confidence by evincing professionalism and competence (Black 1972).

Much opposition policy work consists in supporting the leader and senior caucus officers with crafting political messages, not only identifying subjects to pursue but ensuring that the wider context of issues is understood and that claims are factually defensible. Question Period is the biggest daily opportunity for opposition parties to attract media attention, and so policy staff often have a key role in preparation (Jeffrey 2010; McGrane 2019). This may involve providing context for issues, counselling about how proposed

questions fit with existing party policy and ensuring factual accuracy since errors could undermine an otherwise strong position. This sort of strategic content advice and fact checking applies not only for Question Period but for public communications generally. Disciplined processes are required to ensure that all products are vetted through a policy lens.

Today's frenetic political environment presents challenges for policy advisors. One experienced Conservative policy staffer related how "day to day I found myself doing communications as much as I was doing policy" (CPC 3). Instead of waiting to fact check products prepared by others, he developed an "entrepreneurial" role. He used his detailed knowledge of files to identify issues of political salience, develop well-referenced background notes and, working with a communications officer, "flip that around to different [reporters] to see if we could get them interested." Expressing frustration with the tactical nature of the job, he explained that "this was just me trying to be relevant, in a time where my skill set wasn't really being fully utilized."

Because a government party has access to the public service and ministerial staff, it has less (if any) need for substantive policy work from its parliamentary research office, and that can lead the office to focus instead on communications.

Sometimes policy analysts play a role in coordinating and even mediating between MPs. A former NDP staffer observed this after the 2011 election. As a consequence of vaulting into official opposition status, the policy positions taken by the many NDP rookie MPs were closely scrutinized by the media and so NDP researchers took a "much more intentional" and "a more intensive role" in policy discussions with critics (NDP 2). The research office acted as a sort of central agency in identifying what policy areas would be impacted by a particular policy proposal, in facilitating meetings to ensure that all relevant critics were engaged, and even in directing the activities of MPs on behalf of the leader (McGrane 2019).

Policy analysis for the government party

Because a government party has access to the public service and ministerial staff, it has less (if any) need for substantive policy work from its parliamentary research office, and that can lead the office to focus instead on communications. According to Jeffrey (2010) this was the case with LRB under Pierre Trudeau's government prior to the 1984 election and during Paul Martin's minority government. It was also true of CRG in the Harper period. But there are exceptions.

As Dan McCarthy, LRB director after Jean Chrétien's 1993 election victory, explained, much of the office's work focused on communications. Nevertheless, they continued to employ policy analysts in order to provide policy support independent of PMO and ministers' offices to the Liberal caucus and, in particular, to the chairs of regional caucus committees and caucus policy committees. This gave backbench MPs a research basis for engaging with ministers and communicating their views more effectively. Sometimes, McCarthy said, LRB even played a "challenge function" by arming MPs with information which questioned government policy, and he mentioned as examples the bureau's support for Reg Alcock, chair of the Liberal caucus social policy committee, on employment insurance, and for Charles Caccia, Liberal chair of the Standing Committee on Environment, on species at risk policy.² In McCarthy's view, researchers were "a trusted cadre of people they [Liberal MPs] could count on to be objective and not just political" and therefore facilitated "substantive conversation" between caucus and the minister.

In an interview, one Liberal staffer explained how LRB in 2019 had two policy advisors. One was a generalist who served as a facilitator between ministers' offices and Liberal caucus members, passing on key lines and messages and coordinating calls with MPs on different topics to make sure they were getting briefed and were up to speed. The other was tasked with supporting the two MPs co-chairing the election platform development effort (LIB 1). While platform support has not been unusual for research offices, it is typically a larger role in opposition than in government.

Extra-parliamentary policy work: from task forces to platforms

Caucus research offices for opposition parties often provide support for their parties' extra-parliamentary policy development work. Jeffrey (2010) documented how LRB officers supported the party policy process leading up to 1988 election, preparing campaign platform planks and drafting a policy handbook for caucus members and nominated candidates. McCarthy, who first joined LRB as a researcher in 1987, recalled that the office took on a similar role in developing the 1993 platform.

Among Conservative Party antecedents, researchers for the Reform Party similarly provided extra-parliamentary policy support. They routinely sat on party policy task forces and the director served on the party's standing Interim Policy Management Committee as well as the United Alternative Policy Development Committee. In advance of the 1997 and 2000 elections, the research office worked with the leader and MPs to generate policy "lights in the window" to attract voters to the party's message, and held the pen in writing detailed platform drafts which would eventually be honed by communications writers with input from a pollster and advertising consultants. The Reform and Canadian Alliance researchers were considered

internally to be the experts on platform content, drafting briefing material for use by MPs and candidates, and providing support on policy substance for speeches and campaign communications efforts.

Platform work of this sort seems to be less common for research offices in government than in opposition. McCarthy recalled that, while party work had consumed LRB leading up to the 1988 and 1993 elections, from 1994 onwards the office had “very little contact” with the Liberal Party. Not only were there more staff resources in government, there was more money. The party, he explained, could buy research if they needed it, and so “it wasn’t within our mandate at that point.”

