

# **Modeling Canadian Federal Electoral Reforms**

**by**  
**Eric Koch**

B.A. (Political Science), Simon Fraser University, 2009

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

in the  
Department of Political Science  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Eric Koch  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
Spring 2017

Copyright in this work rests with the author. Please ensure that any reproduction or re-use is done in accordance with the relevant national copyright legislation.

# APPROVAL

**Name:** Eric Koch  
**Degree:** Master of Arts (Political Science)  
**Title of Project:** *Modeling Canadian Federal Electoral Reforms*

**Examining Committee:** **Chair:** Genevieve Fuji Johnson, Professor

---

**David Laycock**  
Senior Supervisor  
Professor

---

**Rémi Léger**  
Supervisor  
Assistant Professor

---

**Andrew Heard**  
Internal Examiner  
Professor

**Date Defended/Approved:** April 10, 2017

## ABSTRACT

This research project is focused on developing an exploratory model that can help explain the factors that affect the political desire for electoral reform. The model, premised on institutional and rational actor theories, develops a set of “endogenous” and “exogenous” factors that allow for evaluation of electoral reform discourse. While some attention is paid to the major reforms that the electoral system has undergone since Confederation, detailed analysis is reserved to the post-1980 period. Data was collected from party manifestos and Speeches from the Throne. Because the federal government has not made any structural changes to its electoral system, provincial and international electoral reforms are considered for the potential influence by “contagion”. Institutional barriers to reform are also factored into the model. Lastly, the model introduces the element of developing web-based technologies such as social media that are changing how the electorate is exerting its influence on the federal parties. From 1980 to 2015, what factors and influences, both endogenous and exogenous to Canada’s national political framework, have affected parliamentary debates on electoral reform?

*Keywords:* Canada; elections; electoral reform; federal parliament; first-past-the-post; proportional representation; social media; voting

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL .....	ii
ABSTRACT .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	3
OVERVIEW OF METHODS AND DATA.....	5
INTRODUCTION TO ELECTORAL REFORM: .....	10
TYPES OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS.....	17
ELECTORAL REFORM IN CANADIAN FEDERAL POLITICS.....	20
1980 – PRESENT: MODELING ELECTORAL REFORM IN CANADA .....	24
THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORM: .....	54
EVALUATION OF EXPLORATORY MODEL FIT WITH POST-1980 CANADIAN EXPERIENCE.....	62
FORECASTING KEY FUTURE INFLUENCES ON MAJOR ELECTORAL REFORM ..	65
REFERENCES .....	67

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1 - Model of Electoral Reform Influences.....	31
Figure 2 - Correlation and Relationships of Reform Influences.....	32
Figure 3 - Reform Influences of the 34th Parliament .....	37
Figure 4 - Reform Influences of the 39th Parliament .....	47
Figure 5 - Reform Influences of the 42nd Parliament .....	53

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1 - Links Between Keywords and Electoral Reform Influences.....	7
Table 2 - Keyword Frequency in Party Platforms, 1988.....	33
Table 3 - Keyword Frequency in Party Platforms, 2006.....	42
Table 4 - Keyword Frequency in Party Platforms, 2015.....	49
Table 5 - Influences Compared Across Parliaments.....	52

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- First-Past-The-Post – FPTP
- Proportional Representation – PR
- Alternative Vote – AV
- PC – Progressive Conservative
- NDP – New Democratic Party
- BQ – Bloc Québécois

## INTRODUCTION

Since Confederation, all federal elections have been conducted using a type of plurality electoral system called first-past-the-post (FPTP). While this electoral system has proven to be a longstanding feature of democratic politics in Canada, critics of the system accuse FPTP of failing to accurately translate voting preferences. These so-called failings inevitably stem from the large swings in representation within the House of Commons that parties experience from relatively small changes in popular support. As the number of parties running for office expands, so does the potential for lopsided election results and even occasional “wrong-winner” scenarios. Wrong-winner cases occur when the winning party receives less popular vote than one of the losing parties. This happens primarily when electoral boundaries affect one party such that their distribution of votes is highly concentrated. In the literature, the exaggerative effect of FPTP has been called “manufactured majority” or “disproportionality of seats” (Gallagher & Mitchell, 2005; Lijphart, 1994; Norris, 1997).

In Canada, pressures have begun to mount on FPTP, with an increasing number of federal political parties calling for electoral reform. For example, whereas in 1980 no formal call for electoral reform was made by any of the three parties competing for seats in Parliament, 2015 had five parties vying for seats, three of which openly called for electoral reform.

While electoral reform has been studied in a myriad of ways – comparative, quantitative and qualitative – this paper mainly draws inspiration from Alan Renwick’s *The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy* (2010). In his study, Renwick contends that there is value in developing “comparative generalizations” about the nature of reforms, which allows for further study of relations between power, interests, values and outcomes within the context of electoral reform. In line with Renwick, I believe that there is potential to expand our understanding of how Canada has approached and is approaching electoral reform by developing a model of

influential factors and comparing their relative influence upon the desired outcome: electoral reform.

In this project, I propose to develop a model to categorize and better understand the spectrum of conditions that affect the political desire for electoral reform in Canada. I will begin with a brief overview of the federal electoral system in Canada, a comparison of majoritarian, proportional representation and mixed systems, followed by a discussion of the relevant comparative literature on factors that affect the adoption of electoral reform. This literature provides a theoretical basis for the model I develop to enhance our understanding of Canadian federal electoral reform. Using my model to analyze specific parliaments that have begun the electoral reform process, I have identified three cases between 1980 and 2015. The basis for selecting these cases for study was substantive variation within party platforms. This was driven by a systematic evaluation of each platform document, which involved parsing for keywords to ascertain periods of piqued interest in electoral reforms. When it was shown that there was both significant party-level interest in electoral reform (multiple parties supporting reform) as well as a specific reform proposal, I examined the case to develop an understanding of influential factors surrounding the reform initiative. My analysis concludes by evaluating the explanatory relevance of the identified influential factors within my exploratory model.

Electoral reform was a prominent issue for the governing party during the 42nd election campaign and indeed, the Liberal Party committed to revising the electoral system if elected. Over the course of the past year, an electoral reform process was formally implemented and rather suddenly terminated. On February 1 2017, the Prime Minister put an end to the electoral reform process. Due to the unprecedented nature of this case, I will also analyze the work of the committee established by the federal government (ERRE committee) to investigate and make recommendations on electoral reform. This analysis will consider the committee's published documents and its members' viewpoints. This most recent example of electoral reform will provide us with a contemporary case for evaluating the merit of the proposed model.

Finally, I propose a forward-looking discussion of an understudied element in the political environment that could impact electoral reform: the evolving role of media in politics, with a specific eye on social media and new information technologies.

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

I will be analyzing the existing theoretical literature on electoral reform, as well as evaluating how the Canadian experience relates to these existing theories. Seminal studies such as Duverger's (1954) analysis of plurality systems and Lijphart's (1994) analysis of performance vs. system have inspired research such that we can now evaluate and compare how various electoral systems perform in key areas such as minority/gender representation (Bernaur, Giger, & Rosset, 2013), strategic voting (Cox, 1997) and participation (Blais & Carty, 1990).

Specifically, my project seeks to:

- 1- Determine when electoral reform has been prominent in federal political discourse since 1980.
- 2- Identify variables that can help explain this heightened interest in electoral reforms.

To determine when political discourse around electoral reform is heightened, I will be analyzing electoral platforms and throne speeches. Although there exist many potential avenues for exploring party interest in electoral reform, the party platform has been employed consistently throughout the modern electoral timeframe, and its purpose is to convey party preferences for action. This is to say that if a party desires to explore electoral reform, this information should be reflected within their platform documentation. In the case of a governing party, the throne speech is a secondary opportunity for a party to communicate intent. In view of the fact that we are currently experiencing heightened interest towards federal electoral reform, I will examine the work of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform, established under the 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament of Canada. The reports and viewpoints put forward by the individual members should afford us some noteworthy insights into the rationale and policy currently espoused by Canada's major federal

parties. I will use these sources to establish which influences are present during the cases, and further categorize them as either endogenous or exogenous. This breakdown builds upon Renwick's (2010) endogenous/exogenous analysis by considering Lijphart's (1994) minor/major reform threshold as well. This model should provide a reasonable predictive basis from which we can estimate future instances of heightened interest in electoral reform.

## OVERVIEW OF METHODS AND DATA

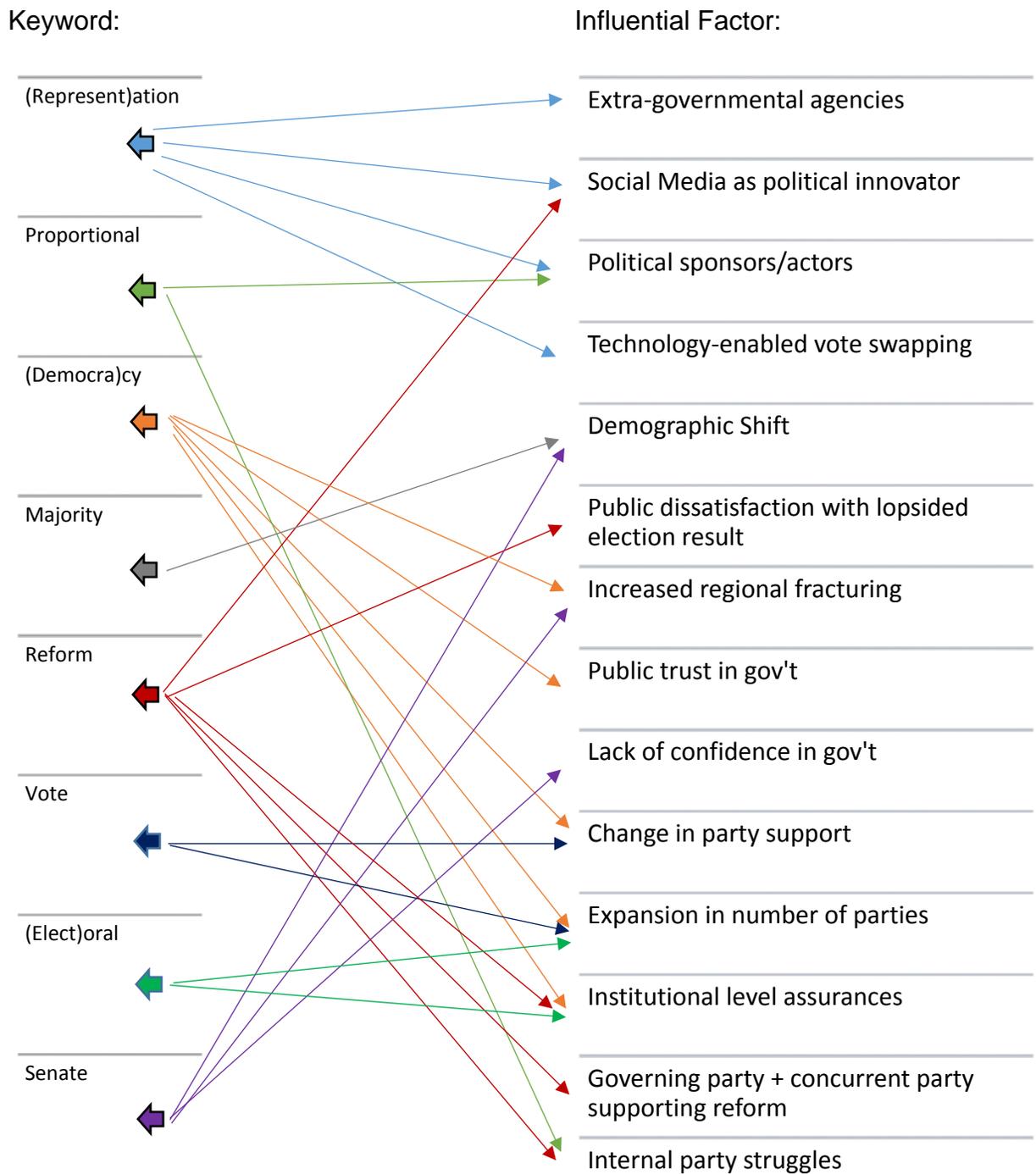
This project will analyze the key theories surrounding electoral reform and the key conditioning factors that have been identified therein. As Canada has only employed FPTP, I will be considering electoral reform analyses from relevant peer-level cases such as New Zealand, to expand our understanding of theoretical fit with the Canadian model. To evaluate how Canada fits within the scope of established theories on electoral reform, I will be predominantly evaluating primary documents made available through the Université Laval's archival site, [www.poltext.org](http://www.poltext.org). This archival resource preserves digitized copies of primary documents from federal political parties (and Québec political parties). Included are party platforms and speeches from the throne. I have read each platform and parsed them for keywords. While examining electoral reform literature, a number of terms were consistently repeated in the discourse. For example, consider the frequency for the following terms amongst the texts of (Bol, 2016; Lijphart, 1994; Norris, 2011 and Renwick, 2010):

- Electoral: 2021 instances
- Reform: 1194 instances
- Senate: 42 instances
- Majority: 552 instances
- Proportional: 463 instances
- Representation: 267 instances
- Vote: 836 instances
- Democracy: 1506 instances

The frequency of these terms in the discourse surrounding electoral reform inspired me to parse the primary documents – in this case, party platforms and throne speeches - to determine when this same reform language was being employed. Furthermore, the literature introduced correlative links between terms and the circumstances under which they occur. For example, the

term “reform” featured often during discussion of citizen dissatisfaction with perceived poor results from FPTP, while the term “electoral” was often witnessed surrounding discussion of party expansion. This led to developing a set of influential factors, which I used to then organize as the categories in my exploratory model. The relationship between the terms and the influences is demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1 - Links Between Keywords and Electoral Reform Influences



The decision to analyze party platforms for evidence of party intention was derived on the basis of two factors. The first was the attention that Michael Gallagher and Paul Mitchell paid to party platforms in their analysis, *The Politics of Electoral Systems* (Gallagher & Mitchell, 2005). The second was the universal capacity to compare party platforms across election years as well as party spectrum. To bridge the gap between policy intentions on electoral reform, which the platforms provide, and the delivery of policy outcomes over the course of a parliamentary session I applied this analysis method to the speeches from the throne as well. Like party platforms, speeches from the throne occur with systematic regularity and universality between parties. Furthermore, analysis of the speeches from the throne for the existence of reform keywords allowed my analysis to separate instances where parties merely suggested electoral reform, from those in which the parliament sought action on electoral reform.

I have also examined relevant literature surrounding the recent debate over electoral reform. Documents such as the Special Committee on Electoral Reform Final Report as well as surveys and commentaries published by members of this group will guide my analysis of this latest proposed federal electoral reform. Because these documents were discussing the implementation of electoral reform, there was no need to parse them for keywords. In this instance, I was able to scrutinize the suggested policies for coherence with their party platform intentions. This allowed for further testing of model fit, as well as expanding parliamentary analysis beyond the speeches from the throne in a very young parliament.

Finally, I will review literature on the role of digital technologies as a mobilizing agent for electoral reform, to consider the potential impact of social media on existing theories of electoral reform, in particular the role of citizen engagement. Because politics inherently relies upon mechanisms for information exchange and the dissemination of power between governed and government, I am interested in examining how notable advances in social media are impacting political discourse and citizen engagement in electoral reform. Some of these technologies, such as hacking and electronic forums, are not exclusively political by nature, but have broad

implications in the political sphere. Due to the unpredictable and often immeasurable influence of such technologies as hacking, the discussion is largely prospective.

# INTRODUCTION TO ELECTORAL REFORM:

## A LITERATURE REVIEW

Electoral systems represent an interesting paradox within political science. On the one hand, they form the institutional framework by which parties must seek office, hence they affect the structure and behaviors of the parties and their actors. On the other hand, elected governments are in a sense byproducts of the electoral system that produced them – which would seemingly discourage a rational actor from seeking their overhaul. Herein there begins to form a paradox, by which democratic institutions would seem to be inherently resistant towards a change in the formula that produced them (Blau, 2008). Some authors have noted that although traditional forms of electoral participation show downward trends, there have been concurrent upswings in the rates of involvement of nontraditional democratic participation such as petitions, citizen interest groups and non-government organizations (Cain, Dalton, & Scarrow, 2003). This could explain some of the populist interest in adopting direct democratic practices into the existing electoral frameworks rather than reforming the representative electoral system.

