

**Mapping Contemporary Canadian English-Speaking Conservatism:
an examination of axioms, core policies, ideological opponents and
intellectual/emotional appeals**

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*To the memory of my grandfather, Papa David:
I did not and could not understand you
until the reading of George Grant
and the writing of this text.*

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Abstract

Canadian political ideas are commonly accessed through traditional political culture or brokerage politics frames. This literature, while explaining certain political phenomenon in a robust way, fails to adequately appreciate the nuance in contemporary Canadian political ideas. A particularly fertile ground for an exploration of these ideas is in the study of contemporary Canadian conservatism. Through an examination of conservative scholars, pundits and political actors, four distinct strains of conservatism are identified and examined for axioms, core policy recommendations and affective appeals employed. Conservatism is demonstrated to be a multilayered and complex contemporary ideology displaying a remarkable diversity of ideas and understandings of the world. Despite these broad differences in core ideas and policy prescriptions and a number of key sites of disagreement, contemporary conservative ideologies remain bound by a core set of ideas and a common vernacular.

Introduction: Canadian Ideology and Conservatism

Canadian scholars, pundits, journalists and politicians provide a steady flow of material purporting to explore, explain and narrate Canadian politics. These explanations tend to focus on material concerns—settlement patterns, formative events, economic realities, the propensities of the Canadian electorate, the character of individual politicians and thinkers, etc.—which somehow are said to determine the values, principles, political culture and even the ideologies of Canadians and Canada. As a consequence of these modes of analysis, politics and political thinking in Canada have largely been understood as barely- or non-ideological. However, economic, social and cultural debate in Canada has consistently demonstrated the existence of polarized values and principles which has led to the adoption of an extensive system of signifiers to help ground political identities and discriminate between ideological traditions. ‘Left’, ‘right’, ‘conservative’, ‘liberal’ and ‘socialist’ signify hegemonic concepts employed in discussions, both popular and academic, of Canadian political life. Each of these terms reduces an otherwise complex and amorphous sets of ideas, or ideological tradition, to easily transmittable and understood nuggets of information. These nuggets efface nuance and fail to demonstrate an appropriate degree of humility in approaching the diversity within each tradition. This is particularly true when trying to understand contemporary English-speaking¹ Canadian conservative thought.

¹ This work focuses exclusively on English-speaking conservatism. This author recognizes the value of studying the various strains of French-speaking conservatism found in Quebec and across Canada, but has chosen to engage in a detailed study of English-speaking conservatism. This is done partly to allow for clear strains of conservative ideology to emerge and partly to constrain the already-ambitious breadth of material covered in this work. Those readers interested in French-speaking Canadian conservatism are referred to *Les Nouveaux Visages du Nationalisme Conservateur au Québec* (Piotte and Couture, 2012).

Contemporary Canadian conservatism often looks differently, behaves differently and is articulated differently than a classical understanding of conservatism would otherwise suggest. In acknowledging the complexity and diversity of Canadian conservatism, there is opportunity for a thorough investigation of this multifaceted and complex political and ideological tradition.

This project, then, is an illuminating one that seeks to outline Canadian conservatism as it exists today. Methodologically, this work engages in close textual readings of a number of key contemporary exemplars who have been explicitly or implicitly associated with the different faces of conservatism. These exemplars are examined in search of axioms, core policies, ideological opposition and emotional/intellectual appeals. The thus identified ideology of these exemplars allows a cartographical production which will at times challenge and at other times reinforce a singular concept of Canadian conservatism. Challenge through demonstrating the plurality of axioms, core policy recommendations, principles and emotional appeals which exist in the textual, political and oral productions of contemporary conservatives; and reinforce through a final synthesis aimed at identifying those commonalities across different identified strains of Canadian conservatism.

To render this robust understanding of the contemporary Canadian conservative map I have identified one key and one supplementary research question: (1) what diversity is found in contemporary Canadian conservative ideology? And: (2) what similarities unite disparate strains of Canadian conservative ideology?

This introduction outlines the roadmap of the project. First, a literature review exploring the conversations which have taken place on conservatism in Canada

demonstrates the imperative for this work. Next, an appropriate methodological approach is outlined. Finally, a brief look at the structure and contents of the proceeding chapters provides a chapter-by-chapter layout of the project.

Literature Review

A review of just those works which explicitly deal with Canadian conservative ideology would not only be tragically small, it would also ignore the uniquely Canadian method of trying to grasp our political world. In the interests of painting a fertile point of origin, this literature review covers material written on Canadian conservatives and conservatism from a variety of methodological perspectives. To understand how scholars have approached conservatism we will need to explore three strands of the study of conservatism in Canada: political culture, brokerage politics, and alternative methods. This style of literature review has necessarily sacrificed depth in exchange for breadth—each of the assessed strands feature works which are taken to be indicative of the scholarship at large.

Political Culture

The study of political culture in Canada has enjoyed significant attention of scholars at the expense of the study of ideology. Political culture seems to enjoy this position because of its ability to act “as a platform for a rumination on Canadian politics” (Wiseman 2007, 1). The more specific and difficult to assess ideology has been subsumed as a subsection of studies on political culture, a fact perhaps best demonstrated by Colin Campbell and William Christian’s texts on political parties and ideologies in which ideology is studied through appeals to political culture and confined into rigid categories of conservatism, liberalism, socialism and nationalism (1990).

Political culture in Canada is studied through four broad approaches: historical analysis, opinion survey research, constitutional and institutional studies, and political socialization (Wiseman 2007, 34). Of the four, only the historical analysis approach studies the power of ideas. The historical analysis approach most applied to the study of conservatism in Canada is known as Hartz-Horowitz fragment theory. In the mid-twentieth century, Louis Hartz published two seminal texts which have come to define much of the conversation on Canadian political culture (and by consequence: ideology): *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution* (1955) and *The Founding of New Societies: Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada and Australia* (1964). The approach taken by Hartz was to study new societies as products of the cultures from which they came. In what has been come to be known as the fragment theory, Hartz claimed that fragments of European culture, having left their ‘home’, become permanent and entrenched in their new contexts, having lost “the stimulus to change that the whole provides” (Hartz 1964, 1). Hartz’s fragment theory was first applied to Canada by Kenneth McRae who concluded that Canada was an “almost” two-fragment society—French and English with a “tory touch” (ibid., 219). Gad Horowitz, picking up on the “tory touch” two years later, famously described the unique character of canadian conservatism through the Canadian phenomenon of the ‘red tory’:

At the simplest level, he is a Conservative who prefers the CCF-NDP to the Liberals, or a socialist who prefers the Conservatives to the Liberals, without really knowing why. At a higher level, he is a conscious ideological Conservative with some “odd” socialist notions (W.L. Morton) or a conscious ideological socialist with some “odd” tory notions (Eugene Forsey). (1966, 159)

Horowitz’s adaptation of Hartz became the cornerstone of discussion of Canadian political thought and political culture. As Hugh Donald Forbes remarks, Horowitz’s 1966

piece is “one of the few things in the field that practically everyone has read and remembers” (1987, 287). Horowitz’s piece has since been “repeatedly and systematically assaulted” (Wiseman 1996, 367) and yet has proven resilient and potent in anchoring studies of conservatism, socialism and liberalism in Canada.

One of the harsher critiques of Horowitz comes in the form of a collection entitled *Canada’s Origins: Liberal, Tory or Republic*, edited by Janet Ajzenstat and Peter Smith and published in 1995. Ajzenstat concludes the discussion through the assertion that “we now know that there was no significant tory influence in Canada’s past” (Ajzenstat and Smith 1995, 65). Through directly challenging Horowitz’s original assertion about the conservative-socialist connection in Canada, Ajzenstat and Smith rewrite how conservatism should be understood in the Canadian context—claiming Canadian conservatism has a republican character rather than tory one. They are not alone in their republican characterization of Canadian conservatism, David Bercuson and Barry Cooper offer similar conclusions in their text *Derailed: The Betrayal of the National Dream* when they characterize Canadian conservatives as “by-the-bootstraps, ruggedly individual free enterprisers” (1994, 92). The four thinkers, however, do not explicitly adopt an alternative methodology, instead choosing to continue in the Hartz-Horowitz tradition of capturing history, ideology and political culture through readings of individuals, institutions and early settlers in Canada. However, the debate Ajzenstat, Smith, Bercusson and Cooper joined was hardly a new one. Scholars in Canada have historically debated the relative merit in the republican and tory conceptions of Canadian conservative ideology and culture. Battles have been waged over the character of John A. Macdonald and the value in understanding Canadian political culture as closer to that of

the United States or that of Britain. The historical focus has meant that historians studying the thought of influential Canadians came to take a prominent or even dominant role in understanding conservative ideology and political culture. Such battles are described in some detail in a chapter entitled The World We Have Lost in Philip Massolin's *Canadian Intellectuals, the Tory Tradition, and the Challenge of Modernity, 1939-1970* (2001, 216-217).

Many scholars do not explicitly admit their participation in the debate but tacitly endorse one view or the other through their employment of Hartz-Horowitz. Christian Leuprecht in The Tory Fragment in Canada: Endangered Species continues to assert that "Immigration is believed to have a formative impact on political culture" (2003, 401). Leuprecht does recognize that "the claim that patterns of immigration that date back decades still have a bearing on contemporary political culture presumes that changes in political culture are gradual" (ibid., 405), however, reads the major political realignment in the 1993 federal election as the product of the difference in the tory fragments dispersed throughout Canada. Again, ancient claims about political culture are repeated to explain complex and contemporary phenomenon.

Throughout these political history debates, little attempt was made to speak of ideology as distinct from political culture. A notable exception is found in Christian and Campbells' extension of Hartz-Horowitz in their works on ideologies in Canada through three editions of *Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada* (1974, 1983 and 1990) and their subsequent *Parties, Leaders, and Ideologies in Canada* (1996). Christian and Campbell offer an explicit treatment of ideology and lay out their conclusion as follows:

Our study has convinced us that Canadians have long held strong opinions on the importance of liberty, individualism, social coherence, hierarchy, and equality, and that these views are ideological in nature. By framing politics and appealing through slogans that incorporate some of these values,

our political leaders have regularly made use of ideology. (1996, 1)

An organic and evolving conception of ideology still rooted in the legacy of “raw European political ideas” (1996, 4) allowed Christian and Campbell to deftly navigate changing political climates and contribute meaningfully to a field caught up in defining and redefining the past. Ideology under Christian and Campbell, while still bound into broad amorphous categories, integrated recent political events with the familiar historical understanding of political culture. However, their reliance on Hartz-Horowitz meant that debates in the past continued to dominate how they perceived contemporary ideologies. Christian and Campbell’s steadfast commitment to the Hartz-Horowitz method is revealed as follows: “a large part of the history of Canadian Conservatism has consisted of the shifting balance between the business liberal and the tory elements within the party. In partnership since the 1850s, each has been influenced by the compromises it has had to make with the other for the sake of party unity” (1990, 102).

This blended methodology was subjected to a test in the 1996 publication where Christian and Campbell were dealt a contemporary reality which included a deeply wounded Progressive Conservative Party and two emergent political movements, Reform and the Bloc Québécois, were not necessarily captured by their four ideological categories (conservatism, liberalism, socialism and nationalism). In a particularly revealing section of their 1996 text, Christian and Campbell deal with the emergent Reform Party by framing it as a similar ideology to terms already comfortable: “business liberalism” in the guise of populism (204). Populism, however, was not presented as an ideology in the first three iterations of Christian and Campbell’s texts—it was only the emergence of the Bloc Québécois and the Reform parties on the federal political scene that urgently required the addition of populism to the other ‘big four’ ideologies.