Under Prime Minister Harper, Conservative Resource Group had no role in policy or developing platform content, although they did contribute to design and production (CPC 5). But, as noted above, in the lead up to the 2019 election, one of the two LRB policy advisors assisted with the governing party’s campaign platform development, working with caucus members and also with the platform co-chairs in order to research and flesh out policy platform ideas. There is some sensitivity about doing this with parliamentary resources. A staffer carefully clarified that “this is not something that’s party related but from the [platform MP] co-chairs in their role as parliamentarians” (LIB 1).

Research offices and communication: supporting the permanent campaign

While the original justification for caucus research offices was policy research, the close relationship between policy and message means that they increasingly focus on providing communications support for leaders and MPs. A particular emphasis is strategic communications: developing products to proactively market the party’s brand and chosen messaging to its target audience. But it also includes issues management, media/press relations and outreach to groups outside government, often known as stakeholder relations.

As with policy analysis, there are some significant differences between work in opposition and in government. Opposition leader’s offices/research offices must provide direct support to the leader in all communications areas. This includes schedulers to arrange tour details, writers to generate content and draft speeches and correspondence, and photographers to capture moments for dissemination. Supporting Question Period efforts when the House is sitting, including developing material, advising and coaching MPs and pitching party positions to journalists, is a heavy task for opposition communications staff. On the government side, by contrast, support for the leader is usually provided by PMO and not by the research office, and Question Period is reactive and managed by ministerial staffers.

With respect to strategic communications, the governing party's caucus research office is kept informed of the government's messaging objectives. Kevin Bosch, as director of LRB, attended the daily communications meeting at PMO chaired by Prime Minister Martin's Director of Communications (Jeffrey 2010) and, as noted above, CRG directors attended the daily PMO Department Heads' meeting under Prime Minister Harper.

Strategic communications: marketing to caucus and Canadians

Until the early 2000s, political communications focused on earning daily newspaper and television coverage, with parties buying advertising only during election campaigns. Today, parties commonly adopt marketing techniques by targeting specific demographic audiences with cohesive branding (Delacourt 2013; Marland 2016). Caucus research offices have become key instruments in this approach.

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As early as 2004 LRB had hired a demographer (Jeffrey 2010) to tailor messaging for local ridings and various cultural groups. However, after 2006 the newly elected minority Conservative government entrenched political marketing as a core operating principle, creating a strategic communications unit inside PMO to develop and proactively market the government's message, including coordinating government announcements for maximum impact (Flanagan 2007; Esselment and Wilson 2017). CRG led this effort, taking messages developed by PMO and the national party and designing a range of products, including templates for web sites as well as House of Commons funded publications (householders and ten percenters), that Conservative MPs could use to communicate with voters.

Matt Triemstra, formerly Manager of Caucus Services and Operations at CRG, explained how CRG hired "the best writers and designers" in order to produce higher quality products than could MPs in their own offices. While, he says, MPs were never coerced to use CRG materials, there was no customization option; so if they wanted the quality products they had to accept the national messaging. In this way, CRG was key for disseminating the party's targeted branding to Canadians while in government. Once returned to opposition, CRG continued to produce the same types of material, devoting significant staff resources to digital design and production (Figure 2).

NDP Caucus Services maintains a similar capacity. For example, in November 2018 the NDP office employed five staffers devoted to

product development working under a Director of Strategic Communications (Figure 3). One former NDP staffer described how Caucus Services would encourage MPs to sign up for its products, arguing that, by saving all the design, production and distribution costs, centrally designed products were worth tens of thousands of dollars in net benefit. "You're not going to be making \$40,000 on a spaghetti dinner," she told MPs, "so why don't you take advantage of this free service that the House is offering?" (NDP 1). In this way NDP Caucus Services provides MPs with high quality product design, but also facilitates common messaging and branding.

The Liberal Research Bureau also supports caucus communications, for example by providing professional design or video services, so that MPs need not themselves purchase specialized equipment or hire requisite production expertise. A Liberal research staffer believes "that's where the role of research offices can really come in to play. We can have those experts in whatever specific topic it is so that you have that expertise to draw on and every MP doesn't think 'My God, I have to have thirty people on my staff just to accomplish things'" (LIB 1).

Issues management

In contrast to strategic communication, issues management is less about the big picture and more about the daily fight to advance a party's messaging. Ian Wayne, who joined the NDP Research Office in 2007 as its first Issues Manager, describes how issues management asks "what are the most useful issues for us to talk about, politically? How are we going to exploit, or even can we make use of, this issue?" This involves "negotiating, between the MPs, the communications shop, the policy shop and sometimes the leader on certain policy ideas" and "handling hot button political issues that could be important for our platform, for question period, or for the day to day political fight that was happening in the media."

Issues management is often reactive rather than proactive. While strategic communication serves as a "sword" to push parties' preferred messaging, issues management is a "shield" (Marland 2016: 190-91) which deflects negative stories in order to minimize political damage. In government, issues management is primarily handled by ministerial staffers who lead rapid response efforts on departmental issues in cooperation with public servants (Esselment and Wilson 2017). Because opposition parties lack executive responsibilities they have less territory to defend. Yet they too must respond to political challenges. As Wayne described, this requires nimbleness in negotiating positions between different competing internal voices, and such responses are often led out of caucus research offices.