Political scientists have dedicated considerable attention to the role of electoral systems in producing stable, functional governments. The overarching premise is that electoral systems can be studied, refined and reformed to best suit the needs of the voting populace. As Lijphart (1994) notes, for the overwhelming majority of cases, mere size and scope of the national level necessitates representative rather than direct democracy. In Canada, representative democracy has been nearly universally equated with FPTP. To better understand why an increasing chorus of calls have come forward to modify FPTP in Canada, I propose a brief overview of the federal electoral system.

Canada belongs to a shrinking, though notable, group of democracies with longstanding affinity for FPTP. Alongside the U.K. – with whom Canada shares founding principles in its Westminster Parliamentary roots – and the United States, with whom proximity and shared

influences abound as well, Canada has stood resiliently with its majoritarian origins since Confederation. Even still, this is not to say that Canada has not been subjected to significant reforms to its electoral process. As we delve into the intricacies within any national electoral framework, we find a great number of evolutionary moments, and some revolutionary opportunities as well.

In his review of Canadian electoral system reforms, John Courtney notes there have been at least five key modifications to the federal electoral system since Confederation. These include such areas as modifying the franchise, establishing an independent electoral office, nonpartisan constituency redesign, financing limitations on parties and elections and the establishment of an electronic database of electors. As Courtney notes, the enlargement of the franchise expanded the electorate from 15 percent of the Canadian population in 1867 to around 70 percent as of present (Courtney, 2012). Similarly, in my study, I understand the proposed implementation of an elected Senate into Canada's electoral process as an electoral reform. This is supported by Louis Massicotte's analysis, which denotes the striking imbalance of Canada's Upper Chamber. Whereas at the time, New Brunswick was represented in the Senate by 10 senators for its population of 729 000, British Columbia found itself significantly under-represented with 6 senators and a population of 3.9 million (Massicotte, 2005). Massicotte addresses the implicit reality that the Senate, in fact, possesses significant veto capacity over the House of Commons, but has largely neglected its use due to the perception of illegitimacy that the appointed nature brings.

An elected and representative Senate could dramatically alter the electoral relationship and function of the two Houses of Parliament in Canada. Indeed, an empowered Senate has featured prominently in the landscape of electoral reform in Canada on a number of occasions, and its alteration has proven to be a sharp regional divide in the national fabric. Regionality has been an important and recognized aspect of the Canadian electoral system for many years (Cairns, 1968; Massicotte, 2005). The growth of regional parties and the constitutional

exasperation that resulted was an important electoral system issue throughout the period of 1980-2015. Where Cairns was one of the first to denote an important correlation between the electoral system and the parties' regionality, Massicotte's study in 2005 illustrates how the pervasiveness of this issue factored into the rise of regional partisanship through the 1990's. The necessity of strong localized support has only served to exacerbate the party-level tensions surrounding electoral system, with the expansion of parties both regional (Reform, Canadian Alliance, Bloc Québécois) and broad-based (Green, NDP). Furthermore, this has led to competing visions about participation and the potential solutions that the electoral system offers.

Political science has devoted considerable attention toward the electoral process and specifically, what constitutes reform. Lijphart's (1994) study of postwar electoral systems has paved the way for a number of interesting analyses on the subject. Lijphart proposes that electoral reforms be separated into two categories, major and minor. When reforms affect 20% or greater of the total electorate, he considers them to be major electoral reforms. If less than 20% of the electorate are impacted, he considers the reform to be minor and outside the scope of his analysis. Adopting an elected Upper Chamber would, if we accept Lijphart's threshold as a baseline, certainly qualify as a major reform to the federal electoral system.

Jacobs and Leyenaar (2011) have proposed a conceptual framework which expands upon Lijphart's focus on major reforms to incorporate similar thresholds and distinctions for minor and technical reforms to electoral systems. They contend that this gap in the existing literature is likely due to the focus that has been traditionally placed upon major electoral overhaul at the federal/national level. Jacobs and Leyenaar affirm that the definition of electoral reform be tied to legislative changes that regulate the process of voting (See: Cain, Dalton, & Scarrow, 2003). Their study identifies four principal categories of electoral reform: changes that affect the proportionality of the system, the ballot structure, electoral inclusiveness (i.e. franchise) and the election level (national, sub-national, local) (Jacobs & Leyenaar, 2011). My analysis will borrow from these two frameworks to examine three proposed electoral reforms in Canada since 1980. By this

interpretation, although Canada has remained inside a common FPTP framework with relatively little in the way of major structural reforms, there have been a number of proposed reforms that have fundamentally changed the way in which the electorate participates in elections.

Because Canada's electoral system has evolved over the course of 150 years, I have incorporated a historical overview that divides Canada's electoral framework into three eras. This begins with a review of electoral system changes between Confederation and 1917, followed by developments between 1918 and 1979, then turns to its primary focus which is the modern era of electoral reform, beginning with the 1980 Federal Election. This boundary encompasses a relatively broad 35-year period and also encompasses a novel influence upon electoral reform, the introduction of social media and networking technologies. This is important as technological developments throughout this time period have also brought about ongoing debate with regards to not only the institutions that formulate the electoral process, but the theories that form the basis for their implementation.

Pippa Norris (2011) isolated "democratic aspiration" as an important theoretical condition of successful electoral reforms. This is to say that it is insufficient to merely have a rational-actor outlook whereby parties seek to maximize their seat or vote share, but also there needs to be a willingness to improve the democratic functioning from within the electorate. This introduces the idea of necessary conditions outside of the party system and structures, or "exogenous" influences. Shugart (2008) also espouses a form of duality in the successful reform process, whereby the primary (inherent) factor is a failure of the plurality system - which he denotes as a "poor performance" election with some form of vote share/seat share misallocation. The secondary (contingent) factor he attributes to a form of perceived benefit by the governing party, such as enhancing party image by adopting a reformist outlook. Shugart thus evaluates the synchronization of electorate/government, and further builds the case for evaluating reforms on the basis of an endogenous and exogenous set of influences.

Alan Renwick also employed the endogenous/exogenous division in his 2010 study of the politics of reform (Renwick, 2010). Renwick identifies exogenous factors as “determinants of actor’s motivations”. This qualification establishes a theoretical support for exogenous influences as relatively fluid and even immeasurable forces. With regard to endogenous forces, Renwick defines these as factors engaged in the reform process itself that shape the outcome. Due in part to the fact that Canada has very high party discipline amongst advanced democracies, endogenous factors in this investigation will be closely linked with the party system as a necessary pathway to electoral system reform.

Behaviour of the parties in response to divisive issues is an important element to consider, when evaluating the role of political parties and shaping electoral reforms. Because of the immense number of variables at play in establishing an electoral system, electoral reform has the potential to become highly divisive even amongst likeminded members. While not specific to electoral reform, Marc van de Wardt analyzed parties to determine whether they de-emphasize issues over which they are divided and found that there was compelling evidence of such effect (Wardt, 2014). This is important when considering the likelihood that parties will (or will not) engage in substantial deliberation on a subject such as electoral reform, even when they are in a majority position of power.

Damien Bol (2016) offers yet another potential explanation for variation amongst parties regarding electoral system support. Bol develops a modified Downsian spatial proximity model, which suggests a spectrum along which parties self-align in their support for electoral systems. Bol finds that there is some altruism within the political parties. He notes that they do not seek merely to maximize their share of power by supporting the system that most closely benefits their immediate situation, but also that there exists some relationship between a party’s ideology and support for a given electoral model. For example, he witnessed higher levels of support for proportional representation models amongst parties that espouse more social democratic leanings - speculatively due to their ideological bias toward egalitarian distributions of power.

Regarding the implications of technology, the links between technological change and electoral reform are somewhat more implicit. When we turn to political participation literature, concepts such as social capital and democratic engagement become indicative of how we can expect the relationship between voter and voting system to evolve. To that effect, authors such as Robert Putnam have laid the groundwork for developing concepts such as “personalized politics”. This research details how modern citizens have pulled away from group social activities such as the church, union or social class. In place of such social activities (of which politics often is a part), today’s western citizenry is forming an individualized vision of their identity around such issues as ethical purchasing and personal betterment activities (Putnam, 2000).

W. Lance Bennett advances this concept of personalized politics in a number of interesting ways, by proposing that there is a link between the push for market deregulation in the modern era (particularly following the end of the Cold War) and the rise of so-called individual politics. Furthermore, he identifies the growth of public-private partnerships during this era as having a correlation with the increasingly apathetic publics and political leadership of the modern west (Bennett, 2012). Perhaps low public support for electoral reform is partly a consequence of the “lack of will to make voluntary radical changes” that Bennett deems a terminal side effect of individualized politics. Indeed, we witness such a correlation internationally, with a number of electoral reforms occurring at the tail-end of the cold war (France 1986, Italy 1993, New Zealand 1993, Japan 1994) and a subsequent absence of such instances as the 90’s progressed through the present day despite numerous proposed reforms (Renwick, 2010).

Whereas Gary Cox (1997) provides an excellent basis for understanding why citizens vote strategically in various electoral systems, one of the primary themes of traditional theory on the subject is the ability of the voter to ascertain knowledge of the contest. This is typically polling-type information that the electorate would have received from sources such as newspapers and television news. Internet technology has revolutionized the collection and distribution of this type of information, which encourages the inclusion of influencers such as social media. Social media

has many implications as to how political researchers consider citizen political engagement in democracies. As the capacity to network individuals shared concerns becomes readily available, there is evidence that citizens are moving their efforts away from electoral politics, in favour of engaging on issues directly with the assistance of the internet and social media (Koc-Michalska & Lilleker, 2016).

Each of these theories contributes a unique angle from which to approach the study of electoral reform, and yet questions remain. I incorporate elements of several of these analyses to develop a model that provides a lens for scrutinizing federal electoral reform in Canada. To better understand the range of policies and reform proposals, I will first provide an overview of the primary types of electoral systems and their relative advantages and disadvantages.

## TYPES OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

While FPTP may have shortcomings, to properly understand what Canada stands to gain and lose by adopting another electoral system we must examine the alternatives. There are four primary classes of electoral system: majoritarian (plurality, second ballot, alternative vote), semi-proportional (single transferable vote/cumulative vote), proportional (largest remainders/party average vote formula) and mixed systems (mixed member plurality) (see Pilon, 2007).

In FPTP, eligible voters cast a ballot for their preferred representative within a predetermined district. Ballots are then tallied for the district, and the representative with the highest portion of ballots received is elected to represent the district. There are, of course, numerous technical variations which can systematically alter the nature of how the plurality system functions. Nonetheless, this format has enjoyed considerable success amongst a number of stable democracies, particularly those with historical ties to Britain. Indeed, when FPTP countries have two-party dominance, majoritarian systems are virtually an accepted fact. Even still, FPTP can deliver some subtle intricacies. One of the common representation issues with majoritarian elections is exaggeration. This phenomenon, as its name would suggest, describes a disproportionate advantage in seat return that the winning party can witness when the vote distribution happens to be correctly patterned (Blau, 2004). Simply put, in a FPTP system it does not matter whether the winning candidate sees a 1% or a 10% margin of victory, therefore it can occur such that the winning party enjoys a very large share of the seats, with only a fractionally higher support threshold. This is seen as an intentional effect of plurality systems, designed to enhance the effective governing ability of the preferred party while sidelining or downplaying fringe party views (Norris, 1997).

As previously mentioned, FPTP can also deliver wrong-winner scenarios, where due to a high concentration of support rather than broad distribution of support, the winning party may receive a lower percentage of the popular vote than one of its competitors. This phenomenon is also known as a spurious majority outcome (Renwick, 2010; Shugart, 2008). Renwick identifies

wrong winner outcomes as a key factor in building party support for electoral reform in New Zealand, when it adopted MMP in place of FPTP (Renwick, 2009). Beyond spurious majorities, the issue of voter distribution under FPTP is particularly challenging for parties that lack geographic concentration of support, such as the federal Green Party in Canada. As of 2015 the Green Party holds a single seat in the Canadian lower house, with approximately 3.5% of the national vote – whereas the highly regional Bloc Québécois enjoy 10 seats of representation with 4.7% (CBC, 2017) This effectively raises a secondary effect that can present itself within plurality systems. When the number of parties running in an election expands, the likelihood of a single party obtaining a true majority in both seat share and vote share diminishes. As much as these exaggerative elements could lead one to posit that the FPTP electoral system is an ineffective representational institution, proponents embrace these effects as strengths. Unsurprisingly, as the namesake majoritarian implies governing from the majority, these electoral systems trend toward governments with unimpeded decision-making ability. More broadly speaking, this is said to produce stable governments with a clear pathway from which their electorate can hold them accountable (Blais, 2008).

Proportional Representation electoral systems (and by extension the mixed systems that incorporate elements from both majoritarian and PR) seek to legitimize the decision making of governments by focusing specifically on minimizing the variance between party support and representation. Indeed, PR and its mixed variations have become the preferred method of election for the majority of democratic countries worldwide, at 52% (Moscrop, 2016). Supporters of PR argue that the system necessarily enhances the traction of minor viewpoints that are spread throughout the electorate, such as the aforementioned Green Party of Canada scenario. Some scholars contend that PR would improve the ratio of women represented in Parliament (Howe, Johnston, & Blais, 2005) while others find no empirical evidence for such an effect (Bernaur, Giger, & Rosset, 2013). It has been empirically demonstrated, however, that PR systems can improve voter turnout. This is estimated to be an effect attributed to the fact that all votes are

captured in the final tallies of most PR systems, hence there is less perception of “wasted” votes (Blais & Carty, 1990; Milner, 2009). Abstention is problematic in ridings with very strong perceived support as well as for fringe parties under FPTP.

A final consideration, for the purposes of this comparison, is the relationship between expansion of parties and PR advocacy (Bol, 2016). As the party system expands, so too do the exaggerative effects of majoritarian systems. This is due to the splitting of the vote eroding the possibility that the winning party will capture a true majority of votes. In PR systems, small parties tend to become relatively more important to the governing balance. This is attributed to the increased need of larger parties to form governing coalitions that include minority parties. The comparative effect of incorporating these minority viewpoints by different electoral systems is known as centripetal versus centrifugal (Cox, 1990; Calvo, 2011). Centripetal forces are typically associated with PR systems, as smaller viewpoints achieve representation under fringe parties. Centrifugal effects are associated with the enveloping nature of majoritarian systems such as FPTP. Under these party conditions, fringe views can be adopted by mainstream parties and hence, brought to representation by centrist forces.

# ELECTORAL REFORM IN CANADIAN FEDERAL POLITICS

## CONFEDERATION - 1917

1867-1979 is a tremendously long stretch within which to evaluate details of a country's national level electoral system. Divided into eras, the period between 1867 and 1917 can be considered the founding era. FPTP was adopted from the founding Westminster-parliamentary style in the United Kingdom. Returning to Canada's enfranchisement process, we saw numerous developments, and a couple of reversals during this period as well. Between the 1867 adoption of the British North America Act and 1885, each province established and enforced independent franchise laws. In 1885 the governing Conservatives briefly obtained federal control over electoral laws, only to have it usurped 13 years later by the Liberals (Elections Canada, 2017). An element of variance at the federal level existed during this period that has not been seen since, due to the ability of the provinces to exert some control over the federal electoral process. Elections Canada has identified three universal conditions between the provinces during this period: being male, having reached the age of 21 and being a British subject by birth or naturalization. Insofar as property was concerned, ownership was a requirement for all electoral regions except British Columbia. Population growth by immigration was also a sizeable factor in this era, and worth considering as it relates to arguments such as Lijphart's 20 percent threshold.

Between 1867 and 1917 Canada's population more than doubled, from 3.4 million to 8.0 million (Statistics Canada, 2017). This meant that in practice, although the FPTP frameworks remained constant, restrictions were enacted to shape the electorate. For example, Chinese and Japanese immigrants were denied enfranchisement in British Columbia, and in 1901 enacted legislation which stipulated that a voter must be able to read the provincial election legislation, that was written in English (Elections Canada, 2017).