The treatment of ideology amongst this first group of authors can be understood through Wiseman's assertion that "ideologies or political philosophies may be defined, dissected, and debated at a metaphysical level without reference to any specific group, society or nation" (2007, 204). Ideologies are distinct from their contexts and this is what allows political history scholars to define ideology only in the most vague and abstract terms while anchoring that which is real and definable in 'political culture'.

Party Politics and Brokerage Theory

The study of political parties is what grounds and popularizes the study of conservatism in Canada. The successes and failures of Canadian conservative political parties has been used as a *de facto* metric for measuring the relative strength and validity of different strains of conservative Canadian political thought and ideology. However, while some thinkers have chosen to employ elections as a means to inform their study of Canadian political thought, the vast majority of writing on political parties has not, in fact, engaged ideological studies in a substantive and positive manner, instead choosing (or defaulting to) conventional brokerage theory narratives. Those who fall into this category make up the most extensive body of literature covering Canadian conservatism, including numerous studies, kiss-and-tell's, and explicitly partisan works. While this section of the literature contains non-academic material, it does provide valuable insight into how conservatism is perceived and understood in popular culture.

One of the oldest and most relevant studies of conservative politics is found in John Irving's *The Social Credit Movement in Alberta* (1959). Irving's matter-of-fact descriptions and treatment of the emergence of Social Credit in Alberta have been echoed in countless pages describing federal and provincial iterations of conservative parties. A

telling passage describing the early years of the Social Credit movement captures the essence of Irving's approach:

It is doubtful whether there could have been a successful Social Credit movement without Aberhart; it is equally doubtful whether he could have provided effective leadership without the resources of the [Calgary Prophetic Bible] Institute, over which he had undisputed control. (ibid., 50)

This passage speaks to how differently the study of parties would be conducted in Canada, relative to the political historians busy engaging with grand deterministic historical narratives. The founding of the Alberta Social Credit Party, which dominated provincial politics for over three decades, can be reduced to the actions and resources of one individual and his organization. Irving does not acknowledge the role of ideology or 'philosophy' in the movement beyond comments sprinkled throughout the text implying the existence of a religious social credit ideology. Irving does not offer a systematic methodology of accessing the ideology, choosing instead to focus on the material conditions of the party: early development strategy, economic policy, the main actors in the Social Credit movement, etc.

This treatment of ideology as implicit and obviously accessible can be found in contemporary works on conservatism as well. For example, in David Bercuson, J.L. Granatstein and W.R. Young's treatment of the Brian Mulroney government throughout the mid 1980s the following was said about the ideology of Mulroney:

Although his supporters in the 1983 leadership struggle had tended to come from the right wing of the party (anti-abortion, anti-metric, pro capital punishment, pro balanced budgets, pro defence spending, and anti-universality in social programs), Mulroney was not a reactionary. His instincts tended toward the red Tory positions on more questions...Like every politician, he was a creature of ambition, a man who sought power less for the sake of achieving great things with it, than for the sake of wielding it. (1986, 5)

Terms like reactionary, red tory, and right wing are used frequently and without explanation. These terms have been situated in a literature presupposing the above Hartz-Horowitz methodological consensus. Political parties, groups and individuals are not

understood as ideological agents *per say*, but rather as products of political cultures.

This tendency to minimize the role of ideology in favor of tacit assumptions about political culture and the essentially pragmatic nature of Canadian parties is most realized in the brokerage theory of Canadian political parties. Brokerage theory maintains that parties do not have clear and coherent ideological programs, and that they act pragmatically in order to appeal to the greatest number of voters at election time (Mintz, Tosutti and Dunn 2011, 207). Harold Clarke, Jane Jenson, Lawrence LeDuc and Jon Pammett make this case in three successive editions of *Absent Mandate: The politics of discontent in Canada* (1984), *Interpreting change in Canadian elections* (1991) and *Canadian electoral politics in an era of restructuring* (1996).

Brokerage theory informs much of the most recent literature on the Reform Party of Canada to Canadian Alliance to Conservative Party of Canada evolution. In a series of collections on the Canadian General Elections, Faron Ellis, Keith Archer and Peter Woolstencroft treat conservative election campaigns exclusively as negotiations and compromises (Frizzell and Pammett 1997, Pammett and Dornan 2001, 2004) between competing visions of conservatism in Canada. Insights into ideology in these texts can be uncovered in discussions of approach to party building and election strategy rather than in poignant descriptions of ideological positions.

Brokerage theory is taken even further by some scholars who attempt to wholly dilute thinkers and movements to pragmatic exercises. Bob Plamondon, in his work in *Blue Thunder: The truth about conservatives from Macdonald to Harper* focuses on the what he perceives to be the seven determinants of success and failure for federal conservative leaders (2009, 19). These determinants include: “Is the party united behind

them?”, “Do they build broad and sustainable coalitions?”, and “Do they divide and conquer their opponents?”. We see in Plamondon’s work the complete removal of ideology from Canadian politics—conservatives have not been successful because of an ideological victory or position but rather because they “were absolutely committed to winning”. While Plamondon is not directing his work towards the study of the ideological base of political parties, to not even speak of the relevance that ideology or even political culture has to electoral victories for the federal conservatives highlights the absolute poverty of ideological discussion in the Canadian context.

Not all authors are Plamondon, however, and some have been more discriminating in their treatment of the importance of ideology within the Canadian right. Writing in 1999, Steve Patten explores the ways in which the “New Right populist discourse” (27) found in the Reform Party will potentially influence policy in regards to the status of Quebec within Canadian federalism, multiculturalism and Aboriginal self-governance. Patten describes the Reform Party as follows:

When combined, Reform’s market liberalism, social conservatism and populism produce an ideological vision fraught with tensions—even contradictions—which sometime cloud the party’s vision of the Canadian nation. Nevertheless, this paper’s analysis will reveal that the Reform Party assumes that any political community is, at bottom, an aggregation of individuals who share an essential sameness that is more fundamental than any apparent differences. (ibid., 29)

Patten tellingly grounds the ideology of the Reform Party in several of the familiar terms of business liberalism, social conservatism and populism. Patten reflects a consistent use of Christian and Campbell’s broad amorphous ideologies in the literature on party politics. The Hartz-Horowitz foundation continues to exert a dampening influence which appears to force any discussion of ideology into these broad themes without the flexibility to address emergent or novel ideologies on their own terms.

Ultimately, the scholarship on party politics in Canada reinforces the understanding

of all Canadian ideology being the product of some combination of Horowitz's conservatism, socialism, liberalism, with populism and nationalism perhaps considered through an adaptation of one of the original 'big three'. For those few who imply ideology through the lens of party structure, electoral strategy, governing realities and rhetoric, the 'big three' continue to ground all understanding. "Any theory can be both useful and consistent by reducing everything to its own terms", said Christian and Campbell in regards to brokerage theory. This can be extended to include traditional ideological studies in Canada where Hartz-Horowitz continue to exert powerful and almost exclusive influence.

Alternative Approaches

While the study of conservatism in Canada is dominated by approaches found in party politics and political history, several writers have adopted diverse, flexible and creative approaches to studying conservative ideology in Canada. This final section of the literature review highlights several of these approaches to demonstrate the viability for alternative methods of reading political thought, ideology and culture in Canada.

One such method is outlined in texts such as Brooke Jeffrey's partisan *Hard Right Turn: The new face of neo-conservatism in Canada* (1999) where he takes the emerging conservative ideologies in Alberta and Ontario very seriously. Jeffrey opens by exploring the influence of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan on Mulroney before turning to the study of "Klein's Cowboys", "Mike and the Boys" and finally "Ignorant Gladiators and Phony Populists". Jeffrey's analysis, while almost conspiratorial in tone, is refreshing in its genuine grappling with what is perceived to be an alien ideological movement that has taken root in the Canadian population. Jeffrey suggests that genuine ideological change is

possible as the result of charismatic individuals, foreign influence, changing material conditions or a multitude of other factors. Jeffrey appears unencumbered by more traditional methods of reading Canadian political culture.

This sense of being unencumbered is reflected in a piece by Roger Gibbins entitled Conservatism in Canada: The Ideological Impact of the 1984 Election in the collection *The Resurgence of Conservatism in Anglo-American Democracies* (Cooper, Kornberg and Mishler, *The Resurgence of Conservatism in Anglo-American Democracies* 1988). Gibbins makes the assertion that Mulroney's Quebec background meant he was not exposed to the "Conservative traditions of Macdonald and Diefenbaker...He was thus able to fashion the Conservative party in his own image without reference to party norms and traditions" (1988, 345). Gibbins asserts that the Progressive Conservative Party under Mulroney was thus free to explore alternative "moorings". Again, this shift away from traditional understandings of Canadian political culture wherein all ideology is grounded in historical precedent opens the way to novel understanding. Gibbins may have proven to be remarkably clairvoyant in his suggestion that "one possibility is that [the alternative moorings] may be found in neoconservative thought and practice that have been so manifest in both Britain and the United States" (ibid.)

Gibbins, in partnership with Loleen Youngman, also published an introductory textbook entitled *Mindscales: Political Ideologies Towards the 21st Century* (1996). The text, while not explicitly directed at Canadian politics, does offer a look at eight ideologies: liberalism, conservatism, socialism, nationalism, populism, environmentalism, feminism and fascism, and does a fine job of generally avoiding the Hartz-Horowitz consensus. Choosing instead to employ literal 2-dimension spatial models of relative

ideological commitments to principles such as individualism and significant state involvement, Gibbins and Youngman seek to tap into ideology through the mapping of ideological space. While Gibbins and Youngman do perform the remarkable step of providing internal differentiation in those ideologies it studies, they fail to delve deeply into the uniquely Canadian environment and further fail to completely distance themselves from “the roots” of ideologies (1996, 66).

A third approach which focuses on individual tory thinkers in the Canadian tradition is Charles Taylor’s much-celebrated *Radical Tories: The Conservative Tradition in Canada* (1982). Romantic and quaint at times, Taylor’s methodology is decidedly unconventional. Taylor’s brief conclusion is arrived at through conversations with the great tory thinkers of the twentieth century. What is brilliant and enduring about Taylor’s methodology, however, is his genuine attempt to explore an ideological tradition through interaction with key individuals in the movement. Through close examination of the oral and written texts of a number of key tory thinkers, a synthesized, accessible ideological product is produced. Taylor, not being in the academic tradition, was similarly unencumbered with Hartz-Horowitz, although his conclusions about the tory tradition do resonate well with typical characterizations of the loyalist fragment.

These three authors, and others like them, who can be identified as practicing unconventional methods offer an escape from a Hartz-Horowitz and brokerage theory frames of analysis, however, focus on specific parties, issues, events or people at the expense of a more comprehensive understanding of Canadian conservatism. Moreover, there is little attempt in these texts to develop a wider concept of contemporary Canadian conservative ideology. In Canada, the treatment of ideology can be summed up in the

words of Nelson Wiseman: “Ideologies are paradigmatic absolutes” (1996, 348). An opening exists in the literature to explore the nuance within Canadian conservative ideology.

Methodology

While Canadian scholars tend to avoid the term ideology in any conversation addressing the ideas driving politics, there is a robust tradition in the discipline of ‘western’ political science of employing the study of ideas to understand both political and private worlds. A diverse set of authors stress the role that ideas and ideologies play in both political discussions and our everyday lives. Without delving deeply into any of the traditions, it is illustrative to look at several authors from different traditions to gain an appreciation of the role ideas play: Quentin Skinner in the historical tradition, Antonio Gramsci in the marxist tradition, Michel Foucault in the postmodern tradition, and Allan Bloom providing a contemporary conservative perspective.