Media press relations

Even in an age of social media, parties still need old-fashioned media relations work. PMO and ministerial staffers can do this for the governing

party, but for opposition parties this capacity is housed in their leader's office/research office. Both the Conservative OLO (Figure 2) and NDP Caucus Services (Figure 3) employ their parties' main media spokespeople, senior staffers who are responsible for building relations with press gallery journalists in Ottawa and with key regional news outlets, as well as supporting communications teams. A March 2018 NDP job posting described the role as including responsibilities such as "communicat[ing] regularly with media to generate national and regional media coverage that raises public awareness for the parliamentary leader and caucus," answering media inquiries, providing media support for MPs and helping them prepare for interviews and Question Period, media monitoring and analysis, travelling with the leader and generally "work[ing] collaboratively within a team to advance New Democrat goals" (NDP 2018). Such services are essential to an opposition party caucus.

In government these duties are handled by ministerial offices, and so in 2019 LRB employed no press secretaries. While the office had media relations capacity, it prioritized strategic communications and therefore emphasized proactively advancing positive stories more than responding daily to reporters. This involved supporting Liberal MPs by helping them deal with journalists, working with minister's offices to identify possible announcements and then assisting MPs to hone and push out positive messages into their local ridings and regions. This ability to focus research office resources on strategic communications, as the Conservatives had done when in government, is part of the staffing advantage for the party in power.

Stakeholder relations

Whether it is called outreach, tour or stakeholder relations, research offices facilitate MPs engaging with groups outside parliament and also themselves engage on behalf of leaders. Cultivating relationships with businesses, industry associations, unions and non-governmental organizations has political value. While ministerial offices, including PMO, devote significant staff resources to stakeholder relations, including dealing with lobbyists, and supporting their ministers' travel and events, opposition leaders must rely on capacity within their own offices. Thus both NDP Caucus Services and Conservative OLO support these efforts in multiple ways, including: performing political triage on invitations for the leader; connecting the group with the right policy person in the leader's office or with an appropriate MP; preparing background briefing notes and tour notes as needed; booking travel; determining and arranging the meeting format, whether private or public, speech or roundtable; and arranging media coverage and communications products, including for social media.

LRB employs a Director of Outreach and Parliamentary Affairs whose team has capacity for building relationships with outside groups. While

opposition research offices are a main point of contact for stakeholders wishing to connect with the leader, and so will need to deal with a high volume of requests for meetings, the main lobbying targets on the government side are PMO, other ministerial offices and MPs. As a consequence, LRB's role, as with media relations, can be less reactive and more intentional in helping individual Liberal MPs to cultivate relationships that are of strategic political value.

Opposition research: gathering and using political intelligence

While "research" is sometimes used as a synonym for "policy" to indicate long term position development, it can also mean efforts for short term political gain. This means finding exactly the right piece of information at the moment when it will have maximum impact, and parties painstakingly assemble detailed databases on a wide range of issues in case some tidbit might be relevant someday, somehow.

Research offices perform a wide range of information gathering services. Frequently this involves compiling material and giving it to MPs to "arm them with politically pointed information" (LIB 4). This might be a list of their opponents' (allegedly) broken promises or a list of (alleged) government patronage appointments, or a background paper touting their own party's successes in meeting their commitments or in holding the government accountable.

Opposition research—known as oppo by insiders—involves intelligence gathering based on publicly available documents (Huffman and Rejebian 2012). As a CRG researcher explained, this is not like the "skunk works" depicted in television shows. "There's always a lot of exciting rumours that get passed along but it's really not worth the effort to try exotic tactics to chase them down. Basically, something is really only useful to us if we can use it publicly or give it to a journalist for use" (CPC 4). Researchers for the opposition closely monitor the government's activities by reviewing material such as Order in Council appointments, proactive disclosures of travel and hospitality expenses and funding announcements in order to find politically useful angles. They file Access to Information requests and draft Order Paper Questions by which MPs may request government information. All parties monitor their opponents' public footprint whenever possible, for example, by collecting voting records in Parliament, comments in local newspapers or broadcast on television or radio, speeches and interviews, social media and online activity.

For Kevin Bosch, the LRB's long-time opposition research expert, the challenge is not just finding politically damaging material on other parties but knowing when and how to use it for maximum political impact, whether

during a parliamentary session or, relocating to a party war room, during an election campaign. “You’d try to hold back some research that would be useful for election time,” he said. “And I considered myself a bit of a hoarder. I’d always look at a piece of information and say, okay, what are the odds that someone else can find this and land a story now?” Such assessment requires a keen sense of political acuity, including the ability to anticipate and shape media reaction.

Sometimes research is defensive. In September 2018, media reported that LRB “regularly” conducts background checks on candidates for appointment to various government offices (Smith and Platt 2018). However, unlike security and background screening conducted by the Privy Council Office or the RCMP, these checks would be about identifying potential political risks and ensuring that no appointment embarrasses the government.

Because sometimes a party’s biggest problems come from inside the tent, “self-oppo” is an important activity for research offices. Tom Flanagan (2007: 241) recounts that, soon after becoming Stephen Harper’s chief of staff, he had organized a “Harper research” program in order to prepare against what other parties might find and throw at them. Flanagan describes how the Liberals found a quote that the Conservatives had missed—an old speech in which Harper had called Canada “a Northern European welfare state in the worst sense of the term”—and released it in the middle of the 2005/6 election campaign to destabilize the CPC. Of course, self-oppo works best if it remains private. The Conservatives’ 500-page collection of Harper quotes was itself leaked to the Liberals who released it as another destabilizing gambit during the 2011 campaign (Bryden 2011).