## 1917-1979 – THE MIDDLE YEARS

1917-1979 was the second era within Canada's federal electoral system. Here we witness the first of Courtney's principal electoral reforms begin to flourish, if unintentionally. The *Military Voters Act* of September 20, 1917 ushered in the start of women's suffrage by extending voting privileges to:

*Women who are British subjects and on active service for Canada (whether or not they are resident in Canada, including "Indians"), and women who are British subjects ordinarily resident in Canada, including "Indians", who are on active service for Great Britain or an ally (only until demobilization). (Statutes of Canada, 1917, c.34 )*

The effective expansion of the franchise to include military nurses led to a second law which conferred the franchise upon not only active servicewomen, but the close female relatives of service members as well, with the War-time Elections Act (Statutes of Canada, 1917, c.39; Parliament of Canada, 2017). In 1918, the franchise was further extended amongst Canada's female populace, with the passing of *An Act to confer the Electoral Franchise upon Women*:

*Women who are British subjects, 21 years of age, and otherwise meet the qualifications entitling a man to vote, are entitled to vote in a Dominion election. In effect January 1, 1919. (Statutes of Canada, 1918, c.20; Parliament of Canada, 2017)*

Another key reform occurred during this administration with the adoption of the *Dominion Elections Act* of 1920. This act enshrined a neutral party as Chief Electoral Officer of Canada as well as finally ending the property rights restrictions (for both men and women) and brought the list of electors permanently under the federal jurisdiction. These reforms meant that the number of valid votes between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> general elections jumped by an astounding 30 percent (Parliament of Canada, 2017), well above the 20 percent standard considered as the de facto "major" threshold. This has led to the assertion that the 14<sup>th</sup> general election can be considered

the first occurrence of “universal suffrage” (Massicotte, 2017) in a federal election in Canada and in essence, ushered in what we know as a familiar participation model today. The biggest reform of the electorate base yet to come was the addition of First Nations peoples to the electoral base. In 1950 voting privileges were extended to Inuit people groups, followed by Status Indians in March, 1960 (Elections Canada, 2017). Statistics Canada reports that as of 1961 there were 220,121 people of aboriginal ancestry on the Canadian census, of a total population of 18,238,000. If we adopt the Jacobs & Leyenaar (2011) adaptation of the Lijphart’s 20% model, then changes that affect less than 20% (but greater than 1%) of the electorate are “minor” reforms. By extension, changes that affect less than 1% are “technical” reforms. In this instance, we are left with a potential impact of 1.2%.

With regards to gerrymandering, which is a real concern in representative plurality systems, Canada has attempted to neutralize the partisanship of its process. In 1964 the adoption of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act – Statutes of Canada, Chapter 31 13-14* (Government of Canada, 2014) reinvigorated a sense of neutrality within the representation frameworks of FPTP. There is an inherent difficulty in mathematically capturing the percentage of possible electors that were affected by this initial reform and the subsequent iterative changes made to the formula however we can estimate that the result could be either major or minor. While it may be difficult to imagine a stable democracy redrawing its electoral boundaries such that over 20% of the population would be reporting to new polling districts, the possibility remains nonetheless.

Changes to election financing are similarly difficult to empirically determine in terms of percentage of electorate affected. As a foundational element of political effectuation however, controls and regulations that govern party and campaign spending are immensely impactful tools in ensuring that corruption is minimized in the process. In 1974, a notable revision to the Canada Elections Act saw the introduction of some key amendments that are now understood as measures of democratic consistency in modern Canadian politics. The idea that elections can be

influenced at the candidate level and the party level by infusing large sums of money was certainly well understood from even the beginnings of Confederation. The 1974 Election Act revisions were supported by all three major parties of the day, and introduced concepts such as tax-deductible political donations and an established position of Commissioner of Election Expenses whom was responsible for compliance and neutrality (Election Expenses, 2000). There were also provisions that sought to limit the influence of third-party contributors in the area of advertising, disclosure requirements for donations above \$100 and disclosure of full campaign expenses (Young, 2012).

Much like the aforementioned *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, the *Election Act* was an iterative reform initiative which continues to be in force to this day. It can at times be merely a technical reform, incorporating small changes that close funding loopholes that did not exist before (i.e. online donations vs. telephone banking). At other times, we have seen amendments to the *Election Act* that were considered sufficiently consequential to threaten minority governments with non-confidence votes. For example, in 2008-09 the governing Conservative Party of Canada tabled legislation to amend the public subsidy of political parties by reducing the per-vote subsidy that parties receive. In such cases, we can consider such reform as a minor reform to the electoral process.

## 1980 – PRESENT: MODELING ELECTORAL REFORM IN CANADA

Despite Canada's longstanding affinity with its pluralistic FPTP electoral system, since 1980 an increasing number of parties have called for electoral reform. In examining Canadian electoral reform as a set of fluid factors which exhibit ebbs-and-flow, I adapt Alan Renwick's (2010) approach in *The Politics of Electoral Reform*. Renwick separates influential factors into "exogenous" and "endogenous" categories to determine how Canada's electoral system interacts with the idea of reformation. In my model, endogenous factors are those directly associated with the party systems and their characteristics, while exogenous factors remain primarily attached to individual citizens.

### Endogenous Influences

Several 'party system characteristics' are endogenous influences in my model. In Renwick's analysis, many of the endogenous influences make an intangible contribution, such as 'leadership' and 'vision and delivery' (2010). My model differs from this, and instead examines endogenous influences as electoral reform factors that are inherent to the parties or the party system. Due to the nature of single-member representation under FPTP, the individual members are intended to capture and relate the preferences of their electorate. To this effect, endogenous influences such as "internal party struggles" capture the idea that under FPTP parties may be comprised of divergent views on a subject such as electoral reform. Ultimately, a party must decide whether to support or oppose electoral reform officially – and in many cases, adopt an official electoral system preference. One can safely assume that if a party does not endorse some aspect of electoral reform in its campaign platform, there is little chance that it will soon actively pursue reform.

In Figure 1, the "expansion in number of parties" factor reflects a core interaction between party and electorate. This interaction is tied to Duverger's law (1954), which posits that the single-member plurality system favours the two-party system. This oft-debated premise leads to the

inference that as the number of competing parties expands, so does the argument for proportional representation. This is due in part to the simple fact that as multipartism gains support, plurality systems begin to lose their pure majority, and thus some of their implied legitimacy. We propose that if this relationship holds as valid, pressure for Canada to move from plurality towards proportional forms of governance should correlate with party expansion in the post-1980 era. This factor is directly related to how parties and electoral systems function, hence the endogenous nature of influence.

The endogenous influence of “governing party + concurrent party supporting reform” is moreover an inference that under the Westminster parliamentary system it is unlikely that legislation will be passed without the support of the party in government. Thus, it is presumed that in cases where reform is sought not only by the governing party, but a secondary party as well, we can estimate a strong likelihood of reform. This corresponds with the aforementioned premise of increasing legitimacy with pure majority support. In cases where a manufactured or even spurious majority occurs, the explicit support of secondary parties will necessarily strengthen the legitimacy of a proposed electoral reform.

In Figure 1, “change in party support +/-” is intended to capture the potential effect of a party looking to maximize their political capital. In the case of very strong support, a party might determine that it was worthwhile capturing that popular support to promote a reform agenda, whereas weakening support might prompt a once-dominant party to examine conciliatory measures to attract support. Examples of both sides of the influence are demonstrated by the 1988 and 2015 elections. In 1988, the robust popular support that the Progressive Conservatives had enjoyed since assuming office in 1984 lent them the political capital they felt was required to introduce reform legislation. By comparison, the 2015 Liberal campaign was coming from a historically low level of voting support that the party received in 2011. We can establish an argument thereby that their campaign decision to support electoral reform is an example of adopting reform to reconcile support.

Finally, the endogenous influence of “institutional level assurances” in Figure 1 is designed to capture the effect of an interested party that wants to “test the waters” of reform. These are institutional frameworks whereby a party can explore reform noncommittally. In the case of New Zealand, a consultative referendum forced the hand of the governing party to address electoral reform with a second, binding referendum attached to the subsequent ballot. This effectively brought electoral reform from the shadows and into the forefront of political discourse. This result demonstrates the importance of relatively subtle endogenous institutions (Ingle, 1995).

## Exogenous Influences

Exogenous influences at the 'electorate opinion' level include feelings of "trust" and "confidence" in government. These subtly different feelings can affect how attitudes toward reform are approached by parties. For instance, when confidence in the representative capacity of a minority parliament is in question, electoral reform might garner considerable attention from the non-governing parties as a means to promoting both altruistic and self-interested gains. This can lead, depending on perception, to issues with trust. This is to say that if a party appears to be actively pursuing electoral reform purely from a self-interested point of enhancing their return, trust in that party may be weakened such that the reform itself is questioned. Due to the inherent difficulty in measuring these factors, we can turn to the influence of issues such as "public dissatisfaction with lopsided election result" and "increased regional fracturing". A "poor performance" of a FPTP election, such as the type suggested by Shugart (2008), is thought to be a critical factor in promoting reforms that encompass PR.

"Increased regional fracturing" is important specifically (although perhaps not uniquely) to the Canadian geographic and cultural reality. Due to the constitutional division of powers, tremendous geographic size and founding cultural duality, Canada is predisposed to regionally divisive politics. Beginning with Alan Cairns' seminal 1968 article (Cairns, 1968), Canadian research has shown that plurality electoral systems such as FPTP are systematically punitive to parties that lack concentrated representation. This has led to massive swings in representative support for Canadian parties that have managed to successfully leverage this effect - as Québec has demonstrated with the Progressive Conservatives in 1984, the Bloc Québécois in 1993 and the NDP in 2011.

## Institutional, Organizational and Social Influences

A number of factors determine how the public gathers knowledge of political discourse and form and express their opinions. These influences form the third level of the model. Technology has had an immeasurable impact on how citizens engage with one-another, which has consequences in the political sphere. “Technology enabled vote swapping” addresses the role that new mediums of communication and networking have played in modifying strategic voting. Whereas prior seminal research in the field such as Cox’s (1997) analysis of strategic voting in electoral systems focused moreover on the rationality of citizens choosing to vote for a candidate other than their preferred choice, the prevalence of peer-level networking through social media has enabled the savvy voter to manipulate plurality ballots to greater (potential) advantage.

“Social media as political innovator” is a relative outlier as a factor in my explanatory model in that it is so recent a phenomenon within the scope of elections affected. The role that social media performs with regards to electoral reform may be unclear from a historical outlook, however it has been a key innovator in terms of the evolving role of political engagement more broadly understood (Dalton, 2008). There is reason to believe that as the population adopts this technology en-masse, the effects of social media will become increasingly relevant to the politics of electoral reform.

“Political sponsors/actors” represent a longstanding influence on the democratic public. Groups such as political think-tanks and politically active special-interest groups represent some of the most formal lobbying efforts for promoting discourse outside of academic circles. There is some disagreement amongst scholars as to the changing role of lobby groups. For instance, Putnam demonstrates in his study of social capital that western democratic countries are eschewing the types of political engagement that political sponsors and think-tanks promote (Putnam, 2000). On the other hand, some scholars are identifying substantial increases in self-

motivated political engagement – the types of two-way discourse that increasing numbers of political sponsors and actors are adopting on services such as Twitter (Dalton, 2008).

Demographics have always had a role in the study of politics – and the influence of “demographic shift” bears this tradition into the formal model. While traditional divides such as urban vs. rural are still very much relevant, an increasing focus has begun to develop around modern demographic factors such as representation of women and minorities (Lijphart, 1994) (Norris, 1997). The idea that an electoral system can help effectuate equality is of potential importance when we consider the broad range of reasons for a citizen to endorse electoral reform.

Finally, I propose a category titled “extra-governmental agencies”. This influential factor addresses the capacity of stateless non-profit agencies who seek to disrupt the status quo by exposing political information. WikiLeaks represents the most well-known example of such an organization, however these groups can be anything from loose affiliations of like-minded individuals with anti-globalization/anti-statist agendas, to lone wolf individuals seeking to demonstrate a technical aptitude. This influence, like social media, is somewhat difficult to quantify empirically, however we can estimate (if only anecdotally) its tremendous potential for disruption.

Structurally then, we can arrange these endogenous and exogenous factors into a visual model which represents how they situate relative to one another (see Figure 1). The layers and funnel shape of the graphic represent how the influences relate situationally to the dependent variable; electoral reform. This is intended to demonstrate how spatially diverse influences at the social level can affect the precursory attitudes within the citizenry. From the citizenry, a similar influential impact can occur upon the strategic choices of parties. Many of these influential factors interact functionally with one-another to form increasingly cohesive pressure, as demonstrated in Figure 2. Finally, at the reform level, we have barriers to entry. These are the legitimizing forces that need to be addressed for a proposed reform to be accepted as legitimate by the electorate and competing parties. This list of barriers is not comprehensive, but rather it represents a number

of popular potential avenues. In Figure 2 we can see that minor reforms can sometimes be excluded from the kind of legitimacy requirements that major reforms might require. This is to suggest that while a proposed overhaul of the electoral system to PR from FPTP might require a binding referendum to satisfy the need for legitimacy amongst competing parties and their supporters, a technical change such as lowering the voting age to 16 years likely would not.