Skinner, in his works tracing the history of thought (1978a and 1978b), pursues a thorough investigation into “*linguistic* context” (1988, 65) to reconstruct ideas and political discourse. Skinner, in his pursuit of the original intention behind speech acts, pushes the history of political thought towards a more ideologically-sensitive approach in the hope of “more readily exhibit[ing] the dynamic of the relationship...existing[ing] between the professed principles and the actual practices of political life (1988, 108). Gramsci, while focusing principally on material- and class-based concerns, is also profoundly aware a needed sensitivity towards the power of ideas and ideology. In his theory of cultural hegemony, Gramsci argues that the dominant class exerts its own internal ideology as universally valid (1987). The masses thus internalize an ideology or

system of thought which contradicts their rational interest. While this Marxist step removes the exclusive cerebral and disembodied nature of ideas in favor of materialism, the ideas themselves continue to be at stake. Further, this Marxist conception of ideology helps to inform an understanding of ideology as emerging out of opposition to existing hegemonies. This understanding informs this work through both providing one of the key lenses through which ideology is examined in addition to theoretically grounding the existence of ideology. Foucault, writing in the postmodern tradition, shifts from this Marxist thought by instead focusing on ideology as being a key component in the production of truths. While Foucault eschews the explicit study of ideology in favor of discourse, he argues that ideology is embedded in normative pronouncements, scientific or otherwise. This implicit embedding of ideology has significant implications for how an individual perceives the world around them and in how they act. Foucault does this text a further service by denying a pejorative and dismissive sense of ideology in stating that “[The presence of ideology] is not a sufficiently good reason to treat the totality of [those invested in the ideology] statements’ as being undermined by error, contradiction, and a lack of objectivity” (1972, 186). Finally, those authors who are the object of this study also demonstrate an investment in, and appreciation of, the importance of ideas. Bloom opens his popular text *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987) by decrying a simple truth: “There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative” (25). The book itself laments the contemporary crisis of ideas, wherein youth and society more broadly have internalized Nietzsche and through doing so have lost both a moral compass and more profoundly, a purpose to life. In this way Bloom identifies an ideological movement

and positions himself in opposition to it. Bloom hints here at how ideology is inherently oppositional and is most potent and motivated when presented with an opposition it finds unsavory.

Without situating ourselves in these traditions, Skinner, Gramsci, Foucault and Bloom, all indicate an enduring value and interest in, investigations seeking to understand the role and character of ideology. While, the descriptor “ideologically driven” is used pejoratively and dismissively in Canadian politics, Terry Eagleton points out that:

The last decade has witnessed a remarkable resurgence of ideological movements throughout the world. In the Middle East, Islamic fundamentalism has emerged as potent political force. In the so-called Third World, and in one region of the British Isles, revolutionary nationalism continues to battle with imperialist power....the most powerful capitalist nation in history has been swept from end to end by a particularly noxious brand of Christian Evangelicalism. (2007, xx)

Ideology continues to be a vigorous driving force behind the political, and is thus worthy of attention—both popular and academic.

This work understands and accesses ideology through the methodology of Gibbins and Youngman as laid out in their text *Mindscapes: Political Ideologies Towards the 21st Century* (1996). Gibbins and Youngman employ a reconstructive approach wherein they seek to map ideology through uncovering the normative framework, enduring principles and political prescriptions underpinning ideologies. Their approach is valuable for its ability to produce accessible and functional understandings of ideologies. Of particular value are the two important steps Gibbins and Youngman take in their study of ideology: first, they identify a set of characteristics common to ideologies and second, they employ a key conceptual tool which allows them to map ideological space. Here are Gibbins and Youngman on that which unites ideologies:

An ideology is a **socially constructed** and **transmitted** system of **political beliefs** with some significant measure of **formal articulation, scope, internal consistency** and **durability**. As such, it provides both a **normative framework** for understanding the political world and a **practical guide for political action**. (1996, 6, emphasis the authors)

This definition provides five characteristics which guide the way this project accesses and treats ideology. First, ideology has formal articulation. This paper draws upon those works which are formal articulations of the identified ideologies; articulations often, but not exclusively, found in written texts explicitly stating beliefs and principles. Second, ideology has an internal consistency. As this project worries that contemporary Canadian conservatism is too quickly assumed to be a singular, coherent and internally consistent ideology, the “internal consistency” of Gibbins and Youngman is taken to mean internally consistent to the four distinct types of conservatism identified. Third, ideology provides a normative framework for understanding the political world; a framework which is based on a number of axiomatic beliefs about the world. Fourth, ideology has durability. And fifth, ideology provides a practical guide of political action. This project uses the former characteristics to determine the scope and means of this investigation and the latter characteristics to interrogate the texts in search of axioms and core policies. Through engaging in a close reading of those texts, this project identifies and constructs an internally consistent set of axioms and core policy prescriptions.

This treatment of axioms and core policy prescriptions is enhanced through examining two additional dimensions: affective and relational. An appreciation of the affective side is drawn from the work of Drew Westen in his text: *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation* (2007). Within a partisan frame, Westen argues that emotion has been undervalued as a key indicator and component of political and ideological success. That is to say the methods by which ideas are conveyed themselves constitute part of the ideological apparatus. This additional level of analysis will assist in nuancing the differences and subtleties between different types of

conservatism in Canada today; an ostensibly emotionless analysis of conservatism ignores the crucial element of transmission. Thus this work employs a supplementary appreciation for metaphor, emotional appeals, narratives evoked, and networks activated.

Finally, Gibbins and Youngman contribute a relational sensitivity to ideology. The authors employ the ubiquitous left-right political spectrum and the metaphorical ‘map’ of ideology to produce figures which illustrate competing ideologies (1996). While political ideologies are often measured on the basis of relative commitment to pure capitalism and relative commitment to the needs of the individual over those of the community, numerous alternative, more specific metrics can be applied to political ideologies: commitment to equality (of outcome or opportunity), dependence on spirituality, faith in human rationality, interest in an international community, etc. These metrics allow for a quick and powerful ‘mapping’ of ideological commitment to significant social and political challenges and questions. The comparative frame provided by Gibbins and Youngman underpins this project and will be explored primarily in the final chapter.

We now turn to those texts and exemplars employed in this work to provide access to the four identified strains of conservatism this text explores: Canadian tory nationalism; economic and social libertarianism; equal-opportunity conservatism; and cultural conservatism. The four strains of conservatism identified in this work are the product of: (1) a preliminary engagement with the literature on Canadian conservatism; (2) engagement with the literature on Canadian electoral politics with a particular emphasis on those texts discussing the evolution of the Progressive Conservative, Reform, Alliance and Conservative parties; and (3) the authors assessment of those conservatives authors and actors who have achieved popular success, either electoral or literary. The

writing, political and oral texts have been chosen for their ability to provide access to the “significant measure of formal articulation” of ideologies (1996, 6). Further, while each of the strains is principally identified through a small number of exemplars, each section draws on other contemporary journalists, politicians and thinkers to provide a more robust and meaningful demonstration of the relevancy of each of the strains to contemporary Canadian politics.

The first identified strain, tory nationalism, is well recognized in the literature (Christian and Campbell 1996; Taylor 1982; Massolin 2001; Gibbins and Youngman 1996). With strong elements of traditional conservatism, tory nationalism has been an enduring feature of the Canadian political landscape stressing order, good governance and personal and public responsibility.

The work of Hugh Segal, a former Progressive Conservative Party leadership candidate, and current Conservative senator and celebrated author, in *No Surrender: Reflections of a Happy Warrior in the Tory Crusade* (1996), *Beyond Greed: A traditional conservative confronts neoconservative excess* (1997), and *The Right Balance: and The Right Balance: Canada’s Conservative Tradition* (2011) provide an explicit and reflexive contemporary perspective. This strain of conservatism is traced back to Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution of France* (Burke 1906, originally published 1790). In addition, a selection of speeches and political actions of Alison Redford, the former premier of Alberta, help provide insight into the political prescriptions of Canadian tory nationalism.

The second strain is Economic and Social Libertarianism, an ideology committed to reducing social and economic government interference. In the literature, this ideology has

often been identified as either libertarian or classical liberal. Thomas Flanagan, an influential author and political operative provides *First Nations? Second Thoughts* (2008) and *Waiting for the wave: the Reform Party and the conservative movement* (2009). Flanagan draws much intellectual support from Austrian economist Friedrich Hayek's: *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) and *The Intellectuals and Socialism* (1949). A selection of publications from the National Citizen's Coalition provides a political angle on libertarianism and more specific policy prescriptions.

The third strain and fourth strains identified in this work do not enjoy the same level of recognition the former two strains possess. The third strain, Cultural Conservatism is based primarily in the west and draws heavily upon religious dogma and articulates a fierce critique of modern life. The exemplar William Gairdner in *The Book of Absolutes: A Critique of Relativism and a Defence of Universals* (2008) and *The trouble with Canada--still! : a citizen speaks out* (2010) illustrates a contemporary adherent to cultural conservatism. The Institute of Family and Marriage Canada and the political action of Ernest Manning provide the necessary partisan angle. Supplementing these Canadian sources is a text by William Bennett, a well-known American author and political commentator: *Why We Fight: Moral Clarify and the War on Terrorism* (2003).

The fourth and final strain: equal-opportunity conservatism, share elements of the well-studied 'New Right', however, seems to position and articulate itself uniquely in Canada. More focused on legal equality than economic and social libertarianism, equal opportunity conservatism is deeply invested in the democratic ideal and employs populist rhetoric. David Bercuson and Barry Cooper provide *Derailed: The Betrayal of the National Dream* (1994) and *Deconfederation: Canada without Quebec* (1991). Cooper

further provides *It's the Regime Stupid: A Report from the Cowboy West on why Stephen Harper Matters* (2009) and several other minor texts. Bercuson and Cooper studied under Allan Bloom, who provides: *The closing of the American Mind: how higher education has failed democracy and impoverished the souls of today's students* (Bloom 1987). Ezra Levant's *Ethical Oil: The Case for Canadian Oil Sands* (2010) and *Shakedown: How Our Government Is Undermining Democracy in the Name of Human Rights* (2009) help demonstrate several political prescriptions of equal-opportunity conservatism.

As a final methodological note, the four strains of conservatism identified do share elements of their narrative frameworks, political prescriptions and rhetorical technique. However, as will be made clear, the exemplars demonstrate sufficiently distinct views on a wide range of subjects. As per the research question, this project interests itself in clearly delineating the distinct strains of conservatism while still searching for what, if any, common ground does exist.

This work begins in Chapter 1 with a more detailed look at the oldest strain of Canadian conservatism: tory nationalism. This provides an introduction to historical conservatism in Canada; the baseline of conservative values and a platform from which the other strains of conservatism, currently experiencing higher electoral and popular success, can be explored. Chapter 2 focuses on Economic and Social Libertarianism. Chapter 3 and 4 discuss the less clear conservative strains: Cultural Conservatism and Equal-opportunity conservatism. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes this work with a relational examination of the core policies, appeals, and axioms and concluding remarks on the commonalities and divergences identified across the conservative strains.

