

described how unsettling this protean quality was to the European observer. In one of the highlights of the book, Wiseman very carefully explains how the two major parties essentially “traded places” (99) on a number of key issues over the course of the twentieth century. On free trade with the United States, for instance, Brian Mulroney’s Progressive Conservative government ultimately negotiated a comprehensive trade deal with the Americans in the late 1980s that was stridently opposed by the Liberals, essentially reversing the two parties’ positions from earlier in the century. In Wiseman’s telling, these policy reversals—which also occurred in the area of provincial rights (101–2), state enterprise (102) and, to a certain extent, the Quebec question (103)—were not so much the product of electoral opportunism as a natural outgrowth of the party elites’ efforts to reshape their competitive partisan environments. Political parties, Wiseman reminds us, are both transmission belts between state and society *and* organizations that shape the polity, economy and culture in general. In other words, the “causal arrow” between party and society “points both ways” (ix).

In his concluding chapter, Wiseman focuses on the manifold ways in which “the nimble and enterprising modern party” has reinvented itself as an institution (xiv). Here he engages directly, albeit in a rather compressed fashion, with the current social science literature on Canadian political parties as organizations, examining in turn party leadership selection mechanisms, the role of party members, party finance, the role of the media and party identification. His main takeaway is that tropes of party decline are entirely unwarranted in the Canadian case: “To be sure, there is more disillusionment with Canada’s parties today than in the past but they continue to dominate the political landscape” (158). This may well be true, but one of the shortcomings of this otherwise perceptive analysis is that the author fails to devote adequate attention to recent large-scale changes in representative democracy—not just in Canada but in most of the so-called advanced democracies—many of them enabled by social media and other new technologies of communication. Wiseman is thus not in a position to rule out more pessimistic theses about the condition of the outwardly strong parties of today, such as Peter Mair’s (2013) argument that these organizations are now ruling over a democratic void—that they have become, in effect, the main players in what is mostly a “spectator democracy.”

Wiseman aims his book at “non-specialist students of Canadian politics . . . general readers . . . politically engaged citizens, journalists, and anyone else who wants to know more about the history of Canada’s political parties” (vii–viii). This intended audience, along with specialists in the field of party politics, will find in each chapter historically rich descriptions of the different eras of partisan competition, along with occasionally surprising (or overlooked) nuggets of information, in a narrative that is written with considerable verve.

## Reference

Mair, Peter. 2013. *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy*. London: Verso.

## Doing Politics Differently? Women Premiers in Canada’s Provinces and Territories

Sylvia Bashevkin, ed., Vancouver: UBC Press, 2019, pp. 332.

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Canadian first ministers at the federal and provincial levels have much say in the direction of government, and since 1867 such leadership positions have been almost exclusively occupied by

men. Only recently has the number of female first ministers increased to the point where it is feasible to assemble a set of essays about them. In this excellent edited collection of 11 insightful essays about 12 cases of women's subnational leadership, Sylvia Bashevkin presents the first comprehensive book about women premiers.

The cases represent different periods, parties and social contexts; the common thread is a focus on when women attain leadership positions. The authors of the chapters throughout the book use a threefold classification of leadership contexts. The first is imperilled leadership. Women leaders in this category assumed control of parties that had been successful in the past but then entered a period of decline. The second category, empowered leadership, contains cases of experienced, popular governing parties that selected a new female leader who could win the premier's office in the next election. The third category, pioneering leadership, combines aspects of imperilled and empowered leadership. Pioneering leadership occurs when the head of a long-term opposition party brings her party to power for the first time, and these politicians "carry the positive halo that comes from turning the tables on an established governing elite and installing a new regime" (11). The chapters also employ a common framework to examine how women's leadership has shaped the climate of political debate, the content of public policy and the numbers of women in party, cabinet and civil service positions (5).

Three territorial cases in the book's first section effectively illustrate the specific contexts and important differences that mark women's political leadership. Graham White's study of Nellie Cournoyea's trailblazing term as the first Aboriginal woman to become a Canadian first minister when she led the Northwest Territories' government in the early 1990s underscores her dedication to serving her community. White concludes that in terms of her approaches and accomplishments, "Cournoyea must be considered first and foremost an Aboriginal premier and only secondarily a woman premier" (52). In studying Pat Duncan's leadership of Yukon from 2000 to 2002, Maura Forrest notes she was the first woman to win an election where the other competing parties were led by men (56). Although Duncan appointed the first gender-balanced cabinet in Canadian history after entering office, Forrest finds her governmental priorities were largely economic rather than gendered ones (78). The final essay, concerning Eva Aariak's role in leading Nunavut from 2008 to 2013, is presented by Sheena Kennedy Dalseg as a case study of change-oriented leadership exercised by a leader sincerely devoted to finding consensus, a style that complemented Inuit cultural norms informing the legislative context (96).