Administration and human resources: managing political personnel

All research offices employ administrative personnel to smooth their internal processes, help with budget management and coordinate with House of Commons administration. They also can help their caucus members with human resource management, including recruitment and development of individuals for political staff jobs which require both competence and, usually, some degree of partisan attachment. This is important since MPs are often inexperienced as employers and largely left to their own devices.

Research offices sometimes provide training for incoming staff, a valuable service in times of rapid caucus change after an election such as the NDP experienced in 2011 and 2015 (NDP 2). This might include “Parliament 101” sorts of introductory training as well as specialized sessions dealing with specific topics such as immigration or taxation casework or database management (LIB 4).

Both LRB (Figure 1) and NDP Caucus Services (Figure 3) have employed Human Resources advisors who maintain a database of job applicants so that they can pre-screen candidates and recommend resumés to MPs looking to hire staff. For the NDP this involves hiring in accordance with the political staff union's collective agreement (NDP 2). LRB also employed a "Senior Advisor, Compliance," a lawyer who could counsel MPs not only on complying with House of Commons rules but on political advisability. As Melissa Cotton, Managing Director of the Liberal office since 2016, explained, just because something is permissible under the rules "doesn't necessarily mean that's the best decision politically."

LRB was also active in setting expectations with respect to healthy parliamentary workplace culture. The office worked with PMO to provide mandatory sexual-harassment training for all staff employed by Liberal ministers and MPs and, leading up to the 2018 Christmas holiday season, sent a memo to all staff to raise awareness of the party's "zero tolerance for harassment, including sexual harassment" (Rana 2019). Cotton believed that it was important to communicate with staff about behavioural expectations and to provide information about what resources were available to them for dealing with personal issues. Regular messaging is necessary since turnover is frequent in Hill offices. Her philosophy: "Let's not do it just once and assume." Central research offices are well-placed to provide leadership in improving the political staff work environment and should be commended for doing so.

Conclusion

This paper has provided an exploratory account of the work of parliamentary caucus research offices and has found that, while these offices are integral to their parties' parliamentary work, they have diverged significantly from their initial conception as a research resource for Members of Parliament. Three key points emerge.

First, research offices have become agents of party centralization. While initially opposition leaders pledged to use research funding for the benefit of all MPs, now leaders closely control their offices and deploy resources in order to further central strategic priorities. Second, research offices have increasingly become more about political communications advantage than about technical, expert policy analysis. They are key instruments for party leaders to develop and market their core messages, first internally to MPs and then to voters, and this includes generating stories in order to wrong foot opponents and helping to defend their own party against attacks.

Third, the truth of Pierre Trudeau's original diagnosis—that opposition leaders require additional support—has become more apparent over time with the growth of government and the expectation that political leaders

will respond in real time with detailed positions on all issues. Lacking other resources, opposition parties rely on their caucus research offices for a much wider range of services than do government parties, for whom the research office is a small but strategic supplement to the professional support of the public service and 500 plus ministerial exempt staffers. Cutting research office funding would significantly disadvantage opposition parties given the public resources expended on political staff in ministerial offices, including PMO. Caucus research offices are, therefore, as Trudeau originally judged, a necessary measure to reduce the discrepancy and bolster the opposition's ability to play their legitimate parliamentary role.

While this paper has provided a preliminary overview of the work of research offices, more detailed attention is warranted. For example, further exploration into research offices could elucidate their relationship with ministerial offices and with political parties, including headquarters and election war rooms, in order to hone scholarly understanding of governance and campaigning. Better insight into how research offices, representing the leader, work with party caucuses could inform theories of discipline and cohesion within the legislature. Little is known about the composition of research office staff, or, indeed, of the broader parliamentary political staff community of which they are a subset. What, for example, is the career pattern for caucus research bureau personnel, including their connection with election campaigns, MP offices, ministerial offices, the public service and work as lobbyists over time? Are today's opposition party researchers tomorrow's senior staffers in a new PMO and, if so, does this have implications for eventual relations with public servants? Just as recent scholarship on ministerial staff has revealed the complexity and importance of their role, so further research into the parliamentary staff community, including research offices, is justified and overdue.

Notes

- 1 In early 2020, the name of the office changed from Conservative Resource Group to Conservative Caucus Services. Along with the leader's office it continues to function as part of a single Office of the Leader of the Opposition (Ryckewaert 2020).
- 2 McCarthy had also mentioned these same examples to Brooke Jeffrey (2010).