Chapter 1: Tory Nationalism

Conservatism is about the organic nature of society—the linkage between family, freedom, tolerance, civility, economic pursuit, law, order, tradition, and opportunity. It is about seeing any society as a living, breathing body with different needs, opportunities, and relationships. It embraces values about human nature and the need for structures that restrain the worst and liberate the best in people across the social spectrum. It embraces the core view that duty, responsibility, and order are the non-negotiable foundations upon which genuine freedom and opportunity are built. (Segal 1997, 17)

Our goal is to ensure economic success and a great quality of life for everyone in a province where hard work is rewarded and no one turns a blind eye to want or hardship. Together, we will build a province where world-class, fully funded public services are there when you need them, no matter what you need them for. We will insulate this province from the shocks of the global economy and build the best Alberta possible. (Redford 2011)

The mapping of conservatism begins with an examination of the first and oldest Canadian strain in an effort to establish a baseline or point of comparison by which the various competing conservatisms can be understood. Tory nationalism has been an enduring feature of the Canadian political landscape since confederation and has consistently stressed order, good governance and personal and public responsibility.² This chapter begins with a brief look at the chosen exemplars of tory nationalism, continues with an examination of the emergence of tory nationalism and its ideological opponents, axioms and underlying appeals, explores two core policies and concludes with a brief look at the tensions existing within tory nationalism.

1.1 Exemplars of tory nationalism

The list of historical proponents of tory nationalism includes an impressive number of high-profile Canadians including prominent politicians such as John A. Macdonald, Robert Borden, John Diefenbaker and Robert Stanfield as well as noted academics such as W.L. Morton, George Grant and Donald Creighton. However, with the merger of the

² Strong Canadian explorations of what I have identified as toryism are found in Charles Taylor's *Radical Tories* (1982) and Katherine Fierlbeck's *Political Thought in Canada: An Intellectual History* (Fierlbeck 2006)

federal Progressive Conservative Party and the Canadian Alliance parties, the genuine proponent of tory nationalism has become an endangered species. One of these ideologically-endangered individuals is Hugh Segal, a Liberal-appointed Conservative Senator, who has worked extensively in the public realm: serving as the Chief of Staff for Brian Mulroney and as the President of the Institute for Research on Public Policy. A prolific writer, Segal has gained wide acclaim in Canada for his texts passionately arguing for a balanced Canadian conservatism and a return to a civility. This work draws upon three of Segal's texts: *No Surrender: Reflections of a Happy Warrior in the Tory Crusade* (1996), *Beyond Greed: A traditional conservative confronts neoconservative excess* (1997), and *The Right Balance: Canada's Conservative tradition* (2011). In Segal we find the clearest and most sustained contemporary extension of Burke's earlier writings.

Burke, while drawn upon in this text, is neither Canadian nor contemporary. However, the story of classical conservatism more broadly is generally said to begin with his *Reflections on a Revolution in France* (1906, originally published in 1790). Burke was one of several thinkers writing in the eighteenth century in response to the rapid liberalization of European societies. Him and his contemporaries were frightened by the enlightenment thinking coming out of the French Revolution and sought to defend to status quo in Europe through a rejection of the radical individualism and belief in indefinite progress championed by the revolutionaries (Gibbins and Youngman 1996, 67). Burke lay much of the groundwork for tory nationalism through identifying what was noble and justifiable about a non-liberal regime.

Our second contemporary exemplar is Alison Redford, the current premier of

Alberta and the leader of the Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta. A lawyer by trade, Redford spent her pre-partisan career working internationally for the United Nations and the European Union. Her work has focused on human rights litigation and education programs. In October 2011, she won the Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta leadership election, narrowly defeating top challenger Gary Mar, as well as Ted Morton (briefly featured in Chapter 4) and Doug Horner. In 2012, Redford led the Progressive Conservatives to a (surprising) victory over the Wildrose Party in the Alberta provincial election.³

Throughout much of her leadership bid and then provincial campaign, writers referred to Redford as “to the left” of the other leadership candidates and the other major contender in the Alberta provincial election. While Burke’s conservative credentials are above reproach, both Segal and Redford have been systematically assaulted for a failure to be conservative enough.⁴ This attempted branding of Segal and Redford as barely conservative is similar to the American term RINO (Republican in name only) or false-conservative which was used to great effect in the United States 2010 midterm elections where candidates associated with the tea-party movement ousted a significant number of incumbent Republican candidates on the grounds that they were not far enough to the right, particularly on social issues. This critique of tory nationalism as not-conservative is more fully addressed in subsequent chapters which explore the ‘battle for the right’ in greater detail. However, tory nationalism, as the oldest strain, earns a position of prominence in this text.

³ The campaign manager for the Danielle Smith, the leader of the Wildrose Party, was Thomas Flanagan who is featured in Chapter 2.

⁴ See Kleiss (2012) and Cosh (2012) for articles in popular media sources criticizing Redford during the Alberta Provincial election.

1.2 Origins and Opposition

In the late eighteenth century, despite the best efforts of Burke and several of his contemporaries, European society became increasingly focused on the individual and intolerant of traditional hierarchies. Conservatism, as articulated by Burke, emerged as a defence of the elite and a championing of slow, cautious and prudent progress. As societies rapidly advanced towards the enlightenment way of thinking, conservatives were forced to change their message to appeal to a wider democratic audience. This shift took the form of a more liberal conservatism which instead couched its resistance in the language of duty and compassion (Gibbins and Youngman 1996, 68). The story normally told is that these trends were mirrored in Canada due to immigrants from England and loyalists fleeing the radical liberalism of the United States. John A. Macdonald and Canada ultimately forged a nation built on deference to the government of England with a strong check on democracy by the elite of the nation: the sober second thought of the Senate (Campbell and Christian 1990, 106). In a very real sense, the original incarnations of tory nationalism defined and articulated the Canadian compromise between the liberalism to the south and the conservatism of the British and French aristocracy.

While there is vigorous debate over the truth of the above story,⁵ what is certain is that the strength of this conservative narrative of Canada declined over the next half century as Canada became increasingly economically dependent on the United States. The huge electoral success of the Liberal party of Canada opened up Canadian borders to free trade and the decline in importance of the Canadian senate. Then, in 1965, George Grant wrote *Lament for a Nation* which mourned the creeping liberal continentalism of

⁵ See the compilation in Ajzenstat and Smith (1995) for a particularly strong refutation.

North America. Grant argued that, through economic might, the United States had developed Canada into a northern extension of the continental economy (Grant 2005, 9). This economic hegemony exerted by the United States was converting the Canadian business elite from individuals committed to the Canadian project into capitalist imperialists: “no small country can depend for its existence on the loyalty of its capitalists. International (financial) interests may require the sacrifice of the lesser loyalty of patriotism” (ibid., 68). The old Canada with the “blending of the best of ancient civilization of western Europe with its maturity and integrity, with the best of North American life...” had ceased to be (Grant 1945, 29). Grant’s *Lament* proved to be a rallying cry for Canadian nationalists. Hugh Donald Forbes summarized the impact of *Lament for a Nation* thus:

By reminding Canadians of their conservative national traditions, at a time when the meaning of those traditions was fading in the glare of American power and prestige after the Second World War, Grant opened the way to giving Canadian nationalism a new meaning...He gathered up a crucial elements of Canada’s heritage and projected them into the future...by demonstrating that we have a fundamentally different past from the Americans (contrary to what liberals and continentalists were claiming), he showed that we can have a significantly different future: a Tory communitarian past contains the seeds of a progressive communitarian future. (2007, 20)

George Grant is too big a figure and thinker to fit in our ideological category of torysim, however, he can be seen as uniquely capturing the reason for an ideological resurgence of tory nationalism in Canada. Tory nationalism emerged, and re-emerged in direct opposition to the excesses of liberalism, first in Europe as a reaction against the individualism and equality espoused by the revolutionaries and then in Canada as a reaction against the unfettered free market and supposed accompanying civic decay.

1.3 Axioms

We now turn to the subject of our investigation: mapping tory nationalism through an examination of axioms, core policy recommendations and emotional/intellectual

appeals. While Redford, Segal and Burke do not share an explicit political or philosophical bond, their texts harmonize on a number of key normative claims which we take here to be the axioms of tory nationalism: (1) a respect for the role of history; (2) the fallibility of humanity; (3) the partnership between government and citizen; (4) the high value of public life; and (5) a belief in an ‘enlightened capitalism’.

There are substantial Burkean elements found in the texts of Segal and Redford. The first axiom shared by the exemplars is an appreciation of the profound impact our history has had on our identity and politics. This axiom, somewhat ironically, helps to explain the hegemonic dominance of the Hartz-Horowitz thesis which sees long-term history as the exclusive origin of political ideologies; we cannot understand the present without a proper appreciation of this past. Here is Segal on the critical role of the monarchy in Canadian public life: “those who see the Crown as simply an irrelevant part of the past, while perhaps well-meaning, misunderstand who Canadians are and where our forebears have come from” (2011, 59). This appreciation of history extends to a thoughtful and earnest respect towards any symbols of national unity such as the flag.

But symbols provide both stability and continuity. They are intergenerational bridges that depict opportunity, sustain freedom, advance consistent values and help cement the order within which freedom can take root and prosper. (ibid., 58).

This belief in intergenerational bridges is the ‘conserve’ aspect of conservatism and finds root in Burke’s assertion that: “people will never look forward to posterity who never looked backward to their ancestors” (Burke 1906, 15).

This long view of history informs the second axiom: tory nationalism frames humanity as profoundly fallible. While the liberal tradition, following enlightenment thinking, finds solace in the indefinite abilities of human ingenuity, tory nationalism has a hostility towards this ‘naïve’ view. Here is Burke:

A man full of warm, speculative benevolence may wish his society otherwise constituted than he finds it; but a good patriot, and a true politician, always considers how he shall make the most of the existing materials of his country. A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesmen. Everything else is vulgar in conception, perilous in execution. (1906, 133)

Two hundred years later, the sentiment is echoed by Segal when he describes the liberal conception of the individual as based on the “profoundly naive belief in the perfectibility of the human condition—and the benign decency of unhindered human nature” (Segal 1997, 17). Conversely, Segal believes that:

In every human association, there are selfish, venal, self-centered, and small-minded people...The presumption that everyone is equally trustworthy is the height of folly and self-delusion and the ultimate liberal conceit. Understanding why laws, penalties, responsibilities and deterrents are essential does not demean the majesty of the human condition: it is simply an acknowledgement of the hard realities history still teaches. (Segal 2011, 12)

This often manifests itself as a propensity to appeal to the past to defend contemporary realities. Segal frequently invokes the words “peace, order and good government” to argue that Canada is fundamentally a conservative compromise (2011, 37, 40 and 45).

Third, tory nationalism understands society as a partnership between government and the citizenry: freedom of the individual can only be properly realized in the framework of order provided by the government. This can be seen in the explicit writings of Segal: “the citizen model — where each among us is owed certain protections and in turn owes certain responsibilities to society as a whole” (Segal 1997, 62) and “without order, freedom is quite illusory (ibid., 9); and implicitly in Redford’s description of the role of government in areas such as the environment: “Canadians count on their governments to keep the environment clean in return for the social license to develop their resources. We must uphold our end of bargain” (2011) and education: “a new PC government will work collaboratively with the business community to identify the right incentives to foster increased private sector involvement and investment in post-

secondary education (Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta 2012, 12). This relationship between freedom and order is not the same as the one suggested by the differentiation between positive and negative rights. It is not simply that the government has a positive obligation to protect certain rights; rather, freedoms cannot be properly enjoyed without a rich and orderly society.