The next section contains two essays about women's leadership in Atlantic Canada. Catherine Callbeck, the first woman ever elected as a provincial leader when she won office in Prince Edward Island in 1993, is analyzed by Don Desserud and Robin Sutherland as a premier who was successful in striking a balance among competing policy priorities (112). Drew Brown, Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant and Amanda Bittner probe the leadership of Kathy Dunderdale, who served as Newfoundland and Labrador's premier from 2010 to 2014. They note that although Dunderdale was a strong proponent of women's rights and gender equality, she devoted so much attention to hydroelectric development and several political crises that "gender-related issues seemed to fall off the radar screen" (133).

With respect to central Canada, in chapter 7, Philippe Bernier Arcand examines Pauline Marois's paradoxical record as Quebec premier from 2012 to 2014. Although she claimed to be a strong advocate for women's rights, during her leadership women's numerical representation in cabinet actually declined (167), and her understanding of nationalism and social values was narrowly focused on the francophone, Quebec-born majority (169). In chapter 8, Bashevkin gives an account of Kathleen Wynne's leadership as Ontario's first woman premier from 2013 to 2018. She notes Wynne moved women's cabinet representation beyond a "glass ceiling" of 42 per cent, concluding that her time in office "constituted a key breakthrough not

just for women but also for sexual orientation minorities” (192). Yet other aspects of Wynne’s record were much less transformative.

In the final section, the book’s attention shifts to the west. Tracy Summerville analyzes the leadership of Rita Johnson and Christy Clark. Although both women were selected to head parties in British Columbia fraught with controversy, Clark managed to lead her party to its fourth consecutive win in 2013, becoming the province’s first popularly elected female premier (204–5). The last two chapters concern Alberta. Clark Banack finds premier Alison Redford did not “move the needle” much on women’s issues during her time in the premier’s office from 2011 to 2014, perhaps owing to the constraints imposed by her right-wing caucus (239). Melanee Thomas underscores that Rachel Notley’s victory in the 2015 election made Alberta the first province to elect a woman-led government twice in a row. Premier Notley actively used the levers of the state to improve women’s political representation and entrench gender identity rights within provincial law (264).

This engaging book will be a popular addition to class curricula, particularly those concerning provincial/territorial politics, gender and politics, intersectional studies, leadership studies and Canadian elections. The work helpfully exemplifies the many policy, party, identity and gender-based challenges each woman premier faced while in office. In answering whether they “do politics differently,” the analysts communicate these women premiers could have used their official powers more actively to ameliorate the many inequalities, injustices and barriers that women face. Bashevkin notes in her summary chapter: “Given that they were responsible for making these institutions work, women premiers tended to adopt many of the same repertoires as did the men who preceded and succeeded them” (287). As the editor observes, this volume opens up new scholarly terrain, and it ought to lead academics to engage the many questions it raises and test some of the answers it provides.

## Policy Transformation in Canada: Is the Past Prologue?

**Carolyn Hughes Tuohy, Sophie Borwein, Peter John Loewen and Andrew Potter, eds., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019, pp. 200**

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This edited book examines major aspects of Canadian public policy in light of changes between Canada’s 1967 centennial and its 2017 sesquicentennial. It contains a wide variety of material. One main theme is that Canada has developed a partially effective and resilient set of intergovernmental relationships. These relationships are not without challenges, but in general they have functioned reasonably well. Another major theme is that the centennial period was a time of big ideas and big programs, and this sort of expansive vision has not been consistently preserved over the intervening years in dealing with long-standing problems, as well as with more recently emergent issues.

There are four major sections to the book. The first is titled “Generational Prospects, Then and Now.” Here we find a great deal of useful analysis pertaining to the aging of the population and the reduction of opportunities for the currently young. The second part of the book is titled “The Economy, the Environment, and the Federation.” This section provides an informative picture of the engines that have driven, and may continue to drive, the economy in a time when many aspirational goals affect the economy in major ways. There is also an analysis of the imbalance between federal and total provincial expenditures and some of its implications