Figure 1 - Model of Electoral Reform Influences

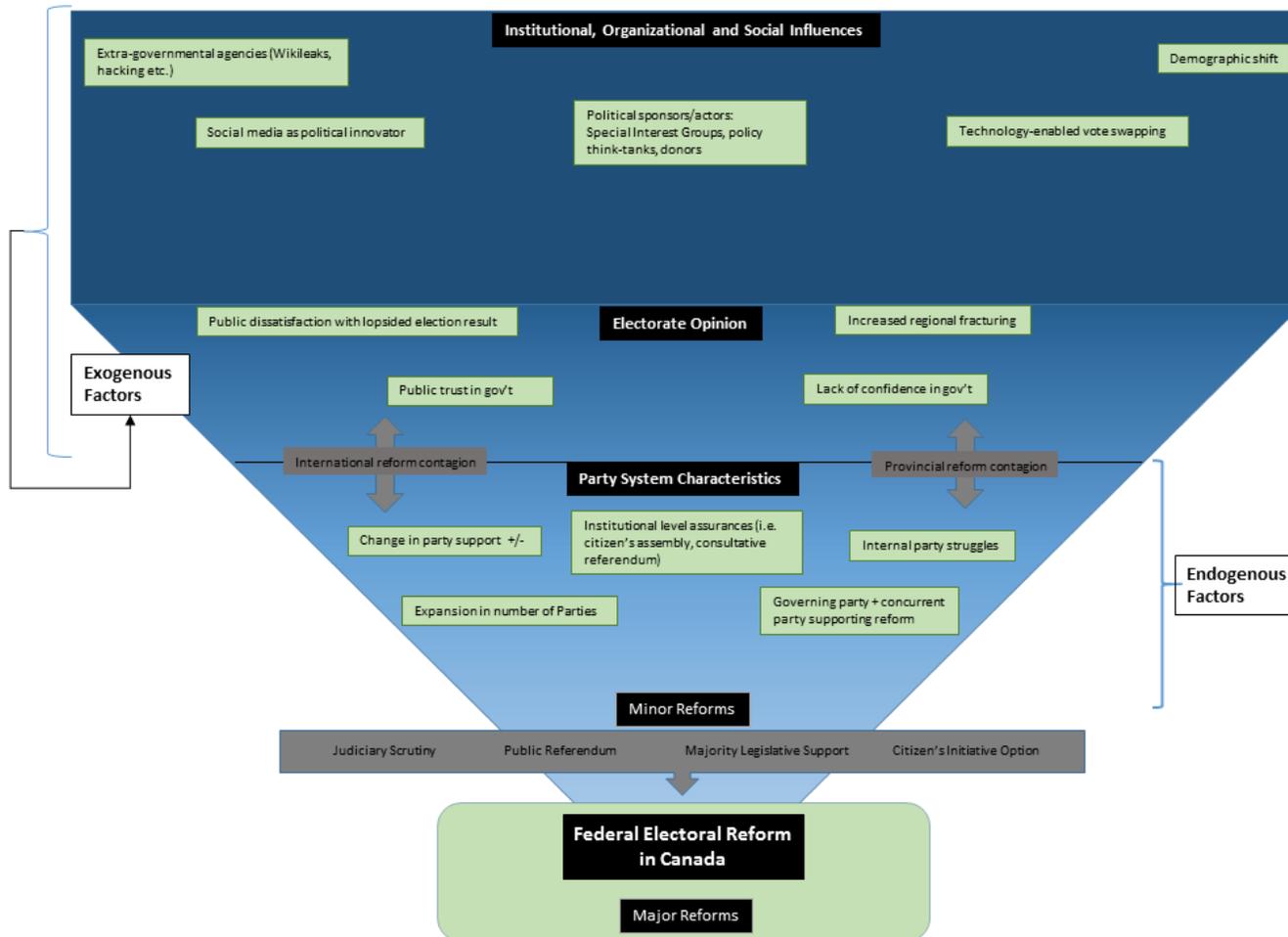
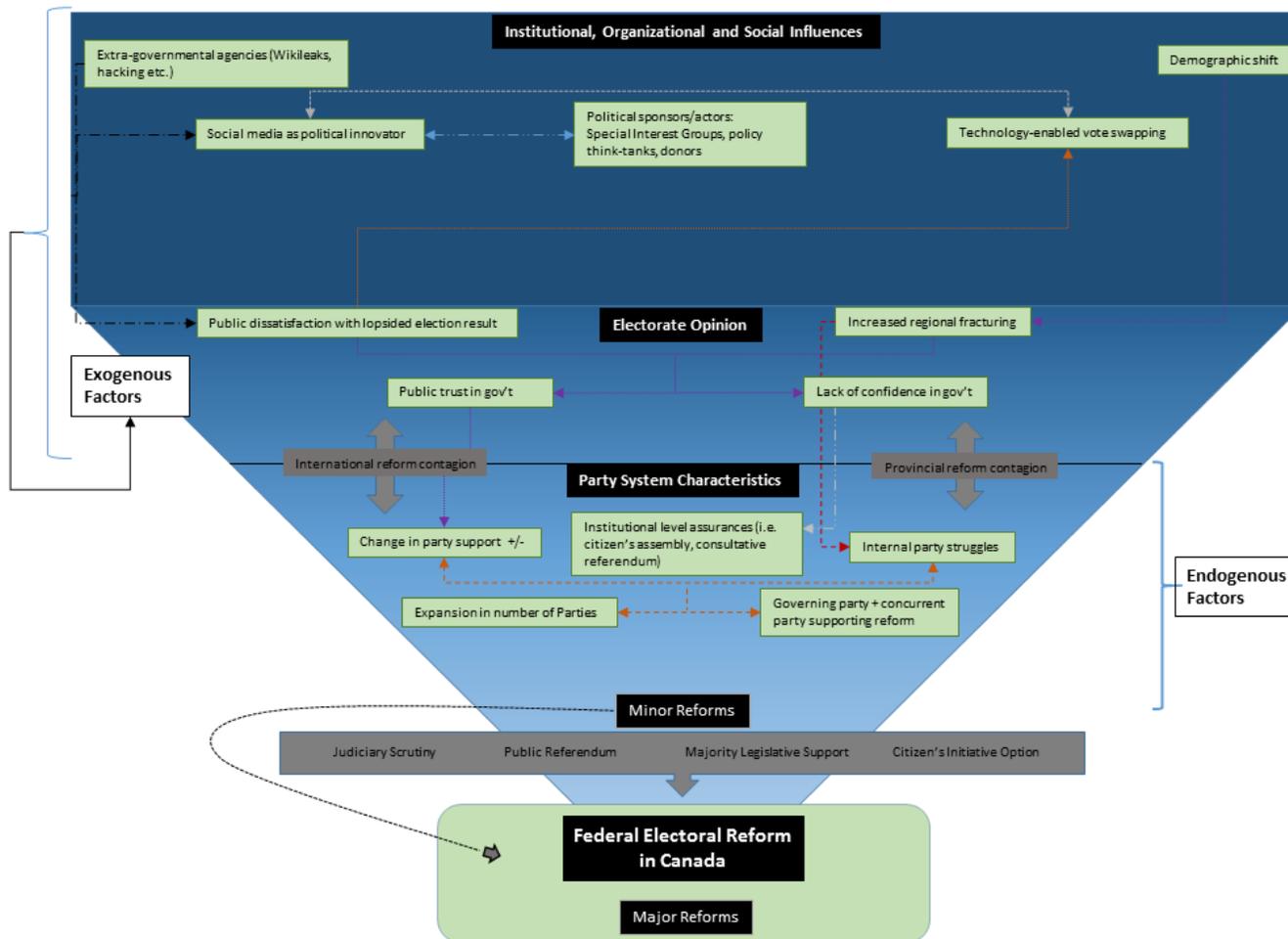


Figure 2 - Correlation and Relationships of Reform Influences



1988 – 34<sup>th</sup> PARLIAMENT OF CANADA

During the 34<sup>th</sup> Parliament of Canada (1988-1993) support for electoral reform began to develop. On the heels of the 1985 Macdonald Commission, there were several developments that began to take shape. Regional tensions were high following the 1976 election of the Parti Québécois and 1982 Constitution Act, which inflamed linguistic and regional tensions between Canadians. Keyword analysis of the party platforms from 1988 (Table 2) reveals the following:

*Table 2 - Keyword Frequency in Party Platforms, 1988*

	<b>Liberal:</b>	<b>PC:</b>	<b>NDP:</b>	<b>Reform:</b>	<b>Throne Speeches</b>
<b>(Represent)ation</b>	(1)0	7/0	4/1	26/8	0, (2)0, (7)0
<b>Proportional</b>	0	0	1	0	0, 0, 0
<b>(Democra)cy</b>	0	(9)1	(3)1	(8)2	(1)1, (1)1, (4)1
<b>Majority</b>	0	1	10	11	0, 0, 0
<b>Reform</b>	3	1	6	90	0, 7, 10
<b>Vote</b>	0	22	4	16	0, 0, 0
<b>(Elect)oral</b>	(4)0	(21)3	(46)0	(29)2	(2)0, (1)1, (3)1
<b>Senate</b>	2	2	5	6	4, 2, 2
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>36</b>

In the Liberal party platform, the keywords “elect”, “represent” and “senate” guided analysis towards their commitment to seeking an elected upper chamber. Likewise, the term “senate” also was featured in similar discussions within the Progressive Conservative platform, however their document introduced “democra(cy)” as an important derivative, which furthered the policy discussion surrounding the democratic aspirations of an elected senate. The NDP document is something of an outlier in that it adopts a critique rather than a prescriptive tone. As such, keywords such as “senate” “represent” and “democracy” were important, however they

revealed policy critiques of the Liberal and PC acceptance of an unelected Senate, but little in the way of proposed policy action. Finally, the Reform Party platform introduced the importance of the keyword “majority”, along with the aforementioned keywords. This elaborated on their support for an elected, representative body with the notion that majority support was a factor in establishing legitimacy for the Senate. In their three throne speeches the Progressive Conservative government focus on Senate reforms is further reinforced, as demonstrated by the frequency of the terms “senate” “represent(ation)” and “democra(cy).”

How then, do the pressures both exogenous and endogenous to the party systems of the 34<sup>th</sup> Parliament, align with our model predictors? Endogenous factors must begin with the obvious: number of concurrent parties supporting reform. Perhaps due to latent influence from the Pepin-Robarts Task Force and Macdonald Commission, electoral reforms feature in some capacity on each party manifesto in 1988. It is, however, the overarching idea of Senate reform and focus upon constitutional amendments to aboriginal self-government which leads the observer to the correlation between the increase in calls for reform and the antecedent reports of 1979 and 1985. Both Senate reforms and aboriginal self-government have the capacity to be electoral system reforms, depending on their implementation. Whereas Canada’s upper chamber has traditionally been a ‘hands-off’ institution in relation to governance, this is largely a byproduct of its perceived illegitimacy due to the fact that it is an unelected body. If a Senate reform were to establish an elected upper chamber, it is entirely likely that Canadians would be modifying their behavior at the ballot box, and thus effectuating an electoral reform. Likewise, aboriginal self-government has the capacity to change the electoral process in myriad ways. At the very least, this would modify the traditional division of powers between federal, provincial and municipal governments. More specifically relevant to electoral reform, there is a strong likelihood that aboriginal self-government would modify the franchise, thus introducing a minor electoral reform for non-aboriginal Canadians.

The Liberal, Progressive Conservative and New Democratic Party platforms all specifically reference Aboriginal Self-Government as a priority, while the Liberals, Progressive Conservative and Reform Party each specify a desire to move to an elected Upper Chamber.<sup>1</sup> The addition of the Reform Party of Canada in 1988 brings up a second endogenous factor – the expansion beyond a three-party federal contest. While Reform failed to elect any Members of Parliament in 1988, its entry into the federal party system did bear witness to increasing regional divisions, and general fracturing of the center-right political sphere traditionally under the Progressive Conservative banner.

This leads us to another endogenous factor, change in voter support for parties. The Progressive Conservatives enjoyed 50% of the popular vote in the 1984 election to give them 211 of 282 seats during the 33<sup>rd</sup> parliament,<sup>2</sup> then dropped to 42.9% of popular vote and 169 of 295 seats in 1988.

On the exogenous side of the model, we have the citizen's interpretations to consider, with trust and confidence in the incumbent Progressive Conservatives waning from their 1984 levels (if we adopt the basic measure of change in support). Potential dissatisfaction amongst the electorate with the heavy bias of seats in 1984 could certainly have affected electorate views in the 1988 campaign. Amongst political actors, there were several institutions outside of the direct party system that might have influenced support for electoral reform, such as the Canada West Foundation and Alberta Select Special Committee on Upper House Reform who were all supporting, to various degrees, electoral reforms with a senate focus (Joyal, 2005). If we build upon our model to denote which factors were present (identified as green in the model) and those which were not (identified as amber) we can then extrapolate as to which factors have a correlative impact on the type of reform proposed. Because this attempt at reform ended with

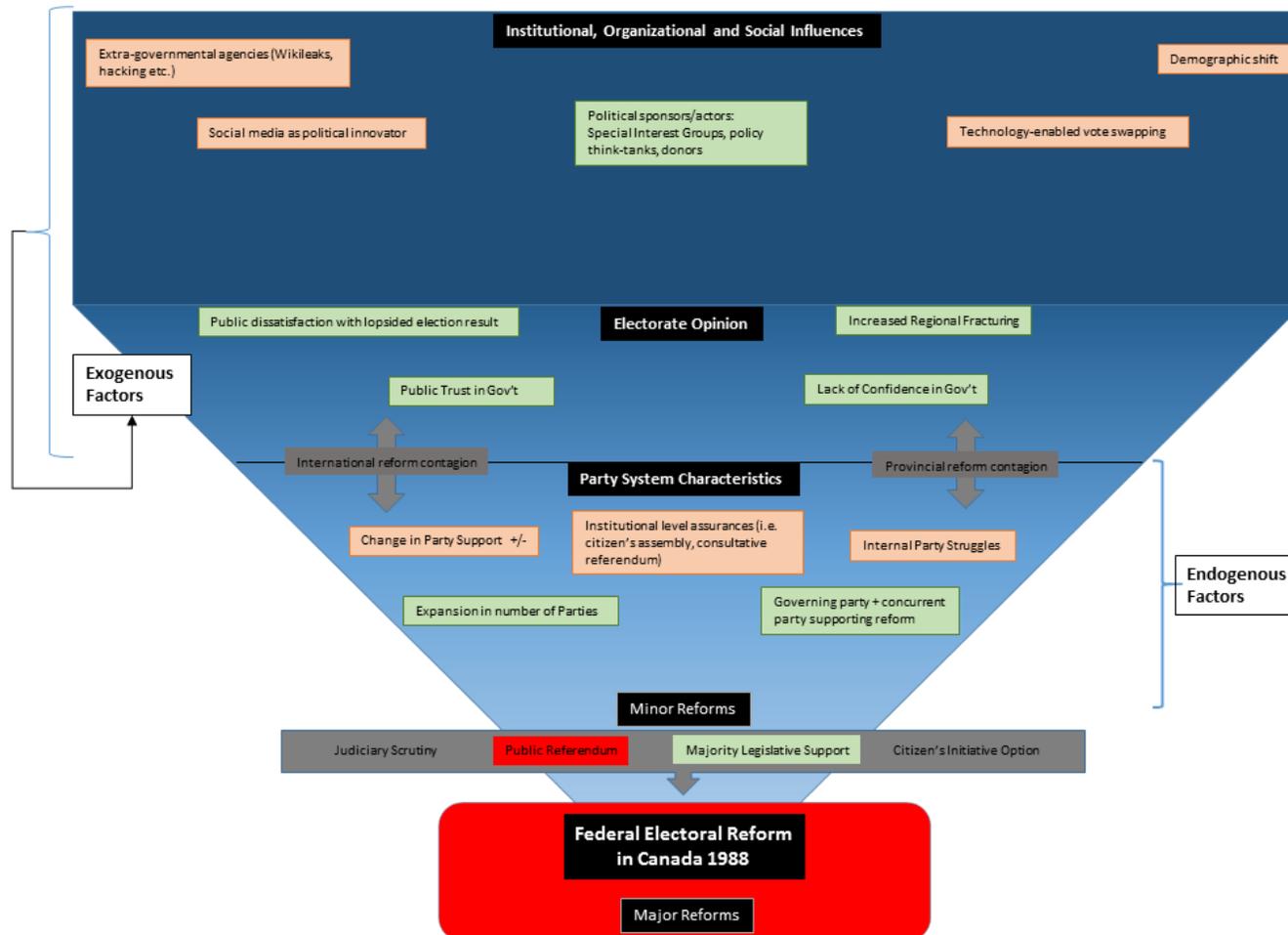
---

<sup>1</sup> (Liberal Party of Canada, 1988), (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 1988) (The New Democratic Party of Canada, 1988) (The Reform Party of Canada, 1988)

<sup>2</sup> (Political Database of the Americas, 1999)

rejection via the Charlottetown referendum, the reform category is coded in the model as red, as well as the legitimizing avenue – in this case, public referendum (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 - Reform Influences of the 34th Parliament



Despite the groundswell of interest in electoral reform during the 1980s as evidenced by the government commissions that tabled reports recommending change such as the aforementioned “Pépin-Robarts Task Force on Canadian Unity” and the “Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada” (better known as the Macdonald Commission), Canadian interest in adopting an empowered Senate ultimately waned. This is demonstrated by the party platforms following the Charlottetown referendum. Whereas in 1988 the Liberals, PC’s and Reform parties all had sections dedicated to reforming the Senate to be an elected, representative body, the 1993 platforms saw only the Reform party referencing Senate reform, and by 1997 the issue fell off the table altogether.

This leads us to wonder why reform failed, with near universal party support for a regionally represented and *elected* senate in one form or another? When we consider the funnel-type representation visually depicted in the reform model, a number of possible obstacles to reform are listed. These limitations are seen as the legitimizing avenues that a successful reform would likely need to address. This is not to say that all of the avenues would have to be met, but rather that depending on the circumstance, one or more may be utilized by the government to enhance the legitimacy of the proposed reform. Certainly, the shift from an appointed to an elected, representational and empowered senate could be anything from a “minor” to a “major” change, depending largely on the independence it was given from the House of Commons.