Fourth, toryism presupposes that there is an incredibly high transcendental value in, and necessity of, living a public and communal life. While toryism does not require that every individual lives a public life, it does suggest that society is greatly enriched through public life and impoverished through excessive retreat to the private sphere:

In a civil conservative word, individuals see themselves as part of a society in which the community and responsibility coexist as means and ends with profit and freedom. This conservatism seeks for an order which that kind of coexistence can achieve. It works for the real benefits to productivity, stability social justice, and opportunity which that order will bring. This conservatism is about a core defence of democracy—and the right within a democracy to have genuine differences of view...it is about a democratic conservatism and a pluralist conservatism. (Segal 1997, 10)

This theme is further developed in a collection of Segal's speeches and columns under the title *In Defence of Civility: Reflections of a Recovering Politician* (2000). The etymology of words is important, particularly to traditional conservatives, and civility is rooted in the latin word *civilitas*, or of 'relating to citizens.' The fundamental role of a civil citizenry in public affairs and the profound egalitarianism expressed by such a dedication to communal life is a cornerstone of tory nationalism. It is only through vigorous public engagement that the problems of the day can be properly and adequately addressed. Out of this axiom develops the high emphasis placed in tory nationalism on democracy and on what Segal calls a 'politics of meaning'. The founding imperative of conservatism may have been the defence of social elite and the throttling of the emerging democratic consensus, however, Canadian tory nationalism has since become fiercely

committed to the democratic ideal.

Fifth, in what Segal calls ‘enlightened capitalism’, tory nationalism has a unique understanding of the relationship between “free enterprise and private capital on one side” and “public interest and social responsibility on the other” (Segal 2011, 81). Here is Segal:

This core belief is the required balance between public and private—and the required role of instruments of the larger community in maintaining that balance, though regulatory and other practices—is part of who Canadian Tories are (2011, 12).

This axiom, that there is no inherent contradiction between strong regulation and strong enterprise, is found frequently in the speeches of Alison Redford. Here is Redford on the benefits of good governance on the realization of free enterprise:

Our success, at home and abroad, is ultimately driven by people. This government will make maintaining Alberta’s quality of life its highest priority. We will continue to help Albertans excel, because a strong economy depends on stronger people. And strong people depend on essential services that keep with their needs. (Redford 2011, 5)

First at the federal level with the challenge of the Reform Party to the Progressive Conservative and then in Alberta with the challenge of the Wildrose Party again to the Progressive Conservatives, other strains of conservatives have decried this state interventionism as socialism dressed up as conservatism. However, tory nationalism understands economic and social success as being symbiotically related to one another. They are both ends and means; both most fully realized when they act in harmony.

1.4 Core Policy Recommendations

While tory nationalism does possess a clear normative frame, it consistently stresses moderation, balance and caution in dealing with any new political development. This often means that it is difficult to infer particular political prescriptions. That said, the following two prescriptions are usefully illustrative of the ideology. First, a commitment to supporting regional diversity in Canada, and second a guaranteed annual income.

The various strains of conservatism in Canada have vastly divergent positions on regional diversity and autonomy in Canada. The position of tory nationalism is best laid out by Robert Stanfield⁶ in *Nationalism: A Canadian Dilemma* (1978) in which he passionately argues that we need to properly delineate and outline a strong binding Canadian nationalism to “keep us together in difficult times and to cause us to put the general interest above our own interests often enough to enable the country to stay on course” (4). Stanfield sees regionalism as a quintessential Canadian truth and as something to embrace and celebrate rather than worry about. Here is Stanfield on why he believes regionalism does not pose a threat to Canada:

Canada is a country of regions. But Canadian regionalism is manageable because Canadians have become more openminded towards the problems of the regions other than their own and will generally accept sensible national policies to meet these problems if they understand them. Many Maritimers and Westerners would dispute that statement, but I think it is true. Attitudes have improved in this respect. (1978, 7)

Rather than regionalism being the problem *per se*, the issue Stanfield sees is that Canadian political parties have become regionally based: with the Liberals based in Ontario and Quebec and the Conservatives based in the west. This has meant that national policies have not been sufficiently sensitive to regional diversity. Tory nationalism sees the accommodation of regional diversity as the historical core compromise of the Canadian nation. Here is Segal on why Quebec in particular needs specific treatment:

...the simplistic assault on those who deny that Quebec, as a Canadian province with the only majority french-speaking jurisdiction in all of North America, needs specific capacities to protect that language, culture, and civilization truly threatens the historic and successful record of compromise. The simple notion that all provinces are equal could truly cost Canada its national survival (1997, 36)

We see here a commitment to historical events informing present policy. The argument at

⁶ While himself not a contemporary exemplar of Toryism, Robert Stanfield has close links to Segal. Segal frequently refers to Stanfield in his texts and shares his prescription here.

the most basic level is that Canada was founded on a regional compromise and therefore needs to maintain that regional compromise. Further, the high value placed on public life is demonstrated in the commitment to the inclusivity and accommodation of regional differences.

The second policy prescription is a surprising one for those who are not familiar with the diversity of conservative thought in Canada and while not explicitly shared by all those proponents of tory nationalism, is deeply illustrative of the logic of tory nationalism. Hugh Segal has long championed what is known as a living wage. Here he is:

The answer, in terms of poverty reduction for working age people, is the same as it has been over decades for seniors -- automatic top-ups for those who fall beneath the poverty line... The real problem in our approach to poverty reduction is that it depends on the state and its employees assessing whether poorer fellow citizens are deserving of support. This is both deeply inefficient, fraught with bureaucratic excess and causes the wrong incentives to prevail. (2013)

While Segal frames his argument consistently as good public policy, there is a deeper ideological and emotional concern in his reasoning. Segal worries that the existing model of equality of opportunity does not apply to many and that the existing situation is fundamentally unfair: “that a rising tide lifts all boats obscure the hard reality that many Canadians have no boat or access to anyone who has ever had a boat... it creates a social justice and equality of opportunity deficit” (ibid.). Redford, since taking office, has increased the minimum wage in Alberta twice. While this move is arguably electorally popular, it is difficult to imagine the other conservatives highlighted in subsequent chapters as ideologically favoring a minimum wage increase.

This second policy highlights is a product of two of the core axioms of tory nationalism: the citizen-government partnership and enlighten capitalism. Both Segal and Redford have framed their discussions of living wage (or minimum wage) as government

ensuring that those citizens who work should be earning a livable income. We will see in subsequent chapters that this sort of language and commitment is not found in other strains of conservatism.

1.5 Appeals

Now that an understanding of the normative frame, axioms and political prescriptions has been obtained, we turn to our last lens of analysis: the rhetorical strategies and emotional appeals employed by tory nationalism. This appreciation of the affective side of politics is critical to understanding how ideologies function and exert themselves in civil society. Following Drew Westen's lead, the 'networks activated' and the emotions elicited by tory nationalism are examined.

Segal's work is particularly fruitful for examining these non-explicit transmission mechanisms. Beginning with the titles of his text, it is clear that Segal is invoking a number of principles he thinks the Canadian public will find appealing. In his most polemical work, *Beyond Greed: A traditional conservative confronts neoconservative excess*, there is a set of positive and negative associations being constructed: tradition and moderation; traditional conservatism and a higher purpose; neoconservatives and excess and greed. Segal, in a text both meant to condemn neoconservatives and to celebrate the true traditional conservatism, engages in a sophisticated exercise in invoking well trod networks and narratives in his audience. Here is the first awkward line of Chapter One: In Defence of Democratic Debate.

The anxiety Marxists had about the negative impact of religion as a dangerous opiate that might inspire people to a morality above and beyond the true dictatorship of the proletariat has had a remarkable parallel in the recent neoconservative anxiety about democratic choice (Segal 1997, 11).

In one line, Segal brilliantly ties the dangerous totalitarianism and religious intolerance of Marxism with a supposedly similar totalitarian and intolerant neoconservatism. There is

little evidence presented and Marxism is not mentioned for the rest of the chapter, however, an uncomfortable association between neoconservatism and all the excesses of Marxism has already been established. Segal continues with an exploration of the extreme right in the United States before again, without evidence or follow-up, links American neoconservatism to the Canadian Reform party. Without presenting substantial evidence, Segal links the Reform party to a foreign movement intent on the destruction of the Canadian compromise and of Canadian democracy itself (1996, 34). This is not fear-mongering; the framing of the neoconservative-traditional conservative debate is intended to associate a network of negative ideas for neoconservatives and positive ones for traditional conservatives. The fact that no evidence is presented does not mean in itself that no such evidence exists; however, the existence of explicit evidence is beside the point when building negative associations.

On the tory nationalism side, Segal pushes moderate, accommodating and respectful associations. This network of ideas is evoked in tory nationalism consistently through explicit and implicit means. Segal speaks explicitly at great length about the value of traditional conservatism being moderation and accommodation in the *The Right Balance: Canada's Conservative Tradition*.

The Canadian conservatism of accommodation, of dealing respectfully with what people believed in and cared about and the institutions that protected those beliefs, led naturally to a constitutional structure process structured around the remarkably more conservative notion of "peace, order and good government" (Segal 2011, 37).

However, we can also see this network being implicitly invoked with conservatism in Stanfield's work:

We should emphasize what we have done and can do together. We should learn more about each other in our schools. I know that in school I absorbed an admiration for French explorers in Canada, for the struggle and courage of early French settlers..Canadians of all stripes...all find their hearts in the same place when Canada is playing hockey against other countries. (Stanfield 1978, 40)

Stanfield goes further here and associates moderation and accommodation with history and his conservative voice (as well as the omnipresent hockey association). These associations are not accidental and represent a concerted effort to 'sell' tory nationalism as the only ideology capable of bringing true Canadian unity through its moderate and accommodating character.

Further to these networks, common narratives are also invoked to increase the affective pull of tory nationalism. In *No Surrender: Reflections of Happy Warrior in the Tory Crusader*, Segal invokes two common narratives in the title and throughout the text: the underdog narrative and the crusader narrative. One need look no further than the chapter titles such as: Fire in the Belly, Loss of Innocence, Answering the Call and the Rise to Fight Again to see the well-know story Segal is trying to invoke. The text begins in the following way:

John Diefenbaker came to my school in 1962. I was a twelve-year old student in grade seven, and his message, quite frankly, grabbed me by the throat...when you grow in a home where your father is a cab driver and many a month the decision was whether to pay the rent or pay the butcher or pay the druggist, because God knows, there was no chance that we were ever going to pay all three, you live with the perception that many opportunities in this world are closed to you. (Segal 1998, 1)

There is no real political argument being made here. Why then, does Segal spend several pages at the opening of his book establishing himself and Diefenbaker as being outsiders? Segal is invoking one of the oldest and best-known political narratives: that of the underdog. While tory nationalism may have once been dominant in Canada, it has since declined significantly in importance and has had little recent electoral success. Chapter 5 addresses this decline in real terms, but we see in the works of contemporary tory nationalism that there is no longer an attempt to dominate the political realm. Rather, what is being attempted is to create powerful positive feelings with the ideals and axioms of tory nationalism.

These narratives and networks evoked may seem to be only of minor import to the ideology of tory nationalism, however, it is of critical importance that ideology is understood as a struggle. Tory nationalism has struggled against liberalism, continentalism and most recently, a challenge from the right in the form of neoconservatism. It only survives through opposition and through the resonance of the network of balance, prudence, pragmatism, decency, civility and moderation and the narrative of the punchy underdog.

1.6 Tensions and Challenges

In this delineation of tory nationalism, a list of positions, policy recommendations and appeals has been put forward. This clear articulation is essential to the mapping project here but alone is insufficient to gain a more nuanced and sound appreciation of the diversity within Canadian conservative thought. This final section of the chapter focuses on the tensions found within tory nationalism. It is in these tensions that the points of difference between strains of conservatism are truly outlined: where the conversations and choosing of sides really occurs. Again, while this first chapter serves as a baseline, several of the key debates occurring within Canadian conservatism more broadly also occur within tory nationalism.