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The promise and limitations of participatory budgeting

Once heralded a “new terrain” for the assembly of a “participatory public” (Avritzer 2006; Wampler and Avritzer 2004) and a form of “revolutionary civics” (Sangha 2012), participatory budgeting has developed a strong foothold as a public engagement technique used by various levels of government, primarily at the municipal level. The term participatory budgeting typically denotes a process in which voluntary members of a constituency allocate a designated portion of a budget through a deliberative process that concludes with a final vote. The model for this process is associated with populist practices that emerged from the redemocratization of Brazil in 1985 and the election of the Partido de Trabajadores in the city of Porto Alegre in 1989. Estimates now range from 1,500 to 2,700 initiatives having taken place around the world under the banner of participatory budgeting (Flynn 2016; Sintomer et al. 2013). These initiatives commonly take place on the municipal level of government due to the advantages of subsidiarity and budgetary responsibilities held at this level of government, such as public works and social services. Across scales, scopes and settings¹, the principal claim of participatory budgeting is that public participation helps to improve the alignment of government investment with the needs of constituents.

Scholarship continues to probe the degree to which participatory budgeting “empowers” participating constituents and their ideas on how public funds should be spent, with valuable analysis being conducted on Canadian cases and by Canadian scholars. This *New Frontiers* article reviews trends in the analysis of participatory budgeting and identifies aspects that remain under-researched.

The integration of participatory budgeting into the global best practice toolkit is reason for both celebration and skepticism. Following the initial glorification of the Porto Alegre model, a more skeptical generation of scholarship has been enabled by more sophisticated analysis and an abundance of cases (Nylen 2011: 494). As part of this critical turn, Pateman (2012) calls for an increased analytical focus on structural factors in order to better identify the degree to which participatory budgeting actually democratizes formerly exclusive processes of decision-making. Aligned with this trend, Tranjan (2015) historicizes the development of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre in order to account for specific structural factors upon which its emergence and continuation largely depend. This analysis supports a deeper

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understanding of how the demand for new entry points in the democratization of government decision-making remain threatened by existing political and economic alliances (Tranjan 2015: 114). By expanding the scope of analysis to include preceding participatory experimentation in Brazilian cities, Tranjan demonstrates how participatory budgeting is in fact a moderate version of bolder ideals (Tranjan 2015: 225). Tranjan makes many valuable contributions to the literature by directly confronting prior authors with a well-informed argument that while participatory budgeting may present an aspirational model of a more democratic relationship between residents and their city, this relationship is not assured by the model itself.

The literature on Canadian cases of participatory budgeting entails a similar transition from a celebratory tone to more critical analysis. The earliest analysis of participatory budgeting in Canada was co-authored by scholars Pinnington, Schugurensky, Van Wagner and Lerner². These studies focus on front-running cases in Guelph's Neighbourhood Support Coalition and in Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) (Lerner and Van Wagner 2006; Pinnington, Lerner, and Schugurensky 2009). This cohort of participatory budgeting enthusiasts does account for specific matters of context in acknowledging the increased standard of living typically enjoyed in Canada, the linguistic and cultural diversity of Canadian cities, and the disadvantageous constitutional disposition of Canadian municipalities. These authors also explicitly discuss the constraints associated with neoliberalization and New Public Management and acknowledge the current political economic condition in which experimentation in direct democracy takes place. However, these limitations are treated as motivating challenges that can be overcome by determined agency (Lerner and Van Wagner 2006: 16; Pinnington, Lerner, and Schugurensky 2009: 467).

Subsequent Canadian analysis engages much more critically with the question of enabling factors and their capacity to serve as a meaningful corrective against hegemonic approaches to urban governance. Patsias, Lattendresse, and Bherer (2013) discuss how the restructuring of local government by the province of Quebec led to both openings and public demand for participatory budgeting experimentation in the Plateau-Borough of Montreal. Finding the openings created by this public demand to be significantly circumscribed, the authors conclude that "decentralization constitutes a necessary but not sufficient condition for participatory budgeting" (Patsias, Lattendresse, and Bherer 2013: 2223). Furthermore, Maley and Pin both foreground the prevalence of neoliberalization and New Public Management discourse, arguing that participatory forums are able to succeed only insofar as they are compatible with trends of neoliberalization and New Public Management (Maley 2010: 121; Pin 2017: 135; Pin 2016: 74). These studies reveal the consistent identification of residents as consumers of government policy rather than participants with a new level of

democratic franchise. These contributions advance understandings of how participatory budgeting initiatives, once again, should not be considered as ends in themselves.

Among Canadian scholars, Pin (2017) is unique in revealing how rather than offsetting narrow notions of expertise, “staff can use the scope of the process as a means of shutting down more creative or unusual projects” (p. 130). This finding is echoed by scholarship covering the growth of participatory budgeting within the City of New York, demonstrating the effects of “bureaucratic constraints” (Jabola-Carolus 2017) and the idea of “good projects” being enforced by “managed participation” (Su 2018). Lerner (2017) has responded to this recent scholarship acknowledging that despite the well-attended participatory budgeting bandwagon, “critical stages of deliberation, learning, and leadership development have become *increasingly inaccessible*” (p. 158, emphasis added). These findings encourage continued analysis of the difference between the level of resident involvement currently made available and that which is necessary to actually empower the resident perspective on necessary government spending.

Understanding the paradox between more inclusive processes and prevailing forms of exclusion is aided by conceptual frameworks such as Miller et al.’s (2017) Modes of Participation. Combining measures provided by Arnstein 1969 and Fung 2006, this framework focuses on the specific dimensions of i) participant selection, ii) quality of communication, iii) processes of decision-making, and iv) ultimate authority over the implementation of decisions. Organized as such, analysis can reveal that even when typically excluded groups are involved in an open dialogue, more consequential stages of the budgeting process are often isolated from participatory intervention. The continued application of such frameworks, when accompanied by explanatory theories of prevailing limitations to involvement and the consequences for decisions, will render revelatory results.