In the end, adopting an elected Senate was overshadowed politically by the pending North American Free Trade Agreement and looming constitutional crisis. In the Liberal Party platform for example, the North American Free Trade negotiations were the third item discussed, with a significant paragraph allocated to the issue.<sup>3</sup> Senate reform by comparison is the 37<sup>th</sup> of 39 issues in the platform, with a scant single sentence declaring support for elected members. The NDP

---

<sup>3</sup> (This Is More Than An Election, It's Your Future. Vote Liberal, 1988)

platform illustrates the disparity further. While (still unnamed) NAFTA agreement is discussed on 6 of 12 pages,<sup>4</sup> senatorial reforms are not mentioned – the NDP discussion of electoral reforms was centered around establishing “aboriginal self-government.” Even within the Progressive Conservative platform, free-trade eclipses Senate election issues by a 2:1 margin.<sup>5</sup> The exception to this pattern rests with the Reform Party. Senate reform is the primary issue discussed in the Reform platform, and relative to free-trade it is discussed more times (6 occurrences versus 5). Furthermore, the Reform Party was also advocating for direct democratic initiatives in their platform, which increased citizen exposure to political discourse about electoral reform.<sup>6</sup>

The most likely legitimizing moment for Senate reform came in a package deal within the framework of the Charlottetown Accord in 1992. This is captured in the model with the section on potential legitimizing avenues, including the judiciary, referendum, parliamentary majority and citizen’s initiative. Presented to the Canadian public by means of a national referendum, the Charlottetown Accord contained most of the “Triple-E” reforms that were championed during this timeframe (Barnes, et al., 2011). Fatefully, the prospects for legitimacy were erased when the referendum failed ratification by the electorate. Certainly, the Mulroney-led majority had the majority legislative support, which – depending on the significance and type of reform – can be enough legitimacy to move forward with a change to the electoral system. In this case, virtually all the parties were calling for senate reform, therefore it would be difficult to imagine any party opposing reforms on the basis that it unfairly advantages one versus the others. The choice for referendum and subsequent inclusion in the Charlottetown Accord is likely a product of the complex question of separation of powers and subsequent provincial approvals that could be required depending on how the constitutional language is interpreted. Indeed, there proved to be

---

<sup>4</sup> (A Fair Deal for Canada, 1988)

<sup>5</sup> (Politiques En Bref - 1988, 1988)

<sup>6</sup> (Platform & Statement of Principles, 1988)

a certain amount of prescience in the decision to invoke a referendum as later attempts at reform were stymied by the Supreme Court of Canada (Supreme Court of Canada, 2014).

If we consider Shugart's (2008) theory of a "failing" of FPTP leading to electoral reform initiatives, there are some parallels to the conditions in 1988, however there is a caveat. While FPTP failed to proportionately translate votes into seats in 1988 (Gallagher index 11.33), the effect was certainly less than it was in 1984 (Gallagher index 20.91). Thus, one could argue that the momentum and attention toward FPTP lopsidedness was waning. This illustrates the need to consider the viability of alternative endogenous influences such as party expansion and the effect of multi-party support of reform initiatives, which feature in the model I propose.

Norris's democratic aspiration theory is also relevant to the discussion of the 34<sup>th</sup> parliament, in that it does not fully capture the gamut of exogenous influence upon the desire for electoral reform by way of an empowered Senate. Senate reform appears to be a combined latent initiative from earlier constitutional discussions when Canada patriated its constitution from the United Kingdom in 1982, and the suggestions of the P  pin-Robarts and Macdonald initiatives. These discussions were taking place predominantly within political/academic circles, as parties at both provincial and federal levels debated the constitution. Largely this ignores the exogenous sphere, except as a ratification element, thus Norris's theory does not capture the regional and cultural implications that were playing out in the policy arena.

Regional fracturing amongst the electorate was a factor in inspiring constitutional discussions. The fact that Senate reform was included in a major proposal for constitutional reform that encompassed a variety of modifications to the collective Canadian identity led to various regions within Canada having different interpretations on the collective reform package. This was one of several factors that produced the referendum rejection of the Charlottetown Accord as a whole, and its electoral reform elements with it. 'Public trust in government' becomes a factor in this rejection, as the various regions of Canada may have (due to the discrepant results) interpreted the intentions of the governing party differently. The model captures the influence of

increased regional fracturing and public trust (and confidence) in government to explanatory benefit in this instance (see Figure 3)

2006 – 39<sup>th</sup> PARLIAMENT OF CANADA

The defeat of the Charlottetown referendum was followed closely by the political demise of the Progressive Conservative party. Electoral reform became something of a secondary focus during the period of Liberal dominance that ensued. Between 1993 and 2005, the Liberal Party of Canada governed with near impunity, as Canada politically found itself reeling between regional fracturing and an unstable right-wing opposition. With the Parti Québécois popular support leading to a referendum on separation in 1995 and the Progressive Conservative Party split with the Reform Party/Canadian Alliance, the prospects for a concerted focus on electoral reform dropped appreciably. By the early 2000's however, several factors began to crystalize and a new era of electoral reform began to emerge. This began with the emergence of the Green Party at the federal level in 2000, and the resurgence of a newly christened and unified Conservative Party of Canada in 2004. For the 2006 campaign, every national party was once again espousing some manner of electoral reform. Keyword analysis (Table 3) of the party platforms in 2006 reveals:

*Table 3 - Keyword Frequency in Party Platforms, 2006*

	<b>Liberal:</b>	<b>Conservative:</b>	<b>NDP:</b>	<b>Green:</b>	<b>Bloc:</b>	<b>Throne Speeches</b>
<b>(Represent)ation</b>	(13)3	(4)1	(5)3	(12)3	(1)0	(3)0, (1)0
<b>Proportional</b>	0	0	2	4	0	0, 0
<b>(Democra)cy</b>	(10)3	(15)5	(24)1	(12)6	(6)5	(5)1, (12)6,
<b>Majority</b>	5	2	3	1	0	0, 1
<b>Reform</b>	11	17	7	10	0	0, 2
<b>Vote</b>	5	2	8	9	0	1, 3
<b>(Elect)oral</b>	(30)0	(49)4	(19)6	(33)5	(4)3	(4)1, 0
<b>Senate</b>	2	4	5	0	0	3, 2
<b>Total:</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>37</b>

As in the 34<sup>th</sup> parliament, focus on Senate reform underscored the relative importance of keywords such as “senate”, “represent” and “democra(cy)” - particularly with the Conservative party. The keywords that associated best with the Liberal party platform were “democra(tic)” and “reform”, owing largely to their platform focus on the “Democratic Reform Action Plan” that they intended to expand. Diverging from this stance, the NDP and Green parties were proposing wholesale electoral system changes, for which keyword relevance was markedly different. “Electoral”, “elect” and “proportional” became indicative terms for both of their parties’ platforms. In the throne speeches the focus corresponds with the interests of the governing (Conservative) party, hence a returned prevalence of “senate”, “democra(cy)” and “represent” were observed. The Bloc Québécois did not support any form of electoral system reforms and their corresponding keyword frequency was thus markedly lower than the averages observed within parties that did support reform.

Endogenous factors shaping the prospects for electoral reform during this period included a drop in electoral support for the incumbent Liberal Party, expansion in the number of parties in the early 2000’s, internal party struggles culminating in the newly invigorated Conservative Party and recent leaders for the Green Party, NDP, Conservatives and Liberals. Previously mentioned was the fact that the majority of concurrent parties did indeed support reforms. At the endogenous level the party system was largely similar to that of the 1988 push. Nonetheless, there were a number of important developments that had come to fruition in time for the 2006 electoral campaign. Chief among these was the introduction of potential reform contagion, with the creation of the Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform in British Columbia, and the subsequent referendums on changing the province’s electoral formula from FPTP to STV. The initial referendum took place with the May 2005 British Columbia Provincial election, thus by proximity to the January 2006 Federal election we can estimate a high capacity for policy contagion.

Furthermore, the Province of Ontario had an ongoing electoral reform process between 2003 and 2007, furthering the capacity for provincial/national policy contagion (Library of

Parliament, 2016). This is especially true given the Liberal Party of Canada's establishment in 2004 of the Democratic Reform Action Plan, which specifies that the government would seek to establish cooperation on the issue of democratic reform (Government of Canada, 2004). The primary tenets of the Democratic Reform Action Plan were a "three pillar" approach to enhancing democratic participation and engagement. The reforms were aimed at increasing the number of free votes in the House of Commons, increasing the usage of parliamentary committees to draft legislation and finally, to increasingly consult with citizens and the provinces about further reforms (Government of Canada, 2004). In their 2006 manifesto, the Liberal party states their intention, if elected, to continue implementing the measures of this plan and to engage in dialogue with Canadians with regards to future reforms within a year in office.<sup>7</sup> The Conservatives meanwhile, espoused a refocus upon the ongoing lack of democratic functioning within the Senate. Their party platform states their intentions to:

- Begin reform of the Senate by creating a national process for choosing elected Senators from each province and territory.
- Propose further reforms to make the Senate an effective, independent, and democratically elected body that equitably represents all regions.<sup>8</sup>

Between 2004 and 2006 the Liberal Party had commissioned some "academic studies in select fields" and held "regional roundtables with key stakeholders, academics and other groups to probe underlying issues and questions that call for democratic reforms."<sup>9</sup> Like the Liberals, the NDP platform also mentions their desire to reform Canada's electoral system – albeit in more precise terms. Referencing the 2004 Law Commission of Canada report, *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada* (2004), the NDP affirms their belief that the electoral system should switch

---

<sup>7</sup> (Liberal Party of Canada, 2006)

<sup>8</sup> (Stand up for Canada, 2006)

<sup>9</sup> (Liberal Party of Canada, 2006)

from plurality to PR (The New Democratic Party, 2006). Like the NDP, the Green party also sought to adopt PR as the federal electoral system, stressing the need for the “progressive tools of a more accountable and participatory society” (2006). Ultimately, it was the Conservatives who controlled the discourse as the governing party during the 39<sup>th</sup> Parliament, and consequently, it was electoral reform by elected Senate that was the pursued avenue.

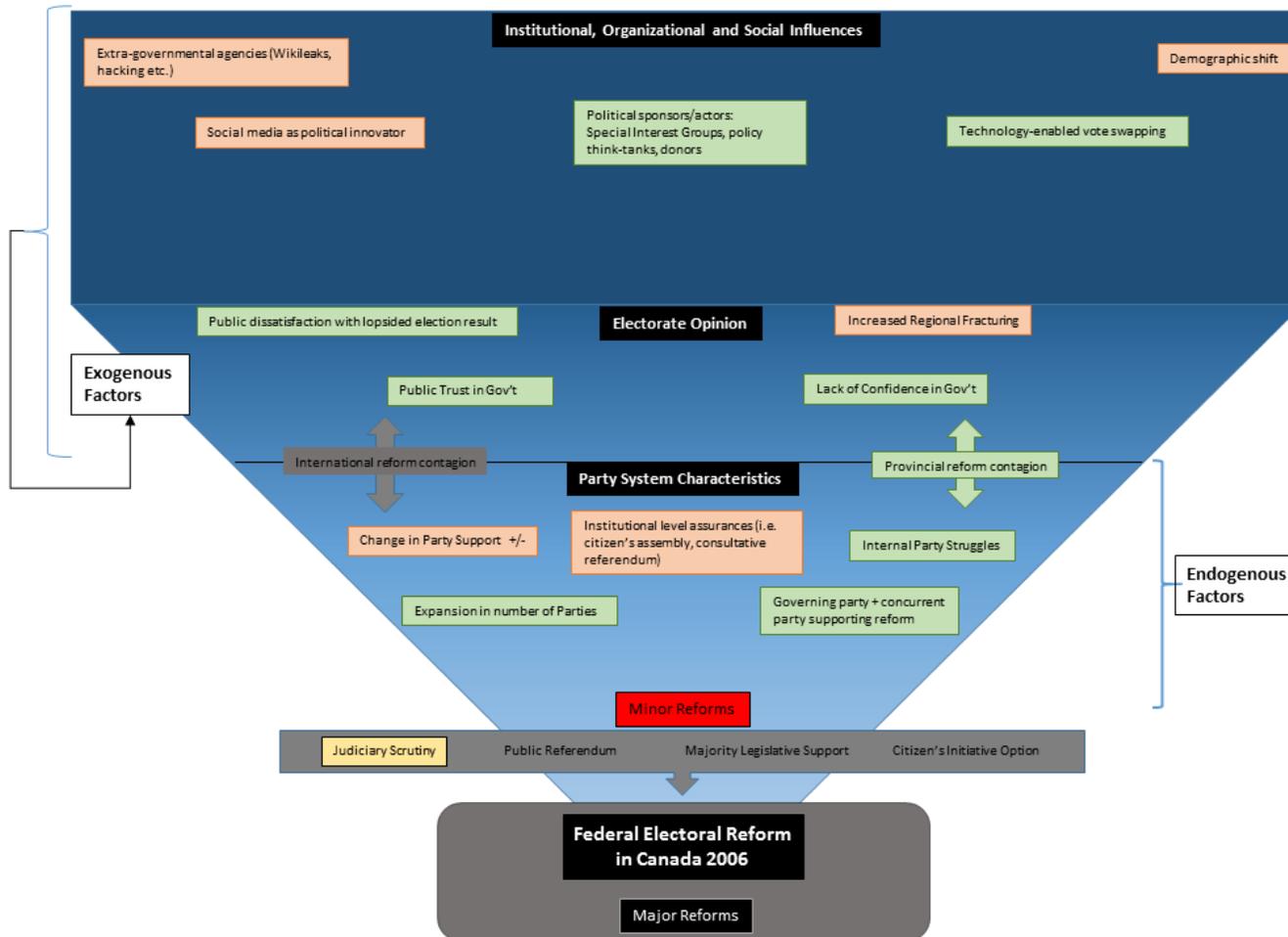
Exogenous influences between the 1988 and 2006 Federal campaigns present an interesting leap. The cultural shift towards the adoption of personal computers, networking and information-sharing that took place over this span introduces some influential and controversial elements into the political sphere such as online “vote-swapping” or “vote-pairing”. The premise is that voters can align their ballots to strategically make an impact where they are most likely. While concrete data surrounding the numbers of individuals who were active participants in such technologies as online vote-swapping is nigh-impossible to accrue, articles began referencing the strategy as early as the year 2000 (Melillo, 2000). Furthermore, the impacts of the internet at this stage were important for political actors in the exogenous sphere such as Special Interest Groups (SIG's). No longer were lobbyists and activists confined to radio interviews, academic campus meetings or traditional distribution media – the web provided a means by which these groups and individuals could distribute their message to a broad audience.

Demographically, Canada had continued a long-term trend towards urbanization. Between 1988 and 2006 the percentage of urban residents rose to 80% from 76%. Public dissatisfaction with the proportionality of seats could be said to be a factor, as the Gallagher index was calculated at 8.61. The parties that stood to be most negatively impacted by the disparity of vote percentage/seat percentage were the Green Party and New Democratic Party. With a -10% and -4% gap in vote/seat representation, both of these federal parties had widespread minority support, which as previously noted, tends to be underrepresented in FPTP systems (LeDuc, 2005). Unsurprisingly, both parties had detailed proposals for modifying the electoral system in their respective manifestos from FPTP to PR.

An exogenous influence that could easily be overlooked was the fact that Canada elected back-to-back minority parliaments. This can be interpreted as a lack of trust and confidence in any particular federal party, and also an indictment of the FPTP systematically. If we apply the model to the influences present during the 39<sup>th</sup> parliament, we notice an incremental increase in endogenous *and* exogenous factors, as well as the potential for provincial contagion effect. The addition of contagion is specifically addressing the potential influence of sub-national electoral reforms upon citizen attitudes toward national reforms. British Columbia had begun exploring electoral reforms in 2004 and Ontario in 2006, hence a substantial subset of the Canadian population had been introduced to the concepts and dialogue surrounding electoral reform already (see Figure 4).

As with the 34<sup>th</sup> parliamentary model, present influences are labeled in green, whereas latent influences are labeled amber. Conduit avenues to adoption (or rejection) of electoral reform are coded similarly, except that latent forces are grey, whereas the chosen avenue is labelled as amber to denote that it did not successfully pass the scrutiny of this chosen avenue. In this model, the proposed Senate reform is deemed to be a minor electoral reform, and is labeled in red due to the unsuccessful outcome (Figure 4).