The first such tension centers on the democratic commitment of tory nationalism. Burkean conservatism was only partially committed to the democratic ideal. In particular, the establishment of the Canadian Senate was intended to ensure a strong check on the impulses of democracy by empowering the countries elite to approve or reject legislation from the lower house (Christian and Campbell 1990, 106). This fear of the fickle will of the majority can be found in tory nationalism as a confused approach to the limits on

parliamentary supremacy and an uncertainty of how to reconcile any residual elements of elitism with the contemporary commitment to democracy. This uncertainty arises from the tension between the second and fourth axioms: the necessity of high engagement in public life balanced against the fallibility of humanity.

While Segal appears at first glance to have suppressed the tory nationalism caution about tyranny of the majority, it may be that the check on democracy has since shifted from the relatively weak senate to the relatively strong courts. First through the Bill of Rights, of which Segal was a strong supporter (Segal 2011, 15), and then through the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Court has been given a broad mandate and ability to limit parliamentary power. Redford's behavior seems to tacitly fit this interpretation, with her professional commitment to human rights and the 2012 Progressive Conservative Platform's support for the Alberta Human Rights Commission (Progressive Conservative Party 2012, 31). During the recent Alberta Provincial Election campaign, Redford attacked the Wildrose party for ostensibly limited the absolute rights guaranteed under the Charter through the codification of so-called conscience rights⁷:

I certainly respect people's personal beliefs but I believe in a province where we have to treat individuals with dignity and respect. We have to live in a community where we respect diversity and we understand that everyone feels safe and included. (Calgary Herald 2012)

Segal explicitly supports the Charter not on the basis of a check on democracy but on several other peculiar grounds. He first argues that the Charter is a brilliant compromise which "reflects the British view of the supremacy of Parliament and the French historical view of written and specified rights in a manner no other Charter of Rights or the American Constitution ever would or could" (Segal 2011, 15). On the same page, Segal

⁷ Conscience rights are the rights of professional practitioners to not perform their duties where to do so would violate their personal ethics. Examples include a marriage commissioner choosing to not perform gay marriages, or a doctor turning away abortion patients.

further justifies the Charter on the basis that it maintains the federal-provincial, and collective-individual balances of power.

The second major tension found in tory nationalism lies in the balance between free enterprise and socially-minded governance. While Segal and Redford insist that there is no contradiction between the two, other strains of conservatism studied in this text do see government intervention in the economy as difficult to reconcile, at best, and at worst, impossible to justify. This tension plays itself out over the history of Canada as a resistance to, and then an embrace of continentalism. While John A. MacDonald and George Grant resisted economic seduction, Segal and Redford instead argue for greater integration and trade on economic merit (Segal 2011, 223; Redford 2011, 24). Segal balances this with a commitment to:

Balanced labour/management relations, a capitalism that also embraces employee share ownership, a respect for the right of people to decent paying jobs through which they contribute to society and sustain their own economic needs (Segal 1997, 67)

This economic tension within tory nationalism, and conservatism more broadly, is explored further in the following three chapters.

Chapter 2: Economic and Social Libertarianism

Society is a spontaneous order that emerges from the choices of individual human beings. The indispensable role of government is to make and enforce rules of conduct that allow societies to function....the only economic system that has brought a high standard of living to a complex society is the free market. Like representative government, it has many imperfections, but it is the most effective method ever discovered for inducing self-interested individuals to serve the needs of others (T. Flanagan 2008, 9)

In a time of austerity, a government must prioritize its spending projects. Ontario's existing education system produces quality minds - of course there are always areas for improvement, but one must question the reasoning behind such a massive investment during difficult times. Balancing the budget and getting back on solid economic footing is the only way to afford to sustain new spending programs - that must be the priority. Does Dwight Duncan think that all-day kindergarten will somehow benefit the economy? (National Citizens Coalition 2012)

We now turn to the second strain of conservatism: economic and social libertarianism.⁸ Historically, Canadian conservatism was characterized as either red toryism (similar to the tory nationalism of our last chapter) or blue toryism. Blue toryism was associated with the economic elite and maintained that government should intervene as little as possible in the economy and instead allow the free market to prosper. This blue toryism was/is strongly economically liberal thought but consistently disagreed on what interventions the government should make into the social economy. Our second strain of conservatism couples the economic liberalism from blue toryism and adds a social libertarianism: thus economic and social libertarianism (hereafter just libertarianism). This chapter begins with a brief look at the chosen exemplars of libertarianism, continues with an examination of the emergence of libertarianism and its ideological opponents, axioms and underlying appeals, explores two core policies and concludes with a brief look at the tensions existing within libertarianism.

⁸ Defined in Christian and Campbell as “strong individualists who believe that the role of government should be limited to the protection of individuals in their person and property” (1996, 47)

2.1 Exemplars of Economic and Social Libertarianism

Libertarianism, as articulated here, is a relatively recent conservative phenomenon in Canada. This work relies principally on the work of Thomas Flanagan and the National Citizens Coalition (NCC). Flanagan, a professor at the University of Calgary and one of the most sought after conservative strategists in the past decade, contributes *First Nations? Second Thoughts* (2008) and a number of articles published in the popular media. Flanagan served as a mentor, confidant and advisor to Stephen Harper during his early years in federal politics (2009), worked as the chief of staff for Danielle Smith during the 2010 Alberta provincial election and is a member of the so-called ‘Calgary School’,⁹ an influential group of conservative academics based at the University of Calgary.

Flanagan directly draws his philosophy to the work of Friedrich Hayek, an Austrian economist and one of the most influential political and economic thinkers of the twentieth century. Hayek is a complex figure, however, his work, like Burke’s, is accessed here for understanding and informing contemporary Canadian libertarianism. Hayek contributes *The Road to Serfdom* (2005, first published 1944) and *The Intellectuals and Socialism* (2005, first published 1949).

Our second contemporary exemplar is the NCC, an influential think-tank that employs the slogan: “More freedom through less government” (NCC Heritage). The NCC proclaims itself to be nonpartisan and tends to lobby the party in government most

⁹ The ‘Calgary School’ is said to be a group of professors out of the University of Calgary who push classical liberalism on federal and provincial governments in Canada (Rovinsky 1998). The construction of the ‘Calgary School’ can be helpful in understanding the ascendancy of Western Canadian academics in policymaking, however, this author disagrees with the grouping of a diverse group of academic and political thinkers as a single ‘School’. Two other academics part of the ‘Calgary School’ are featured in Chapter 4 on equal-opportunity conservatism.

strongly; a March 2012 ad campaign criticized the current Conservative government's failure to significantly curtail federal spending (2012). The NCC contributes *Freedom Watch* and the *National Citizens Review*, two publications focusing on contemporary commentary on Canadian issues. Together, Flanagan and the NCC have had a significant impact on Canadian policy but further have helped to shift the political landscape in Canada.

2.2 Origins and Opposition

A discussion of Canadian libertarianism begins with Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* and *The Intellectuals and Socialism*. *Road to Serfdom* began as a memo to Sir William Beveridge, the then-director of the London School of Economics and was intended to dispute the "popular claim that fascism represented the dying gasp of a failed capitalist system" (Caldwell 2007). At the time, the unpredictability and failures of the free-market, along with the success of wartime planning, "increased the mainstream acceptance of peace-time government planning of the economy" (1949, 19). The ideas of the British economist John Maynard Keynes were popular and prescribed government intervention in order to keep a "high and stable level of employment". The Canadian government's *White Paper on Employment and Incomes* (1945) called for greater government intervention. Indeed, over the next thirty years, government spending would balloon as the welfare state emerged.

Hayek saw these ideas as well-meaning but doomed to failure as he believed: 1) that the government was incapable of generating economic genuine growth and wealth; and 2) that excessive state planning will result in a form of totalitarian socialism similar to what emerged in Germany under the Nazi regime. Hayek's work, like Grant's, was a

call for action heard loudly and clearly in Canada. Hayek called for revisiting the benefits of individualism which would allow for scientific, economic, cultural and social growth. His work had a substantial impact on thinkers, politicians and surprisingly for Hayek, citizens around the world. Hayek gave rise to an effective counterbalance to theories of government intervention in the economy.

We find that counterbalance in Canada in Flanagan and the NCC, among others. Flanagan, while having a broad political view, has an academic focus on the relationship between the federal government and indigenous peoples. He sees the continued government distortion of the market as perpetuating an unjust and debilitating cycle of poverty for indigenous peoples. It can be said that his writing lies in direct ideological opposition to those thinkers calling for greater government support of and engagement with indigenous forms of governance.

The NCC, meanwhile, publishes material on a range of public policy issues but focuses particularly on where central government planning causes damaging distortions in the market. Canada itself is far from realizing the fascist consequences of government planning that Hayek predicted, however, the NCC has internalized the idea that government intervention inevitably leads to less freedom, and the growth of government over the past half-century is its chief concern.

2.3 Axioms

We now turn to the subject of our investigation: mapping libertarianism through an examination of axioms, core policy recommendations and emotional/intellectual appeals. Our exemplars harmonize on a number of key normative claims which we take here to be the axioms of libertarianism: (1) laissez-faire capitalism; (2) the individual is the

fundamental unit of society and should be left to his/her own devices; (3) humanity is ingenious; (4) the role of government is to provide safety and order; and (5) the government should practice fiscal responsibility.

The first axiom shared by the exemplars is a commitment to laissez-fair capitalism. This axiom lies in stark opposition to the model of enlightened capitalism found in tory nationalism, but emerges from a similar concern about the greater good of society. Here is Flanagan: “the only economic system that has brought a high standard of living to a complex society is the free market” (2008, 9). While those on the left frequently paint laissez-faire capitalism as a rapacious and self-service ideological commitment, the exemplars highlighted in this text are not perpetuating their own (limited) wealth but rather truly believe that laissez-faire capitalism will enrich the whole of society.

In order for laissez-faire capitalism to function, the government needs to leave individuals alone to pursue their rational self-interests. The second axiom of libertarianism is that the individual is the fundamental unit of society. Again, here is Flanagan: “society is a spontaneous order that emerges from the choices of individual human beings” (ibid., 8). While this axiom is typically understood to refer to economic policy, it is also important to note the social dimensions of a fierce individualism. The government should have no control over economic or social life of its citizens. This follows from *Road to Serfdom* wherein the government will not only seek to control the economic fortunes of its citizens but also the social, athletic and cultural dimensions as well (2005).

The third axiom is deeply intertwined with the first two. Hayek believed that the socialist utopian view found to be so compelling in the mid-twentieth century could not

be realized – the world could not be ordered in such a perfect way and attempts to do so would actually impede the real driver of human progress – individual ingenuity. Where utopia was not possible, progress was and the betterment of mankind had been/would be achieved through technological and scientific advancement flowing from the choices of ingenious individuals. Government should remove itself from the equation and allow the ingenuity of individuals to prosper. Here is Hayek: “We must clear away the obstacles with which human folly has recently encumbered our path and release the creative energy of individuals. We must create conditions favourable to progress rather than ‘planning progress’” (2005, 70).

It is at the fourth axiom that the role for government finally emerges: security.