Given the promising avenues reviewed above, research on participation should continue to focus on the mechanics of public administration with respect to participatory budgeting. I argue that there ought to be three priority areas for research: (i) the pivotal factor of staff conduct, (ii) the participatory construction of knowledge and learning, and (iii) the analysis of systemic limitations to richer forms of collaboration.

First, the role of staff surprisingly remains under researched. This despite their official role in any dialogue over public infrastructure and occasional recognition of staff influence in Brazil (Baiocchi 2005; Nylen 2003). Aside from Pin, Su, and Jabola-Carolus, staff are often mentioned as significant but are not situated as the focus of analysis (Maley 2010: 121; Patsias, Lattendresse, and Bherer 2013: 2218). Pinnington, Lerner, and Schugurensky (2009) discuss the role played by staff but focus on the agency of a specific staff person rather than the pivotal nature of their institutional position (p. 477). Along

with the renegotiated role for residents, the role of staff is also implicated in the transition from representative to participatory forms of democracy. Staff can indeed be invaluable allies helping to increase civic literacy and preventing processes from becoming additional assets for already privileged communities. Studies have found that staff support helps to unlock resources and produce implementable projects (Koontz and Newig 2014).

Second, with the proposals and decisions from participants needing to adhere to technical requirements of the designated funds, the lay knowledge of participants is put in dialogue with a panoply of protocols and policies masterfully known by expert staff. In-depth explorations of the encounters of common residents and expert staff will help to better understand if participatory budgeting can support new forms of knowledge production and learning. Lerner (2010) directly discusses the importance of mutual learning between participants and staff, however, empirical research has focused much more on participants learning to be “better citizens” (Foroughi 2013; Pinnington and Schugurensky 2010)³. This narrow focus is being called into question by emerging critical scholars such as Koga, who asks “what kind of citizenship learning can occur and what can be missed?” (Koga 2013: 3). Doctoral research by the present author investigates how the design, implementation, and evaluation of the 2015-2017 participatory budgeting pilot project in Toronto ironically discounts the experiential knowledge of participants.

Finally, it is crucial to account for MacCallum’s (2016) insight that prevailing limitations are not the result of meddling bureaucrats but rather the privileging of certain views over others in the ostensible “Age of Participation” (p. 165). Analysis of how authoritative views of the “public interest” serve to inhibit the inclusive nature of participatory initiatives can reveal the actual practice beneath the rhetoric. In the Canadian context, this draws attention to the embedded narratives of New Public Management and the limited ability of municipalities to engage with residents in a more collaborative fashion. By analyzing how the exclusion of new ideas prevails in nominally participatory processes, future research can reveal the conservative nature of some of these processes and also explore the case for other forms of direct engagement otherwise viewed as unnecessarily agonistic or contentious.

Participatory budgeting fosters a meeting between the experiential knowledge of residents with the technical knowledge of city staff, which can ideally create the basis for innovative and well-planned collaborations. With participatory budgeting being discontinued in the oft cited original setting of Porto Alegre and emerging as a mainstream practice in new settings such as New York City, research and analysis remains relevant in order to understand what participatory budgeting now stands for and the feasibility of future elaborations. This research and analysis is especially important in a post-Covid-19 world as negotiations over infrastructure, essential services,

and government spending advance towards diverse visions of a new and desirable normal.

Notes

- 1 While these initiatives commonly take place in specific wards or city-wide processes under the purview of municipal government, they have also taken place in schools, community housing corporations, and state-level governments. Some initiatives have allocated portions of the operating budget for government programs and social services, but many are limited to capital funding for one-time expenditures meant to address shortcomings in physical infrastructure.
- 2 Lerner (2004) also wrote a report on how participatory budgeting could work in Toronto as his MSc. Planning Thesis in for the Community Engagement Unit, for the City of Toronto. Lerner is also the founder and co-Executive Director of the Participatory Budgeting Project a non-profit organization that provides technical support and education on participatory budgeting with branches in New York and Oakland.
- 3 While learning outcomes are certainly of importance in developing more informed and formidable approaches to participatory decision-making, their prioritization can compromise the goals of open dialogue, inclusion of typically excluded groups, and resident-led decision-making drawing on experiential knowledge. This prevailing centralization of knowledge can certainly reinforce "internalizations of hierarchical decision-making," which is a recognized limitation to robust participation (Pinnington, Lerner, and Schugurensky 2009: 478).

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Teaching public administration in the COVID-19 era: Preliminary lessons learned

Introduction

In *Why Nations Fail*, Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) explain that the Black Plague represented both a calamity for humanity and an opportunity to reinvent itself. Without the Black Plague, they argue, the Renaissance would not have occurred until several centuries later. In March, universities in Canada faced an unexpected and unprecedented upheaval, suddenly having to transpose their teaching from the classroom to the virtual world. The schools of public administration and public policy certainly could not avoid this significant disruption.