Figure 4 - Reform Influences of the 39th Parliament



Speeches from the Throne during this Parliament (minority parliament dissolved in September 2008) demonstrated that the governing Conservative Party was predominantly interested in reform by way of modifying the Upper Chamber. In the second Speech from the Throne in 2007, the Governor General stated: *“Canadians understand that the federation is only as strong as the democratic institutions that underpin it. Our Government believes that Canada is not well served by the Senate in its current form. To ensure that our institutions reflect our shared commitment to democracy, our Government will continue its agenda of democratic reform by reintroducing important pieces of legislation from the last session, including direct consultations with voters on the selection of Senators and limitations on their tenure.”* (Government of Canada, 2007)

These reforms, as described, would almost assuredly be considered “minor” in nature, if electoral at all, as they do not express a particular interest in moving to an elected, representative or empowered Upper Chamber. This aligns well with Blau’s (2008) previously mentioned theory which references Tsebelis’ veto player outlook, in which the governing party has little interest in engaging electoral reformation, given it represents the framework which put them in power. The net result of the 39<sup>th</sup> Parliament regarding electoral reform was, therefore, a continuation of the status quo.

2015 – 42<sup>nd</sup> PARLIAMENT OF CANADA

As shown in the platform data, NDP/Green Party interest in PR continued to feature steadily from 2006 onwards. This was offset in the House of Commons through 2011 by the Conservative party focus on Senate. The aftermath of an unusual outcome for the Liberal Party in 2011 merits some study as to its effect upon the policies presented for the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Election in 2015.

Keyword analysis of the 2015 electoral platforms (Table 4) reveals the following:

*Table 4 - Keyword Frequency in Party Platforms, 2015*

	<b>Liberal:</b>	<b>Conservative:</b>	<b>NDP:</b>	<b>Green:</b>	<b>Bloc:</b>	<b>Throne Speeches:</b>
<b>(Represent)ation</b>	(15)1	(4)0	(7)3	(31)10	(7)0	(1)0
<b>Proportional</b>	1	1	2	5	0	0
<b>(Democra)cy</b>	(4)2	(14)10	(18)7	(40)13	(15)4	0
<b>Majority</b>	1	2	1	15	1	0
<b>Reform</b>	6	17	6	31	0	3
<b>Vote</b>	22	2	9	27	2	2
<b>(Elect)oral</b>	(41)6	(156)1	(24)3	(79)6	0	(4)1
<b>Senate</b>	5	6	4	4	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>

In 2011, the Liberal Party fell to third party status for the first time in its history, when the New Democratic Party captured Official Opposition status. Whether this was the catalyst or not, the effect remains the same as the Liberals adopted a very strong policy position on electoral reform for the 2015 campaign for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament. This marked the first outright proposal by

a federal party which had formed government to dismantle the FPTP system. The Federal NDP and Green parties had been supporting PR in their manifestos since the year 2000, but neither the Conservatives nor especially the Liberals had espoused dropping FPTP, despite having assembled various committees and reports which had produced such suggestions.

Keyword frequency in this period reveals a corresponding increase in electoral reform language versus prior parliaments. With a majority of parties supporting electoral system reforms, we begin to witness a substantial increase in the importance of the keyword “proportional.” Despite its relative scarcity, the term has very few applications outside of electoral system discussion - specifically “proportional representation.” This is observed with the Liberal, NDP and Green party platforms, along with a corresponding increase in the term “represent(ation).” Strongly linked with the discourse for proportional representation is the keyword “democra(cy).” This keyword appears frequently within these platforms with respect to enhancing democratic principles. In the Conservative platform, the terms “reform” and “senate” illustrate a continued commitment to this initiative. Furthermore, “elect(oral)” surfaces within the Conservative platform, with specific reference to their desire for electoral reform legitimacy via referendum. Although only one throne speech has been presented during the 42<sup>nd</sup> parliament to date, the Liberal discourse correlated with the terms “electoral” “reform” and “vote”. Once more, the BQ platform exhibited far fewer instances of electoral reform keywords versus the other platforms.

The endogenous factors influencing the 2015 campaign were numerous. Internal party struggles - while difficult to measure empirically – can be said to be a factor for any party fielding a new leader, and especially with three leaders in as many consecutive elections. Once more, a majority of concurrent parties were supporting reform, with the ongoing exception of the BQ. Perhaps most revealing endogenously would be the atypical fluctuation in voter support for the Liberal Party. The number of parties in the federal party system remained stable since the 2004 campaign, and no institutional level assurances had been added to the parliamentary system. Overall, the model indicates that the influential factors for electoral reform in the 42<sup>nd</sup> parliament

appear to be gravitating towards the electorate and institutional, organizational and social influences.

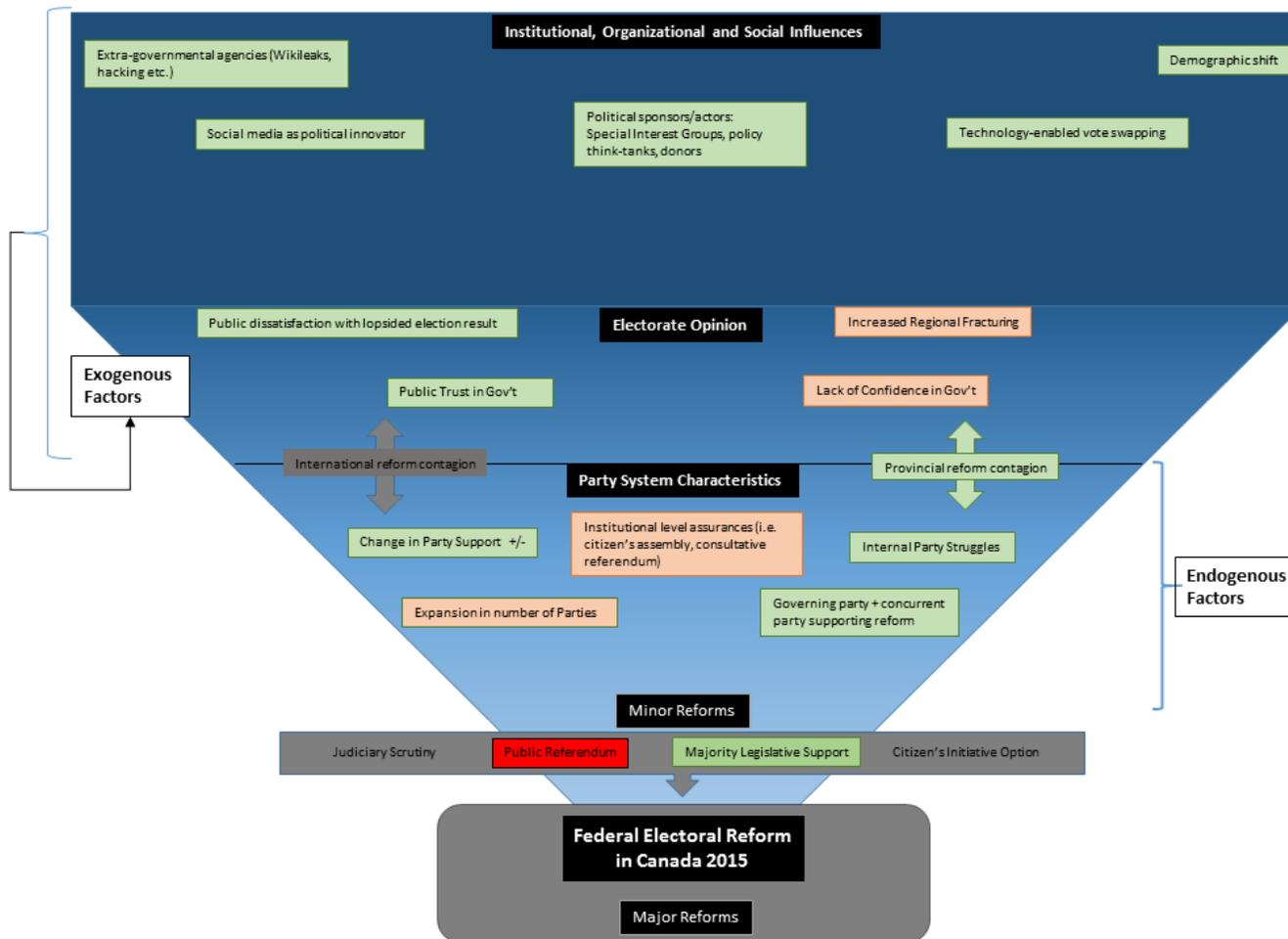
Exogenous factors in the 2015 campaign cannot be ignored in their unique influences on policy and electoral reform relative to previous campaigns. In the 2006 iteration we identified key technological progressions which had the effect of rallying politically minded individuals who had some interest in electoral reform, by means of enabling special interest groups such as Fair Vote Canada, as well as aiding strategic voting by individuals who could connect with relative ease online. Despite this, in 2006, the technology sphere and the political sphere were still exploring ways in which they could effectively cohabitate. For example, the smartphone was still largely in its infancy (the two most popular ecosystems today, iPhone and Android OS launched in 2007 and 2008 respectively) (Sarwar & Soomro, 2013) and social media sites were still largely the domain of youth and students. Facebook had only expanded beyond university and college subscribers to include high-school students in 2005, eventually expanding to the general public in September 2006 (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Twitter (2006) and WikiLeaks (2006) are also key agencies involved in shaping factors such as “social media as political innovator” and “extra-governmental agencies”. Demographic politics featured more prevalently in the 2015 campaign than they had in recent campaigns, given the debate amongst the major parties on how to approach the increase in asylum seekers from the Middle East. If we turn once more to the reform model, the progression of influential factors, particularly in the exogenous tier, is noteworthy (see Figure 5). This effect is clearly demonstrated when we compare the progression of influences between the 34<sup>th</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> parliaments (Table 5).

*Table 5 - Influences Compared Across Parliaments*

<b>Parliament:</b>	<b>Party System</b>	<b>Electorate</b>	<b>I.O.S.</b>	<b>Contagion</b>	<b>Total:</b>
34 <sup>th</sup>	2	4	1	No	<b>7</b>
39 <sup>th</sup>	3	3	2	Yes	<b>9</b>
42 <sup>nd</sup>	3	2	5	Yes	<b>11</b>

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament created a special committee on electoral reform, suggesting the need to expand our platform-level analysis to include extensive documented party positions throughout the sitting of this committee.

Figure 5 - Reform Influences of the 42nd Parliament



## THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORM:

### MANDATE AND MEMBER PERSPECTIVES

As mentioned earlier, the Liberals were relegated to third party status following the 2011 federal election. For 2015, the Liberals promised to end FPTP as the federal electoral system if elected. This marked a considerable about-face from traditional party stance throughout much of the party's dominant run between 1993 and 2006 during which they largely avoided any suggestion of electoral reform. The policy handbook for the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Election states:

*"We will make every vote count.*

*-We are committed to ensuring that 2015 will be the last federal election conducted under the first-past-the-post voting system.*

*-We will convene an all-party Parliamentary committee to review a wide variety of reforms, such as ranked ballots, proportional representation, mandatory voting, and online voting.*

*-This committee will deliver its recommendations to Parliament. Within 18 months of forming government, we will introduce legislation to enact electoral reform."*

(Liberal Party of Canada, 2015)

The Liberal endorsement of electoral reform following the 2011 election outcome is best understood as an endogenous factor, "change in party support". The 41<sup>st</sup> General Election was an atypically poor result for the party, so this may have influenced the party such that "internal party struggles" may have played a role as well. When the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Election placed the Liberals back in power, the campaign promise to evaluate a pathway to reform was thrust into the forefront of political discourse.

As promised, the elected Liberal Party formed a “House of Commons Special Committee on Electoral Reform” in the 42<sup>nd</sup> parliament, on June 7<sup>th</sup> 2016 (Parliament of Canada, 2017). The committee was comprised of 12 members whom represented all major parties featured in the House of Commons of Canada. Committee members were appointed based on the outline of 5 members from the governing Liberal Party, 3 from the Conservative Official Opposition, 2 from the New Democratic Party and 1 each from the Green Party and Bloc Québécois. Committee chair Francis Scarpaleggia notes that the majority governing Liberal Party would compromise and not have an absolute majority on the committee, despite originally planning to enumerate members on the basis of seat allocation in the House of Commons (Scarpaleggia, 2016). The mandate was set as follows:

*1) Effectiveness and legitimacy: that the proposed measure would increase public confidence among Canadians that their democratic will, as expressed by their votes, will be fairly translated and that the proposed measure reduces distortion and strengthens the link between voter intention and the election of representatives;*

*2) Engagement: that the proposed measure would encourage voting and participation in the democratic process, foster greater civility and collaboration in politics, enhance social cohesion and offer opportunities for inclusion of underrepresented groups in the political process;*

*3) Accessibility and inclusiveness: that the proposed measure would avoid undue complexity in the voting process, while respecting the other principles, and that it would support access by all eligible voters regardless of physical or social condition;*

*4) Integrity: that the proposed measure can be implemented while safeguarding public trust in the election process, by ensuring reliable and verifiable results obtained through an effective and objective process that is secure and preserves vote secrecy for individual Canadians;*

*5) Local representation: that the proposed measure would ensure accountability and recognize the value that Canadians attach to community, to Members of Parliament understanding local conditions and advancing local needs at the national level, and to having access to Members of Parliament to facilitate resolution of their concerns and participation in the democratic process*

(Parliament of Canada, 2016)

It is worth noting that the committee was assigned this mandate not only in regards to the replacement of FPTP, but also to consider the ramifications of mandatory voting and online voting in the context of electoral reform. The process took place over a period of six months, and included several stages of interaction and consultation both with expert witnesses, members of the public and foreign officials from jurisdictions with relevant experience in electoral reform. The result of the special committee's mandate was to provide the federal government with a semi-exhaustive report by which to guide their electoral reform process.

The ERRE (the committee's parliamentary designation) had a relatively early deadline by which to accomplish its mandate, from formation June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 until "no later than December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016" (Parliament of Canada, 2016). By contrast, the British Columbia Citizen's Assembly (provincial analog to the ERRE when that province evaluated electoral reform in 2003/04) began its work on January 10, 2004 and tabled its report on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004 (Ratner, 2005). This timeframe is all the more revealing when we consider the geographic, regional and cultural differences between performing such an evaluation at the provincial level as compared to the national level.

#### LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

The Liberals came into the reform process with two views on reform. On one side of the equation, party leader Justin Trudeau espoused the Alternative Vote – which had been endorsed as of the 2012 party policy convention (Pilon, 2015). On the other hand, much core party support

for PR existed; Pilon notes that in December 2014 over half of the Liberal caucus supported the NDP motion to adopt PR as the federal electoral framework. These supporters, it should be noted, included names such as prior Liberal leader Stéphane Dion. All the same, in 2015 the Liberal Party of Canada, we can assume that the official party policy (AV) would be the first choice. The AV system could theoretically be advantageous to the Liberals as a “centrist” party, given the expected benefit of drawing second-rank from voters on both right-leaning and left-leaning parties who would conceivably prefer a moderate.

When the report from the committee came forward, there was no concrete recommendation of any system, however it was noted in the 12<sup>th</sup> recommendation that “the overwhelming majority of testimony was in favour of proportional representation” (Special Committee on Electoral Reform, 2016). Logically, this must not have been the result that the Liberal Party sought, as their supplementary report focused on the lack of a singular alternative to FPTP. If PR was an option they were willing to consider, its recognition by the ERRE would have been reason enough to pursue reform.

The Liberal supplementary report diverged from the Majority Report (as the consensus document tabled by the entire committee is known) on the issue of holding a ratification referendum as well. Whereas the MR recommends squarely that “the Government hold a referendum, in which the current system is on the ballot”, the Liberal supplementary report decries such action as unnecessarily divisive and unfairly accessible to urban residents. Perhaps most bizarre is the Liberal supplementary report’s stance on the timeline proposed by the ERRE committee. While the committee was formed and given its mandate under Liberal control, following a Liberal campaign promise to end FPTP before the 43<sup>rd</sup> election, the supplementary report denounced the MR plan to implement a reform proposal by said deadline as “unnecessarily hasty and run[ning] the risk of undermining the legitimacy of the process by racing toward a predetermined deadline” (Scarpaleggia, Aldag, DeCoursey, Romando, & Sahota, 2016).

## THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The NDP membership on the ERRE committee represented a virtual counterbalance to the outright skepticism of the Liberals. Whereas the Liberal members of ERRE were all first-time Members of Parliament, save for committee chair Francis Scarpaleggia (an MP since 2004), the NDP contingent was comprised of deputy critic for democratic reform Alexandre Boulerice and former House Leader for the Official Opposition and critic for Democratic Institutions, Nathan Cullen. Cullen has supported the mixed-member proportional electoral system in prior contexts, and indeed the NDP supplementary report advocated this, as well as Rural-urban proportional representation as potential alternatives to FPTP.

While the Liberal-preferred Alternative Vote was not specifically denounced in the NDP supplement, both Boulerice and Cullen have vocally criticized AV in Parliament and interviews. Boulerice used the analogy of a consumer who wants an electric car, but because the option is not on the lot at the time of purchase, must accept either a van or an SUV as his choice (Boulerice, 2016). Cullen likened a Liberal push for AV to “political nuclear war” due to the perception that such a system would largely suffer the same failings as FPTP while naturally enhancing the centrist party’s chances (Smith, 2017). The NDP was adept at capitalizing on the situational context throughout the ERRE. It managed to alter the Liberal’s initial proposal of committee membership (which allocated members on the basis of House seats) to a shared balance of power, as would have been the case had membership been based on PR (Wherry, 2016). Formally, the NDP (and Green Party of Canada) supplement made clear that the party was open to accepting the process and recommendations put forward by the ERRE committee (Cullen, Boulerice, & May, 2016).

## THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

The Conservative party was represented by the second-largest contingent on the ERRE committee, with three seats. Vice-chairperson Scott Reid has arguably the longest federal

commitment to the process of electoral reform of any member, having been an active critic of FPTP stretching back to 2001 during his time as MP with the Canadian Alliance. In his positions on the record, accessible through parliamentary records, Reid has consistently criticized FPTP as being “perverse” in its translation of votes into seats. However, he has been cautious about recommending a particular alternative. In an article written for the *Canadian Parliamentary Review* in 2005, Reid reminded readers that there is an inherent paradoxical situation at play, whereby elected officials are being asked to devise a manner by which to allocate their own jobs (Reid, 2005). This is the essence of the contradiction addressed by Blau (2008) and Shugart (2008) which adds a layer of complexity not only in terms of finding an agreeable consensus upon a system to endorse, but also in legitimizing the eventual choice with the electorate.

Apart from Scott Reid, the Conservative Party was represented at the ERRE by MPs Gérard Deltell and Jason Kenney, the latter who resigned his seat in August 2016 to Blake Richards. Kenney, like Reid, has criticized both electoral turnout and representation statistics in Parliament as products of a “15<sup>th</sup> Century voting system designed for medieval England” while he was with the Canadian Alliance in 2001 (Kenney, 2001). Deltell by comparison has little on-record history prior to his tenure on the ERRE, while Richards had been engaged in technical reforms suggested by his party while they governed from 2011-2015. On the whole, the Conservative position regarding electoral reform consistently featured the claim that legitimacy in such a consequential institutional reform could only be achieved by way of referendum. Critics denounce this as little more than tacit disapproval, given the historical record of electoral reform referendum approval provincially in Canada. On the other hand, a parliamentary motion to enact such reforms without a referendum would be the first such occurrence in Canada since the 1950’s, as Reid noted in his official response to parliamentary debates that occurred on December 8, 2016 (Conservative Party of Canada, 2016). Indeed, although the Conservative party did not release a supplementary report as did the other National parties, their messaging remained consistently committed to seeking legitimacy for whichever electoral system would be proposed by the ERRE

through a referendum. Without Conservative approval, no consensus position on electoral reform could be brought forward from the ERRE process, thus insistence on a referendum could be used as a strategic veto position to force committee support for a referendum despite Liberal and NDP unease with the idea. This was reflected, as the 12<sup>th</sup> recommendation of the Majority Report: “The Committee recommends that: The Government hold a referendum on which the current system is on the ballot;”.

The ERRE process illustrates the expanding role of exogenous influences in the electoral reform process. Whereas deliberations for antecedent reforms such as the 34<sup>th</sup> Parliament’s discussion of Senate reform took place almost exclusively at the endogenous (i.e. government) level, the ERRE process sought to engage Canadians directly. This was evident from the outset with the government’s publication of a guidebook for citizens, designed to help grow electoral reform discussion from the citizen’s level (Government of Canada, 2016). The guidebook specifically references 5 desired outcomes:

- Restore the effectiveness and legitimacy of voting, such as by reducing distortions and strengthening the link between voter intention and the electoral result
- Encourage greater engagement and participation in the democratic process, including by underrepresented groups
- Support accessibility and inclusiveness of all eligible voters, and avoiding undue complexity in the voting process
- Safeguard the integrity of our voting process
- Preserve the accountability of local representation

We can clearly see the ties with these desired outcomes and the model’s categories “public dissatisfaction with lopsided election result,” “public trust in government,” and “lack of confidence in government.” Particularly novel however, is the official endorsement of participation via social media technologies. In the guide, Canadians are invited to publicize their opinions and discussion

findings by way of Twitter and Facebook. The hashtags “#CdnDemocracy” and “#EngagedinER” are specifically proposed by the government. This has clear implication for the influential category “social media as political innovator.” The use of social media and peer-networking technologies has certainly become commonplace in the political arena, which will provide interesting future avenues for electoral reform influence. In the end, the ERRE committee completed its mandate with little resulting attention paid from the federal government. Despite the sudden hitch in what was presented as an assured electoral reform, how has the exploratory model fit in the post-1980 federal electoral reform experience?

## EVALUATION OF EXPLORATORY MODEL FIT WITH POST-1980 CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

150 years of FPTP illustrates that Canada has developed a longstanding relationship with the electoral system as its proven (if sometimes criticized) method of voting. Comments by former ERRE committee member and longstanding MP Jason Kenney summarize this dichotomous relationship with near-perfection. In 2001, when Kenney was a member of the Canadian Alliance he derided the FPTP system in Parliament to his Liberal counterpart: “Does he care at all that Canada is now the only complex multiparty democracy in the developed world which still relies on a 15th century voting system designed for medieval England? Does he care at all that 60% of Canadians in the last election voted against his government's program and yet the government holds 100% of the political power?”<sup>10</sup> Fifteen years later, and having accrued time in the seat of power, Kenney found himself responding to very much the same allegation from Liberal Minister of Democratic Reform Maryam Monsef, who charged that Canada was one of only three OECD countries still utilizing FPTP. This time, however, his tone was far more moderate: “Madam Speaker, it might occur to the minister that those three OECD countries are also the oldest and most stable continuing democracies in the world”.

This small anecdote summarizes well how fluid the party perspectives are with regards to electoral reform. While there appears to be some plausibility to Shugart's claim that under FPTP, electoral reforms are predicated by a failed election and a perceived benefit to the governing party, these two factors alone do not fully explain the experience with federal electoral reform in Canada. The proposed model finds consistent evidence across the 34<sup>th</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> parliaments of an important influence in multiparty support for electoral reform. There also appears to be correlation between multiparty support for electoral reform and the expansion in number of competing parties, possibly derived from the effects of splitting the vote in a majoritarian system.

---

<sup>10</sup> (Kenney, 2001)

In the Canadian case, there have been several strong instances of democratic failings (i.e. poor translation of votes to seats in 1993 where the BQ became Official Opposition) where very little interest electoral reform has ensued, despite the opportunity for party gains. In 2015, Shugart's conditions were nearly met, as the 2011 election delivered an atypical result to the Liberal party, who adopted AV electoral system change as a party initiative soon thereafter – with clear potential benefit to their party. The palpable lack of shared enthusiasm from the official opposition however, underscores the importance of multi-partisan support for the intended electoral reform. Indeed, it seemed that once the opportunity for benefit to the governing party – alternative vote – was no longer a viable option, electoral reform was taken off the government's agenda. Where Shugart's theory leans more heavily on endogenous, party level perception of failure with FPTP, my exploratory model finds evidence for considering the multiple exogenous aspects associated with the public's perceptions as well.

While Norris's theory incorporates the need for an electorate level (exogenous) desire to improve the democratic functioning of the electoral system, it largely ignores the growing influence that institutional, organizational and social influences have in fostering this collective action. When the Liberals decided to forego further action on electoral reform in 2015, recommendations of the ERRE notwithstanding, the lack of a congruent public will was cited as a primary factor in this decision. As such, my model looks to broaden the future study of exogenous influence to address the effects of social media and networking technologies which appear to be supplanting the traditional mechanisms by which electoral reform discourse takes place. Thus, the understudied element of social media and technology is introduced as a potential explanatory avenue. Increasingly, we are seeing politically engaged actors of all stripes turning to the technological sphere to influence and assert their political capital. This necessarily will influence how electoral reform is perceived as we look to the future of electoral reform. Indeed, much was made of (now former) Liberal Minister of Democratic Institutions Maryam Monsef's insistence on social media as an effective validator for political will (Global News, 2016) (Otis, 2016). As scholars have

already noted, although traditional forms of democratic participation such as voting have seen downswings, nontraditional forms of participation are seeing concurrent upswings. It would not be unreasonable then, to speculate that the future of electoral reform might be found in factors largely exogenous to the party system. Indeed, in one of the most recent examples of a contemporary nation, New Zealand's impetus for electoral reform (1992/93) was cascaded forward on the basis of a political misspeak by the then-prime minister on television (Ingle, 1995). The political will of the electorate could be similarly gelled by a catalyst from new technologies such as social media or extra-governmental information publishing as in the case of WikiLeaks.

In the Canadian electoral reform scenario, it is important to consider the issue of barriers to legitimacy in electoral reform efforts. Even with the political will of the electorate and a willing federal partner in the legislative seat, electoral reforms could still be rejected by the judiciary (as was the case with Senate reform proposals in 2014). Furthermore, a strong precedent for referendum has been established both sub-nationally within Canada and internationally as well. As Canada does not have provisions for direct-democratic options such as citizen's initiatives, the future pathway of electoral reform from inception to ballot box remains unclear on a number of levels. Nonetheless, this model has demonstrated that an increasing number of influences upon electoral reform seem to be aligning. Influential factors both endogenous and exogenous to the federal party system are expanding, and their presence now well entrenched in Canada's political discourse.

## FORECASTING KEY FUTURE INFLUENCES ON MAJOR ELECTORAL REFORM

Looking forward, the exploratory model and ERRE experience would appear to endorse three primary influences on future Canadian electoral reforms. The first of these is the role of social media technologies in generating the requisite exogenous influence amongst the general population. Loader and Mercea comprehensively explore these developments in *Networking Democracy* (2011). They assert that for the most part, research in the field has shown that while social media has moved from the domain of an advantaged few and into mainstream consumption, trends still demonstrate a propensity for like-minded users to network together. This effect has the potential to stimulate the discourse of disparate individuals who desire to see electoral reform such as Fair Vote Canada.

Fair Vote Canada describes itself as a “grassroots multi-partisan citizens’ campaign for voting system reform” (Fair Vote Canada, 2017). From this website, interested citizens can obtain information about electoral reform in their respective ridings, network with local “action teams,” contact the ERRE committee as well as share any of the site information via Facebook or Twitter. This capability represents a tremendous opportunity effectively unavailable prior to the widespread adoption of internet and social media technologies. One of the most innovative aspects of social media as it relates to the political sphere is the capacity to blend participation between the public and private spheres. (Loader and Mercea 2011) This means that political engagement no longer strictly happens in the public sphere, by way of voting and petitioning party membership, but can occur well within the more accessible spheres of private life. Indeed, as the technologies that everyday users employ improve, algorithms are beginning to conquer the self-imposed barriers of comfort previously discussed. Search engines now alert users to related content, so a search for one of the federal political parties will also elicit suggested content and results that relate to any of the other major federal parties.

Reductions in print media subscribership have seen concurrent growth in individualized, person-to-person online media. This will certainly affect future channels, instruments and character of political discourse. Whether this produces a gradual exchange of policy knowledge amongst the public, or (as in New Zealand) a more sudden, catalyst moment of electorate disaffection spread by the instantaneous nature of social media, the influential medium remains the same.

The second influential factor to consider in future periods of enhanced public attention to electoral reform is related to policy contagion. Despite recent unsuccessful provincial-level deliberation and referendums on electoral reform, interest in reforming the electoral system at the sub-national level is ongoing. Indeed, British Columbia's NDP announced in their 2017 election platform that they believe that a switch to a proportional electoral system is needed, and they would modify the referendum threshold from 60% to simple majority if elected (BC NDP, 2017). It may take a successful sub-national electoral reform to convince the electorate to accept a federal level electoral reform.

Finally, while the exploratory model pointed to a relationship between multiparty endorsement of electoral reform and government decisions to bring forward such proposals, the most important multi-party accord rests between the governing party and the opposition. Should the governing party and official opposition find themselves concurrently supporting a similar electoral reform, this would alter the dynamic of a committee outcome such as the ERRE. As mentioned, it is possible that one party could find themselves endorsing electoral reform to capture a progressive image with the electorate, while another could do so imagining a perceived benefit following a disproportional election outcome.

As the study of Canadian federal electoral reform continues, it seems likely that these key exogenous factors will attain increased importance in explanations of the determinants of electoral reform. Future research would do well to give them more attention.

## REFERENCES

- Barnes, A., & Robertson, J. R. (2009, August 18). Electoral Reform Initiatives in Canadian Provinces. *Library of Parliament Canada*. Retrieved January 15, 2017, from <http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb0417-e.htm>
- Barnes, A., Bedard, M., Hyslop, C., Spano, S., Pare, J.-R., & Robertson, J. R. (2011, 09 12). *Library of Parliament Canada*. Retrieved from Library of Parliament Research Publications: <http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2011-83-e.pdf>
- Barney, D. D., & Laycock, D. (1999). Right-Populists and Plebiscitary Politics in Canada. *PARTY POLITICS*, 5(3), 317-339.
- BC NDP. (2017). *Working For You: Our Commitments to Build a Better BC*. n.p. Retrieved 04 15, 2017, from <https://action.bcndp.ca/page/-/bcndp/docs/bc-ndp-platform-book.pdf>
- Bennett, W. L. (2012, November). The Personalization of Politics: Political Identity, Social Media, and Changing Patterns of Participation. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 644, 20-39.
- Bernaer, J., Giger, N., & Rosset, J. (2013). Mind the gap: Do proportional electoral systems foster a more equal representation of women and men, poor and rich? *International Political Science Review*, 36(1), 78-98.
- Blais, A. (2008). To Keep or To Change First Past The Post? The Politics of Electoral Reform. In A. Blais (Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Blais, A., & Carty, R. (1990). Does proportional representation foster voter turnout? *European Journal of Political Research*, 18(2), 167-181.

- Blau, A. (2004). A quadruple whammy for first-past-the-post. *Electoral Studies*, 23(3), 431-453.
- Blau, A. (2008). Electoral Reform in the UK: A Veto Player Analysis. In A. Blais, & A. Blais (Ed.), *To Keep or To Change First Past The Post? The Politics of Electoral Reform* (pp. 61-89). New York: Oxford Scholarship Online. Retrieved from <<http://www.myilibrary.com?ID=185324>>
- Bol, D. (2014). *Strategic Voting under PR: Evidence from the 2010 Swedish General Election*. Making Electoral Democracy Work. Retrieved from <http://electoraldemocracy.com/strategic-voting-pr-evidence-2010-swedish-general-election-1293>
- Bol, D. (2016, December 9). Electoral reform, values and party self-interest. *Party Politics*, 22(1), 93-104.
- Boulerice, A. (2016, August 30). *House of Commons*. 42nd Parliament, 1st Session. Retrieved March 18, 2017, from <https://openparliament.ca/committees/electoral-reform/42-1/18/alexandre-boulerice-3/only/>
- Bowler, S., & Donovan, T. (2008). Election Reform and (the Lack of) Electoral System Change in the USA. In A. Blais, & A. Blais (Ed.), *To Keep or Change First Past the Post? The Politics of Electoral Reform*. New York: Oxford Scholarship Online. Retrieved February 11, 2017, from <<http://www.myilibrary.com?ID=185324>>
- Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2008). Social Network Sites: Definition, History and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210-230.
- Cain, B. E., Dalton, R. J., & Scarrow, S. E. (Eds.). (2003). *Democracy Transformed?* New York: Oxford University Press.