Hayek differentiates between two types of security:

But there are two kinds of security: the certainty of a given minimum of sustenance for all and the security of a given standard of life, and the relative position which one person or group enjoys compared with others. There is no reason why, in a society which has reached the general level of wealth ours has, the first kind of security should not be guaranteed to all...It is planning for security of the second kind which has such an insidious effect of liberty (2005, 66-67)

Hayek maintains that the collective effort of society as manifest in government must provide adequate security against severe privation as a means to enrich rather than limit freedom. Flanagan states it thus: “the indispensable role of government is to make and enforce rules of conduct that allow society to function” (2008, 7).

Libertarianism’s fifth axiom flows naturally from the first four. As the government has expanded in scope, it has become necessary for contemporary libertarians to specifically target government overspending. The fifth axiom is that the government should always maintain fiscal responsibility, ie. expenditures should not exceed revenues. This axiom can be seen most strongly in the NCC’s repeated calls for a dedicated effort to reduce government debt. An example of this is found in the NCC call for zero-based

budgeting – an annual review system wherein all government expenditure is measured against a baseline of 0 dollars (5-0-1 Campaign).

2.4 Core Policy Recommendations

Unlike tory nationalism, libertarianism holds many strong ideologically motivated core policy recommendations. While the full breadth of these ideas cannot be explored here, two recommendations in particular are worth highlighting as indicative of the core ideology. The first is a dramatic shift in how the federal government engages and supports indigenous communities and the second is the elimination the mandatory long-form census.¹⁰

During the 2010 debate on the mandatory long-form census both Flanagan and the NCC weighed in on the issue (T. Flanagan 2010, Macleans 2010). At stake was the mandatory distribution of the long-form census. The census is a tool generally used by government in making large-scale planning decisions. For example, the census is useful for cities to map out the services required by various communities. For libertarians, the existence of the census facilitated the type of excessive government expenditure and central planning they are so adamantly opposed to. Here is the NCC:

The long-form census is an antiquated and flawed system that needs to be reformed...it is nice to receive free statistics at the expense of taxpayers but our government should not be compelling this cooperation with the threat of jail time nor should we be bankrolling the whole endeavor...the knee-jerk reaction to protect a long census that violates privacy and provides little return to the average citizen (2010)

And here is Flanagan:

[the census] tends to morph into a convenient vehicle for busybody questions that government has no need or right to ask. ..constitutional democracy is supposed to make the bureaucracy serve the public through the parliamentary doctrines of responsible government and ministerial responsibility. What's worse than ill-advised political interference in public administration? Exemption of the civil

¹⁰ The mandatory long-form census was abolished by the current Conservative government in 2010 and replaced with a voluntary National Household Survey. This abolition came despite significant opposition from Elections Canada, many economists and statisticians and much of civil society.

service from political oversight. (2010)

We see in the two quotes above a strong articulation of some of the axiomatic themes of libertarianism. Government should be fiscally prudent and only engage in those activities absolutely necessary to its core functions – it should certainly not be subsidizing public policy research best left to private ventures. Further, the census is infringing upon the rights of individuals. It is important to note here that libertarianism endorses the gathering of social data by private enterprise for private purposes, but it is the coercive and government-funded approach to the census that they find unpalatable. The abolition of the mandatory long-form census and the abolition of the long-gun registry are examples of successful policies pushed by libertarians.

A less successful policy pushed by libertarian thinkers in Canada is a marked shift in the way federal and provincial governments approach indigenous land claims, governance and direct financial support. Flanagan in particular has spent significant time arguing that the current approach is fundamentally flawed and needs to be dramatically revised (see Flanagan 2009 and 2012). In *First Nations Second Thoughts?*, Flanagan refutes some of the core claims of what he calls the ‘Aboriginal Orthodoxy’. The attempt in early chapters to revisit and define Aboriginal land rights and Aboriginal Sovereignty is primarily a setup for Chapter 9: Making a Living. In Chapter 9, Flanagan argues that Indians are subjected to the “welfare trap” wherein aboriginal peoples have been disenfranchised from the productive economy by excessive reliance on the Canadian welfare system. Here is Flanagan:

They face a set of perverse incentives unique in Canadian society. Unless they have high levels of education, special skills, or good connections, most Indians will be financially better off on the reserve than if they enter the labour market at the bottom and try to work their way up the ladder (2008, 177)

Flanagan forwards a number of recommendations to help Aboriginal communities escape the welfare trap. He would like to see aboriginal governments become more accountable to the people over whom they preside, break up the control of elected band councils on the basis that they hold excessive control over life on indigenous communities and thirdly, a regime of private property rights should be instituted.¹¹ For Flanagan, indigenous government in Canada closely mirrors that of the highly centralized (fascist) government libertarianism originally emerged in response too. Through devolving power, restoring private property and removing perverse economic incentives, Flanagan believes that the free market will lift aboriginal communities out of poverty. In the 2012 federal budget, changes to the procedure for bands to lease land were lauded by Flanagan for making it easier for those bands that wish to lease land to do so (2012). This increase ease of leasing land, Flanagan would argue, is a step in the right direction but is still a long way from the full realization of property rights for indigenous peoples.

2.5 Appeals

We turn to our last lens of analysis: the rhetorical strategies and emotional appeals employed by libertarianism. Both Flanagan's and the NCC's work are fruitful for examining these non-explicit transmission mechanisms. It is important to note that, more than tory nationalism, libertarianism has a core narrative which is invoked frequently: economic and social potential is best realized through freedom. This battle cry has proven to be very effective in Canada, the United States and across the western world in recent

¹¹ This third and final recommendation is responsible for significant criticism of Flanagan's work from Indigenous activists and writers. Flanagan has been accused of arguing for the abolition of the other entrenched rights possess by Indigenous peoples in favor of exclusive property rights. The accusers can point to the more recent *Beyond the Indian Act: Restoring Aboriginal Property Rights* (2010) as further evidence of this underlying agenda. While not politically palatable, such a position is consistent with Libertarian principles.

decades. A brief reading of any of Flanagan's or the NCC's work will yield frequent reference to this core rhetorical flourish. However, there are numerous other narratives which are employed to affectively convince an audience of the correctness of the libertarian position.

The fall 2010 issue of the National Citizens Review opens with an article entitled Worshipping the Nanny State. It begins thus:

On the surface, there might not seem to be much connection between the closing of a lemonade stand in Port Coquitlam park and the denial of a controversial new treatment to victims of MS (multiple sclerosis). But there is a common denominator – an unquestioned belief in the omniscience of big government is the motivation behind both. That belief is also the greatest obstacle to freedom in Canada. (2010)

And continues:

But this is what too many of us have become – wards of the state, entirely dependent on government to decide what is and isn't good for us. We have blind faith in government to protect our rights, secure our homes and families, and ensure our incomes. We should not be surprised then if we wake up one morning to discover we are being treated like 12-year-old lemonade stand operators (ibid.)

There is significant emotional and rhetorical technique being brought to bear in the article.

The key elements found frequently in libertarian discourse are: government is eroding your personal moral compass; government is entrenched and is institutionalizing individual members of society; government is a barrier to entrepreneurialism; the institution of government wants to infantilize all of its citizenry. Government preventing a child from operating a lemonade stand (here representing entrepreneurialism) and government slowing down approval of a new MS treatment (here representing ingenuity) are just two examples of government stifling humanities greatest assets.

Government is frequently said to be paternalistic or infantilizing in libertarian discourse. The MS treatment was being restricted because of safety concerns, yet libertarianism has framed government regulation of the medical industry as government overreach by equating it with the closing of a child's lemonade stand. The last sentence

quoted above is ominous and indicative of a real belief, dating back to Hayek, that government intervention inevitably grows and ultimately seeks to become fascist. A prime example of this is the NCC's campaign: "Stop the speech police". The Canadian Human Rights Commission is said to: "have evolved into absurd theater productions designed to protect people's feelings and censor free speech at the taxpayer's expense". Phrases like absurd theater and censor free speech are linked with government behavior consistently in an effort to delegitimize any and all government intervention. By highlighting areas of waste and mismanagement in their Freedom Watch publication, the NCC seeks to affectively convince citizens that government is fundamentally flawed. Of course, libertarians believe that government has some legitimate uses but by delegitimizing general government practices (like medical health and safety as above), libertarians are better able to argue a policy like zero-sum budgeting (described above) – each government expenditure must be heavily justified.

It is through individual citizen action that this government impulse can be resisted. While libertarian works tend to attack government, there is the occasional celebration of individualism and entrepreneurial spirit. There are a number of positive concepts employed with libertarian thought. Libertarians seek to link the compelling ideas of freedom, equality, progress, and collective enrichment to their policy prescriptions. In Flanagan's argument for indigenous privacy rights you find the following passage indicative of both the positive and negative associations drawn by libertarian thinkers (bolding added for key phrases):

There has been an **explosion of entrepreneurship** on Indian reserves...those first nations wishing to **take over the responsibility of ownership** should be able to acquire the title to their reserves from the Crown, thus **emancipating themselves from the stifling paternalism of the Indian Act**...restoring aboriginal property rights will enhance economic activity on reserves, create more jobs and business opportunities for first nations people, and improve both the quantity and quality of

housing on reserves. (2012)

Responsibility of ownership, emancipation, explosion of entrepreneurship are all positive qualities Flanagan is associating with a policy that would fundamentally alter indigenous way of life in Canada. Regardless of the merits of such a policy, Flanagan is framing those against the policy as paternalistic and, as his choice of the word emancipation indicates, associated with a colonial past.

2.6 Tensions and Challenges

Unlike tory nationalism, which worries about the balance between the individual and the collective and the balance between the economy and social welfare, libertarianism has simple commitments which tend towards internal consistency. However, there are several challenges that arise to contemporary libertarianism. The two worth exploring in some detail are the ongoing tension between liberty and security (again, a common theme throughout all conservative thought) and the simultaneous ingenuity and fallibility of humanity.

The first tension arises from the most famous quote by Hayek: “those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety” (2005, 69). The phrase ‘essential liberty’ is explored by Hayek in some detail but it is difficult to imagine what areas of the contemporary government apparatus fall under the essential liberty threshold and which fall above it. Modest taxation is clearly permissible but higher levels of taxation may constitute a violation of essential liberty. Libertarian’s desire a guaranteed equality of opportunity in the most bare sense, but it is unclear at what point the taxation of citizenry to pay for equality of opportunity violates the essential liberty threshold. Is the purchase of “temporary safety” through public healthcare spending a violation of essential liberty? Hayek was speaking hyperbolically

and in reference to an uncompromising and totalitarian state apparatus, but a more modest yet still significant state may provide significant public safety. The pure and generally uncompromising nature of libertarianism is difficult to apply to a complex contemporary government apparatus and that is a real challenge for libertarianism, especially when it comes to electoral success in Canada.

The second challenge to the internal consistency of libertarianism is a seeming tension between the ingenuity and fallibility of individual choice. Hayek lays out a process by which individuals in society can become enamored with and subjected to the excesses of central socialist planning. At every point along that journey, the individuals would argue that they are making rational choices and are acting in their own self-interest and yet the net result is an end that Hayek finds intolerable. This tension exists in contemporary libertarianism as well where individuals frequently will make self-interested choices that ultimately undermine their long term happiness and economic well-being. Flanagan argues that the welfare trap exists and keeps indigenous populations in poverty. However, if that was true then indigenous peoples should be able to recognize the long-term damaging effects and instead choose to break the welfare trap and act in a so-called ingenious manner to their ultimate economic well-being. The core tension lies between a pure belief in competent motivated actors and the reality of institutional power eroding the efficacy of individual choices. Libertarianism wants to generate an environment where each individual is unencumbered by government or institutional power but cannot generate a coherent explanation of how such a system would emerge and be maintained. In a way it is its own utopian vision. Flanagan begins to address this point through a democratic commitment wherein individuals would regulate the

institution through representative government but any such government will coercively regulate and limit the choices its constituent members are free to make. These struggles tend not to bother contemporary libertarians because society and government are so beyond their core functions – it is enough to focus on scaling back government involvement and the problematic philosophical issues are not particularly relevant in a non-libertarian society.