Universities initially thought this disruption would be temporary and end with the spring semester. However, in the spring almost all universities in Canada extended online education to the spring and fall semesters of 2020, with some programs even confirming that the entire academic year 2020-2021 would be online. This raises the question: does COVID-19 represent the black plague of university education? More specifically, have the measures of isolation, containment and social distancing to combat the spread of COVID-19 led university education, particularly in public administration, to a profound redefinition of its mission and ways of doing things?

To answer this question in part, the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA) held a virtual workshop on 2 June 2020 aimed at providing an opportunity for academics and practitioners in public policy and public administration to discuss the meaning of the sudden changes and the implications for teaching within our discipline. We wanted to find out whether we are witnessing a passing phenomenon or an unfolding transformation.

The virtual workshop was divided into three themes delivered by twelve presenters: experiencing the sudden shift from classroom to online teaching; debunking some of the myths about online teaching; and, presenting innovative techniques in online teaching. The objective was not to promote e-learning but to provide conceptual and technical input to those required to

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offer (and take) courses online, primarily in the fall of 2020. It is not our intention to synthesize the presentations here, but instead draw essential lessons about what it means to teach online in the field of public administration during COVID-19. These lessons can be grouped into two three categories: teaching approaches; moving online; and, access to resources.

Teaching approaches

In terms of lessons on the most salient teaching approaches, it is important to distinguish between andragogical and pedagogical principles. Indeed, models of pedagogy abound in the world of online education that focus mainly on teaching methods. However, pedagogical models do not reflect the realities of university teaching in public administration, where adults are the primary beneficiaries. It is critical to create a learning environment that promotes self-learning rather than directed learning and that is based on the experience of the learner and not simply that of the academic.

Adopting an andragogical style involves building a course that is based on adult learning engagement. Courses have to be designed that focus not on material to convey, but rather that are aimed at problem-solving using real-world practical examples and cases. Emphasis is placed on ensuring an appropriate balance between inductive and deductive reasoning to ensure momentum is maintained using synchronous and asynchronous approaches and tools.

Moving online: thinking differently

The sudden shift from classroom teaching to online teaching naturally led us to ask a fundamental question: how can we move our in-class courses online? This is the wrong way of thinking about the task ahead, as is the idea as to what can be done with this or that technology. Two essential elements must guide online course design: the objectives you want to achieve and the skills you want to develop. It is also essential to consider how students learn. At a minimum, one must recognize that in-class strategies aimed at encouraging rapid-fire spontaneous exercises and discussion are not easily replicated online where more reflexive discussion works better. In addition, the role of the instructor in-class is often facilitator-based to online moderator-based roles. In essence, the entire format of teaching has to be re-thought with appropriate andragogical approaches considered. Most importantly, working in the online space requires detailed planning of each session.

Courses must, therefore, be structured around these essential ideas, while at the same time ensuring that they fit appropriately into the program to which they belong. In this respect, nine rules can be identified from the interventions made during the virtual workshop:

- Know your audience
- Know the course objectives that meet expected learning outcomes
- Know the timeline you are working with (i.e., length of sessions)
- Know your role in the learning environment
- Know the student's role in the learning environment
- Know your strategy for engaging students to maintain momentum
- Know what tools are available and link them to the course objectives and learning styles of the students
- Know which tools work with your learning outcomes

These rules can be summarized: make clear choices; know why you approach a learning outcome in a certain way; and, understand the sequence of activities according to the course objectives and the competencies to be developed. This means that academics must experiment with the structure of their courses, the sequence of activities, and the technologies at their disposal. Through these experiences, one can gain knowledge as to how to set up an online course, gain some wisdom in the area, and gain a genuine understanding of how to effectively combine course objectives, student learning styles, and teaching technologies.

Through these experiences, instructors can expand their repertoire of andragogical approaches, develop emotional intelligence, and increase one's toolbox for working with students online. However, academics' experimentation must be accompanied by flexibility on the part of students and university administration, all of whom must be open-minded. Indeed, experimentation means from the outset that nothing will be perfect and that instructors will make mistakes. They must be given the permission to make less than effective decisions, and they must also accept that they will make mistakes.

Flexibility also means rethinking the concept of time in the constitution of an online course. In a course that is offered both synchronously and asynchronously (or entirely asynchronously), time is no longer defined in the way that an in-class course is offered. Time has to be rethought in course design, especially the synchronous elements. For example, one can plan an online course over several days, week or month(s).

Experimenting suggests testing different types of pedagogies, tools and technologies and ways of doing things to make sense of them in personal teaching practice. Academics can adopt materials that engage learners and ensure that these materials enable them to achieve their learning objectives. Therefore, they can adapt their material to an increasingly asynchronous course design (something that many are not used to), which then provides opportunities for learners to develop their own learning plans.

Experimenting makes it possible to rethink approaches to learning, which also involves turning to resources that are often forgotten. First, there is an

opportunity to engage practitioners from anywhere in the country. Indeed, it is easy to understand that in the context of a three-hour course that is offered every week in a morning or afternoon classroom for twelve to fifteen weeks, it becomes difficult to involve public administration practitioners (who typically perform their primary functions at these hours and in their offices). However, e-learning breaks down these physical and temporal barriers. It allows practitioners to be involved in the training of students in public administration through the use of various technologies and, above all, through an asynchronous structure in which the time of the course is no longer defined in the same way. One can create recorded interviews or vignettes that can enlighten specific course topics. It is also possible to engage practitioners synchronously through an online discussion.