- Cairns, A. C. (1968). The Electoral System and the Party System in Canada, 1921-65. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 1(1), 55-80.
- Calvo, E. H. (2011, January). Centripetal and Centrifugal Incentives under Different Electoral Systems. *American Journal of Political Science*, 55(1), 27-41.
- CBC. (2017, 02 28). *Canada Votes*. Retrieved from Federal Election Results 2015:  
<http://www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/results-2015/>
- Conservative Party of Canada. (2016, 12 09). *Statement from Scott Reid and Blake Richards responding to comments made by the Minister of Democratic Institutions on the Liberal plan for changing Canada's electoral system*. Retrieved from Conservative.ca:  
<http://www.conservative.ca/statement-from-scott-reid-and-blake-richards-responding-to-comments-made-by-the-minister-of-democratic-institutions-on-the-liberal-plan-for-changing-canadas-electoral-system/>
- Courtney, J. C. (2012). Can Canada's Past Electoral Reforms Help Us to Understand the Debate over Its Method of Election? In R. S. Patti Tamara Lenard, P. T. Lenard, & R. Simeon (Eds.), *Imperfect Democracies: The Democratic Deficit in Canada and the United States*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Cox, G. W. (1990, November). Centripetal and Centrifugal Incentives in Electoral Systems. *American Journal of Political Science*, 34(4), 903-935.
- Cox, G. W. (1997). *Making Votes Count: Strategic Voting in the World's Electoral Systems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cullen, N., Boulterice, A., & May, E. (2016). *Supplementary Opinion of the NDP and the Green Party on Electoral Reform: A Strong Mandate for Proportional Representation*. Retrieved

from

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=e&Mode=1&Parl=42&Ses=1&DocId=8655791&File=435>

Dalton, R. J. (2008). Citizenship Norms and the Expansion of Political Participation. *Political Studies*, 56, 76-98.

Dalton, R. J., & Gray, M. (2003). Expanding the Electoral Marketplace. In B. E. Cain, R. J. Dalton, & S. E. Scarrow, *Democracy Transformed? Expanding Political Opportunities in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (pp. 23-43). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Duverger, M. (1954). *Political parties: their organization and activity in the modern state*. New York: Wiley.

Election Expenses. (2000). In R. Marleau, & M. Camille, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* (2000 Edition ed.). Parliament of Canada. Retrieved 03 09, 2017, from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/marleaumontpetit/DocumentViewer.aspx?Sec=Ch04&Seq=6&Language=E>

Elections Canada. (2017, 03 07). *A History of the Vote in Canada*. Retrieved from Elections Canada:

<http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=his&document=chap2&lang=e>

Fair Vote Canada. (2017, March 28). *Fairvote.ca/about*. Retrieved from Fair Vote Canada:

<http://www.fairvote.ca/about/>

Froio, C., Bevan, S., & Jennings, W. (2016). Party mandates and the politics of attention: Party platforms, public priorities and the policy agenda in Britain. *Party Politics*, 1-12.

Fung, A. (2006). Varieties of Participation in Complex Governance. *Public Administration Review*, 66(1), 66-75.

Gallagher, M., & Mitchell, P. (2005). *The Politics of Electoral Systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

German, K. (2011, 08 2). *A brief history of Android phones*. Retrieved from Cnet.com:

<https://www.cnet.com/news/a-brief-history-of-android-phones/>

Global News. (2016, May 12). *Tories on electoral reform: Liberals 'want decisions to be made by*

*Twitter'*. Retrieved from Global News: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2697926/tories-on-electoral-reform-liberals-want-decisions-to-made-by-twitter/>

Government of Canada. (2004). *Ethics, Responsibility, Accountability - An Action Plan for*

*Democratic Reform*. Privy Council Office. Retrieved 03 05, 2017, from <http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/docs/information/publications/aarchives/dr-rd/docs/dr-rd-eng.pdf>

Government of Canada. (2004). *Ethics, Responsibility, Accountability: An Action Plan for*

*Democratic Reform*. Ottawa: Privy Council Office.

Government of Canada. (2007, 10 16). *Speeches from the Throne - Canada*. Retrieved from

[poltext.org: https://www.poltext.org/fr/discours-du-tr%C3%B4ne-canadiens](https://www.poltext.org/fr/discours-du-tr%C3%B4ne-canadiens)

Government of Canada. (2014, 07 10). *Library of Parliament - Government of Canada*. Retrieved

from LEGAL MEASURES GOVERNING CHANGES IN FEDERAL ELECTORAL DISTRICTS:

<http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/compilations/HouseOfCommons/legislation/LegislationElectoralDistrict.aspx>

Government of Canada. (2016). *Your guide to hosting a successful dialogue on Canadian federal electoral reform*. n.p. Retrieved 11 27, 2016, from <http://pco.gc.ca/docs/ppts/er-toolkit-en.pdf>

Green Party of Canada. (2006). *2006 Election Platform: We Can*. n.p. Retrieved 02 05, 2016, from [https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can2006green\\_plt\\_en.\\_14112008\\_165902.pdf](https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can2006green_plt_en._14112008_165902.pdf)

Howe, P., Johnston, R., & Blais, A. (2005). *Strengthening Canadian Democracy*. Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy.

Ingle, S. (1995). Electoral reform in New Zealand: The implications for Westminster systems. *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 1(4), 76-92.

Jacobs, K., & Leyenaar, M. (2011, April 11). A Conceptual Framework for Major, Minor and Technical Electoral Reform. *West European Politics*, 34(3), 495-513.

Joyal, S. (2005). *Protecting Canadian Democracy - The Senate You Never Knew*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Kenney, J. (2001, February 20). *37th Parliament, 1st Session*. Retrieved from Parliament of Canada: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=37&Ses=1&DocId=1241020#LINK196>

Koc-Michalska, K., & Lilleker, D. (2016, October 26). Digital Politics: Mobilization, Engagement, and Participation. *Digital Politics*, 34(1), 1-5.

Law Commission of Canada. (2004). *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. Government of Canada. Retrieved 02 04, 2017, from

<http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/J31-61-2004E.pdf>

LeDuc, L. (2005, Jan). *Making Votes Count: How Well Did Our Electoral System Perform?*

Retrieved from Elections Canada:

<http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=eim/issue16&document=p8&lang=e>

Liberal Party of Canada. (1984). *The Issues - John Turner Speaks Out*. Canada. Retrieved 11 12, 2016, from <https://www.poltext.org/en/part-1-electronic-political-texts/electronic-manifestos-canada>

Liberal Party of Canada. (1988). *This Is More Than An Election, It's Your Future. Vote Liberal*. n.p.

Retrieved 01 19, 2017, from poltext.org:

[https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can1988lib\\_communique\\_en\\_12072011\\_132536.pdf](https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can1988lib_communique_en_12072011_132536.pdf)

Liberal Party of Canada. (2006). *Securing Canada's Success*. Retrieved 11 03, 2016, from

[https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can2006lib\\_plt\\_en\\_14112008\\_165437.pdf](https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can2006lib_plt_en_14112008_165437.pdf)

Liberal Party of Canada. (2015). *Real Change: A New Plan for a Strong Middle Class. Liberal Party Election Platform*, p. 27. Retrieved 11 15, 2016, from <https://www.poltext.org/en/part-1-electronic-political-texts/electronic-manifestos-canada>

Library of Parliament. (2016). *Electoral Systems and Electoral Reform in Canada and Elsewhere: An Overview*. Legal and Social Affairs Division, Parliamentary Information and Research

- Service. Retrieved 03 01, 2017, from  
<http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2016-06-e.pdf>
- Lijphart, A. (1994). *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lijphart, A. (2012). *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (2nd ed.). Yale: Yale University Press.
- Loader, B. D., & Mercea, D. (2011). Networking Democracy? Social media innovations and participatory politics. *Information, Communication & Society*, 14(6), 757-769.
- lop.parl.gc.ca. (2016, 10 20). *WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE IN CANADA*. Retrieved from  
PARLIAMENT of CANADA - PARLINFO:  
<http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/ParlInfo/Compilations/ProvinceTerritory/ProvincialWomenRightToVote.aspx>
- Mamiit, A. (2016, 01 09). *A Brief History of the iPhone*. Retrieved from Tech Times:  
<http://www.techtimes.com/articles/123053/20160109/apple-announced-first-iphone-on-january-9-2007-heres-a-brief-history-of-the-iphone.htm>
- Massicotte, L. (2005). Canada: Sticking to First-Past-the-Post, for the Time Being. In M. Gallagher, & P. Mitchell (Eds.), *The Politics of Electoral Systems* (pp. 99-118). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Massicotte, L. (2017, 03 07). *The Evolution of the Duties to be Fulfilled by Poll Staff with Regards to Registration and Voting on Polling Day and Advance Polling Days, 1920 to 2012*. Retrieved from Elections Canada:  
<http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=cons/comp/evol&document=intro&lang=e>

- Melillo, W. (2000, October 30). A New Strategy: Vote Swapping. *ADWEEK Eastern Edition*, 41(44). Retrieved 02 16, 2017, from <http://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/new-strategy-vote-swapping-29529/>
- Milner, H. (2009). Does Proportional Representation Boost Turnout. *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems*. n.p. Retrieved from [http://www.cses.org/plancom/2009Toronto/CSES\\_2009Toronto\\_Milner.pdf](http://www.cses.org/plancom/2009Toronto/CSES_2009Toronto_Milner.pdf)
- Moscrop, D. (2016). *An Electoral System for All*. Broadbent Institute.
- Norris, P. (1997). Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems. *International Political Science Review*, 18(3), 297-312.
- Norris, P. (2008). *Driving Democracy: Do Power-Sharing Institutions Work?* New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Norris, P. (2011). Cultural Explanations of Electoral Reform: A Policy Cycle Model. *West European Politics*, 34(3), 531-550.
- Otis, D. (2016, December 05). *Electoral reform survey sparks online backlash*. Retrieved from CTV News: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/electoral-reform-survey-sparks-online-backlash-1.3190554>
- parl.gc.ca. (2016, 10 23). *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*. Retrieved from PARLIAMENT of CANADA: Parliamentary Business: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/procedure-book-livre/document.aspx?sbdid=2ae20cbe-e824-466b-b37c-8941bbc99c37&sbpid=3>
- Parliament of Canada. (2016, 06 07). *Mandate of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform*. Retrieved from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Committees/en/ERRE/About>

Parliament of Canada. (2017, 03 07). *Electoral Results By Party*. Retrieved from Elections and Ridings:

<http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/Compilations/ElectionsAndRidings/ResultsParty.aspx>

Parliament of Canada. (2017, 03 06). *Parliament of Canada - ERRE Special Committee on*

*Electoral Reform*. Retrieved from parl.gc.ca: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Committees/en/ERRE>

Parliament of Canada. (2017). *PARLINFO - Legislatures*. Retrieved 03 07, 2017, from Women's

Right to Vote in Canada:

<http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/ParlInfo/Compilations/ProvinceTerritory/ProvincialWomenRightToVote.aspx>

Pilon, D. (2007). *The politics of voting: reforming Canada's electoral system*. Toronto: Montgomery Publications.

Pilon, D. (2015). Electoral Reform: Here's the evidence, Mr. Trudeau. *Inroads*(Summer/Fall), 51-60.

Political Database of the Americas. (1999). *Canada: 1984 Parliamentary Elections*. Retrieved from Political Database of the Americas:

<http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Elecdata/Canada/parl84.html>

Progressive Conservative Party of Canada. (1988). *Politiques en Bref*. Retrieved 01 18, 2017, from

[https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can1988pc\\_plt.\\_14112008\\_181252.pdf](https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can1988pc_plt._14112008_181252.pdf)

Progressive Conservative Party of Canada. (1988). *Politiques En Bref - 1988*. n.p.

- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: the collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Ratner, R. (2005). The BC Citizens' Assembly: The Public Hearings and Deliberations Stage. *28(1)*, 24-33.
- Reform Party of Canada. (1988). *Platform & Statement of Principles*. n.p.
- Reid, S. (2005). The Road to Electoral Reform. *28(3)*, 4-8.
- Renwick, A. (2009). DO 'WRONG WINNER' ELECTIONS TRIGGER ELECTORAL REFORM? LESSONS FROM NEW ZEALAND. *Representation, 45(4)*, 357-367.  
doi:10.1080/00344890903235256
- Renwick, A. (2010). *The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sarwar, M., & Soomro, T. R. (2013). Impact of Smartphone's on Society. *European Journal of Scientific Research, 98(2)*, 216-226.
- Scarpaleggia, F. (2016, 06 23). *Francis Scarpaleggia Member of Parliament*. Retrieved from  
RELEASE: FRANCIS SCARPALEGGIA ELECTED CHAIR OF ELECTORAL REFORM COMMITTEE:  
<http://fscarpaleggia.liberal.ca/news-nouvelles/release-francis-scarpaleggia-elected-chair-of-electoral-reform-committee/>
- Scarpaleggia, F., Aldag, J., DeCoursey, M., Romando, S., & Sahota, R. (2016). *Supplemental Report of the Liberal Members of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform*. Liberal Party of Canada.

- Sevi, S., & Blais, A. (2016). *Ensuring young people are heard on electoral reform*. Retrieved November 30, 2016, from <http://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/october-2016/ensuring-young-people-are-heard-on-electoral-reform/>
- Shugart, M. S. (2008). Inherent and Contingent Factors in Reform Initiation in Plurality Systems. In A. Blais (Ed.), *To Keep or Change First Past the Post*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, J. (2017, January 25). *Liberal government chewing on 'ambiguous' results of survey on electoral reform*. Retrieved from Winnipeg Free Press: <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/canada/lib-push-for-ranked-ballot-would-be-political-nuclear-war-says-cullen-411806365.html>
- Special Committee on Electoral Reform. (2016). *Strengthening Democracy in Canada: Principles, Process and Public Engagement for Electoral Reform*. Ottawa: Parliament of Canada.
- Statistics Canada. (2017, 03 07). *Estimated population of Canada, 1605 to present*. Retrieved from Statscan Censuses of Canada: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/98-187-x/4151287-eng.htm>
- Supreme Court of Canada. (2014). *Reference re Senate Reform*. SCC 32 - Docket 35203.
- The Conservative Party of Canada. (2006). *Stand up for Canada*. n.p. Retrieved 02 05, 2016, from [https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can2006pc\\_plt\\_en.\\_14112008\\_165519.pdf](https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can2006pc_plt_en._14112008_165519.pdf)
- The New Democratic Party. (2006). *Jack Layton: Getting results for people*. n.p. Retrieved 10 28, 2016, from

[https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can2006ndp\\_plt\\_en.\\_14112008\\_165642.pdf](https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can2006ndp_plt_en._14112008_165642.pdf)

The New Democratic Party of Canada. (1988). *Meeting the Challenge*. Party Platform. Retrieved 01 18, 2017, from [https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can1988ndp\\_plt\\_en.\\_14112008\\_181303.pdf](https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can1988ndp_plt_en._14112008_181303.pdf)

The New Democrats. (1988). *A Fair Deal for Canada*. n.p.

The Reform Party of Canada. (1988). *Platform and Statement of Principles*. Party Platform. Retrieved 01 18, 2017, from [https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can1989r\\_plt\\_en\\_12072011\\_125440.pdf](https://www.poltext.org/sites/poltext.org/files/plateformes/can1989r_plt_en_12072011_125440.pdf)

Wardt, M. v. (2014). Putting the damper on: Do parties de-emphasize issues in response to internal divisions among their supporters? *Party Politics*, 20(3), 330-340.

Wherry, A. (2016, February 05). *NDP wants to use proportional representation to decide fate of first-past-the-post*. Retrieved from CBC News - Politics: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/ndp-liberals-electoral-reform-1.3434297>

Young, L. (2012). Regulating Political Finance in Canada, Contributions to Democracy? In P. T. Lenard, & R. Simeon (Eds.), *Imperfect Democracies* (pp. 138-160). Vancouver: UBC Press.