Also noteworthy is the use of resources such as Twitter, and podcast news sites, which are often overlooked or perceived as ineffective learning tools. These tools can be an integral part of online teaching. Since we need to train public servants of today and tomorrow, we would benefit from integrating these tools into our learning methods to teach them how to use them responsibly and effectively.

Access to resources

Several presenters and participants pointed out how helpless they felt mid-way through the winter term of 2020 when they suddenly had to occupy a virtual space to teach. It was a time when each of us lost our bearings and searched for help and resources. But the discussion held during the workshop brought light to that. Much of this help and resources are already available in our universities and schools of public administration. However, it is not only the responsibility of those who teach to go out and look for the available resources. University administrations must also support those involved in teaching that their programs have the resources needed to make the transition to the online space. In this regard, several universities have developed banks of resources, support and training programs for academics to assist them.

However, one of our disciplines' peculiarities is that these resources can also be found outside our universities (i.e., help from colleagues, practitioners, tools available on the web). Many presenters indicated that colleagues should not hesitate to call on others working in their field of expertise as well as public administration practitioners. The sharing of ideas and experience can become a real goldmine, and university administrations have an opportunity to support academics in this transition. Simultaneously, academics should not hesitate to bring their needs to the attention of university administrations so that help can be provided to find the necessary resources.

Concluding thoughts

All the lessons we learned from the virtual workshop can be boiled down to a few key ideas: be dynamic, inclusive, less teacher-centred; be more empathetic to the needs of learners; be less controlling in ways that align with andragogical approaches; be open to experimenting with new learning tools; and, be ready to actively engage practitioners in student learning. Ultimately, we are training the public servants of today, and, especially, of tomorrow. Therefore, we have a responsibility to ensure that learners have the tools, skills, and critical thinking necessary to face the world ahead of them.

As indicated in our introduction, the events of this winter have led us to postulate whether the measures of isolation, containment and social distancing to combat the spread of COVID-19 have led university teaching, particularly in public administration, to a redefinition of its mission and ways of doing things. Our workshop suggests that a phenomenon of this magnitude is indeed underway and, more importantly, our discussions allowed us to define its preliminary forms through a series of lessons learned. It is too early to predict that “nothing will ever be the same again” or to answer our research question entirely and definitively. We are continuing our observations and intend to hold more workshops in the near future to understand better this new phenomenon that is before us, and how we cope with the effects of this new reality on our programs and the learning outcomes for our students.

Note

1 The URL for workshop videos is: <https://athenap.enap.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=2815> (access code: COVID-19).

Annex: Program / Programme¹

“Teaching Public Policy and Public Administration in Times of COVID-19”
/ Enseigner les politiques publiques et l’administration publique à l’époque de COVID-19

Roundtable: And a minute later, we were all online: how we experienced the passage from in-class to online teaching / Table ronde : Et puis une minute plus tard, nous étions toutes et tous en ligne : l’expérience du passage soudain de l’enseignement en classe, à l’enseignement en ligne

- *Kathy Brock* (Queen’s University); *Isabelle Caron* (Dalhousie University); *Naomi C. Couto* (York University); *Ian Roberge* (Glendon College, York University)

Panel: Deconstructing the Myths / Panel : Déconstruisons les mythes

- Why Online Teaching is Superior to Classroom Teaching (or Why it Will Change How You Teach Face-to-Face) / Pourquoi l'enseignement en ligne est supérieur à l'enseignement en classe (ou pourquoi cela changera votre façon d'enseigner en face à face) – *Evert Lindquist* (University of Victoria)
- Stop talking and start teaching! Beyond the voice-over PowerPoint deck / Arrêtez de parler et commencez à enseigner ! Au-delà de l'enregistrement de la voix dans PowerPoint – *Peter Constantinou* (York University)

Panel: Teaching Public Policy and Public Administration Case Studies Remotely and Online / Panel : Enseigner les études de cas en politique publique et en administration publique à distance et en ligne

- Lessons from bridging theory and practice in the development of an online public administration degree / Leçons tirées de la rencontre de la théorie et la pratique dans la conception d'un programme en ligne en administration publiques – *Martin Boucher* (University of Saskatchewan)
- Moving online: Maintaining Quality with Live Classes / Passer en ligne: maintenir la qualité de l'enseignement avec des cours en direct – *Kathy Brock* (Queen's University)
- Teaching Cases Online: Shifting One's Mental Model / Enseigner avec des cas en ligne: changer ses schèmes mentaux – *Robert Shepherd* (Carleton University)
- Teaching Public Policy and Public Administration Case Studies Remotely and Online / Enseigner les politiques publiques et l'administration publique à distance et en ligne – *James C. Simeon* (York University)

Panel: Innovative Practices / Panel: Des pratiques novatrices

- The Web Safari: Connecting Theory to Practice Through Student-Led Discovery of Contemporary Material / Le web safari : lier la théorie à la pratique par la découverte de matériaux contemporains par les élèves – *Justin Longo* (University of Regina)
- Creating a podcast for students / Créer des balladodiffusions pour les étudiantes et étudiants – *Jean-Francois Savard* (Ecole national d'administration publique)

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