Chapter 3: Cultural Conservatism

Punishment also creates social sanctions, which are then incorporated within each individual as conscience, transferred from generation to generation through the family and in religious and civil law. Lectures from parents, teachers, pastors, coaches, the fines and parking tickets we pay, and reminders of the Ten Commandments do have effect. Swift, sure punishment helps a society to internalize and thus clearly express its prohibitions (Gairdner 2010, 341)

In the present phase, individual independence and personal responsibility are giving way to more and more collectivism and acceptance of the socialistic concept of the welfare or paternal state. This trend has developed to a place where an ever increasing number of people are expecting and demanding that the state provide not only for their actual needs but for their desires in an ever number of fields...an integral part of this welfare state philosophy is the dangerously false belief that services provided to individual citizens by the state are free services as far as the people involved are concerned (Manning 1963)

The third conservatism examined here is an unusual and often-forgotten player on the Canadian political scene. Strongly grounded in Christian thought, cultural conservatism is largely concerned with issues of social economy. Like the two before it, this chapter begins with a brief look at the chosen exemplars of cultural conservatism, continues with an examination of the emergence of cultural conservatism and its ideological opponents, axioms and underlying appeals, explores three core policies and concludes with a brief look at the tensions and challenges existing within cultural conservatism.

3.1 Exemplars of Economic and Social Libertarianism

Based primarily in the west, cultural conservatism draws heavily upon religious dogma and articulates a poignant critique of secular modernity. The best known Canadian thinker is William Gairdner, a prolific writer who has gained a following amongst Canadians for his passionate defence of so-called traditional ‘Canadian-ness’ and for his clarion call for moral fortitude and action. Gairdner contributes *The Book of Absolutes: A Critique of Relativism and a Defence of Universals* (2008), *The trouble with Canada--still! : a citizen speaks out* (2010) and passages from his website

(www.williamgairdner.com) and from his commentary in popular media. Cultural conservatives have historically found some electoral success in Canada, particularly under the guidance of Rev. William Aberhart, Rev. Ernest Manning and his son Preston. Two major political parties, the Social Credit party of Alberta and the Reform party of Canada can be directly linked to these cultural conservative roots. More important from a contemporary perspective, the think-tank the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada (IMFC) has been very successful at publically articulating cultural conservative political prescriptions and has encountered mixed reactions towards many of its ideas. The IMFC contributes a number of its publications and campaigns to assist in illustrating the axioms, policies and appeals of cultural conservatism.

Supplementing these Canadian sources is a text by William Bennett, a well-known American author and political actor/commentator: *Why We Fight: Moral Clarify and the War on Terrorism* (2003). Bennett has an impressive political and publishing record which includes similarly named texts like the *Death of Outrage* (1999) and *The Book of Virtues* (1996). Bennett is usefully to supplement the Canadian texts. Similar to Burke for tory nationalism and Hayek for economic and social libertarianism, Bennett articulates a similar non-Canadian articulation of the ideology. Unlike, Burke and Hayek, Bennett cannot be seen as the founder of something-similar-to-cultural-conservatism, but rather as one of its articulate and successful voices.

3.2 Origins and Opposition

Cultural conservatism is best understood as a reaction to the growth of the welfare state and the success of the New Left in the United States and Canada. One of these is already familiar, as the earlier origin story of libertarianism also pointed to the welfare

state. While libertarians object to the welfare state on economic grounds, cultural conservatives add an objection to the welfare state on moral and religious grounds.

The core premise of cultural conservatism, and the source of the moral certainty so frequently invoked by cultural conservatives, is that society is on a path to economic, political and moral ruin (Harrison 2008, 212). Cultural conservatism is ardently opposed to any centralization of moral and social decisions. Ultimately, and most succinctly, cultural conservatives want to see the abolition of the social-welfare state. Historically, the community, the family and the church provided social services like a social safety net and the provision of child care. Now, it is the government who provides these services that has led to overdependence on the state and a general moral collapse in society.

Cultural conservatives frequently appeal to a historical time which is supposedly morally, politically and economically superior to the contemporary one. Gairdner rationalizes this through his concept of political entropy. Entropy's common meaning is found in physics and describes to a constant movement towards order and loss of energy. Gairdner applies a metaphor and extends the meaning to include human behavior. Gairdner states that the human social animal engaging in politics will tend towards a dissipation of value and belief:

To a great degree, this book is about the entropic process at work in Canada, whereby egalitarian forces are gradually threatening the distinctive features that have made productive social life possible. This happens whenever predictable, useful, reliable, distinctive ideas, traditions, values, motives, or beliefs are slowly eroded and replaced with neutrality, or sameness, their force dissipated. When marriage is devalued and defined... (Gairdner 2010, 208)

The metaphor here itself is an interesting means of transmission which we will return to later, but what is notable about this idea is that society, from conception, is inherently and continuously under threat from within. Here is Gairdner:

It is an admission that people of greatness, statesmanship and noble sentiment who are capable of standing above all base political interests are now much harder, if not impossible to find. It is an

admission of loss of faith in ourselves. (2006)

That threat, Gairdner says, can be defeated given a sufficiently guarded and moral citizenry but it is difficult and requires a commitment to moral certainty.

Gairdner's metaphor hints towards the moment cultural conservative's find the most resonance with – that of the foundation and early days of societies. When society is first formed and bound by the will of great citizens through a constitution it is said to be at its strongest point. This bold assertion is not held as the literal truth for all cultural conservatives (including Gairdner), but cultural conservatives do display a continuous worry with where we, as a society, are in relation to where we were. Unlike libertarians who respond to the welfare state by seeking to remove all external constraints on individual's lives, cultural conservatives want to respond to the welfare state by reinforcing historical moral constraints in an effort to stem the corrupting influence of central government planning. It is in that historical (Christian) morality that cultural conservatism finds its origins.

3.3 Axioms

The texts of Gairdner, Bennett and the Institute of Family and Marriage Canada align on a number of key normative claims which are taken here as the axioms of Cultural Conservatism: (1) the welfare state erodes personal responsibility; (2) faith-based morality should inform politics; (3) the family is the central constructive unit of society; (4) power should be maximally decentralized and restrained. Each of these axioms is explored and justified in turn.

First is that idea that the welfare state erodes personal responsibility. The welfare state here refers to a specific set of social economy interventions by the government:

socialized medicine, state-run education and the social safety net. Here is Gairdner on public education:

The game is over: on the whole, in the long run, despite even the best intentions, public education cannot be successful because it is run by government, and inherent in all government is a tendency to both crowd out the resources intended for the consumers of the service, and to displace community values with state values. (Public Miseducation n.d.)

The IMFC does not overly criticize public education, but does promote home- and private schooling and argues against expansion of the public education system.¹² The IMFC typically extolls the virtues of the alternative education schemes through reference to “civic engagement” and “life satisfaction” (2006). This axiom is explored in greater detail during the discussion below on the policy prescription of welfare abolition.

However, there are a number of ideas about the nature of humanity that guide this first axiom. Gairdner is explicit about these:

Premise 1: People respond to incentives and disincentives. Sticks and carrots work. Premise 2: People are not inherently hard-working or moral. In the absence of countervailing influences, people will avoid work and be amoral. Premise 3: People must be held responsible for their actions. (2010, 187)

Individuals on welfare are simultaneously victims of the state and exploiters of it. This complicated and nuanced view of individual morality is explored further in Section 3.6, however it is important to recognize the central nature of individual responsibility and morality to the ideology of cultural conservatism.

Second, faith-based morality should inform politics. Today, it is relatively uncommon that public displays of faith occur in Canada. However, cultural conservatives see Canada as founded on faith-based morality and wish to see a greater religious influence in public policy and individual behavior. Gairder again says it best:

A handy way to remember the values on which the West was built is to think of “the four Fs”:

¹² See *The cost of a free lunch* (2009), *Full-day kindergarten in Ontario* (2013), *Home education in Canada* (2006) for some examples.

Freedom, Family, Free enterprise, and Faith. The handicap system is built instead on the opposite of each, namely “the four Gs”: Government, interest Groups, tax Grabs, and Godlessness. (2007, 13)

The third axiom is found implicitly and sometimes explicitly in all texts by cultural conservatives. Frequent references are made to god, the church and faith that are uncommon (in the case of tory nationalism and equal-opportunity conservatives) or unheard of (in the case of libertarianism). Words like blessings, sins, and the soul are common throughout cultural conservative texts.

Third, the (traditional) family is the central constructive unit of society. This is seen most strongly in the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada direction statement:

Family is the foundation of our society. We explore the causes and consequences of family breakdown and of family strength. We want to help Canadian leaders better understand the impact their policies are having on families. After all, what is good for families is also good for our nation. (About Us)

Gairdner and Bennett also forward this axiom in lengthy published books. Gairdner wrote *The War Against the Family: A Parent Speaks Out on the Political, Economic, and Social Policies That Threaten Us All* (2007) and Bennett wrote *The Broken Hearth: Reversing the Moral Collapse of the American Family* (2001). This focus on the social economy found in cultural conservatism finds the core unit to be family rather than the individual. This is because they affirm and recognize that individuals are subject to their environments and require a community to self-define. Again, this stands in contrast to libertarianism because while economic choices might be made as individuals, moral and social ones are made as families and communities. Here is Gairdner:

Although the basic political unit of modern society is the individual, the basic social unit throughout human history has been the family: that immemorial unit of a married man and woman and their children living together in the same home. We shall see throughout this book that the modern confusion between the basic political and social units – explicit in totalitarian systems, implicit in democracies – brings grief to society in the name of high principle. (2007, 4)

It is extremely important to note that this family-focus should not be confused with communitarianism or collectivism – something cultural conservatives take a real issue with. This contrast is explored further below in the tensions and challenges section.

Finally the fourth axiom: power should be maximally decentralized and constrained. Again, unlike the libertarian axioms which seek decentralization of power for economic reasons; this axiom also refers to social power. In turn, this does mean that cultural conservatives desire the centralized federal government to diminish economically, but because that gives them less social control (the loss of economic control is incidental). Also, unlike the desire for a loss of federal power and an increase in provincial power found in the next chapter on equal-opportunity conservatives, cultural conservatives do not want any centers or nodes of formal government control over the social spheres. This fourth axiom comes from a fundamental distrust of social engineering as practiced by the state.

3.4 Core Policy Recommendations

A core theme of cultural conservatism is personal responsibility. The overarching theme is found in several of the axioms outlined above and extends far into the policy realm for cultural conservatives. While there are a number of policies associated with this theme, a common one which has received significant attention from the current Conservative government is a tough-on-crime stance. While cultural conservatives would agree that this is a step in the right direction, cultural conservatives tend to hold favorable views on capital punishment or lifetime prison sentences. Cultural conservatism believes in punitive, rather than rehabilitary justice. Here is Gairdner:

Someday we may come to realize that the modern penchant for rehabilitation rather than tough punishment, repayment to society, righting the balance of justice, and so on, is in fact a psychological scam we have suffered upon ourselves to assuage our collective guilt for the type of

morally weak society we have created, but for which we continue to deny responsibility. (Gairdner, *The Rehab Scam* 2006)

Justice for many cultural conservatives is about retribution and the protection of innocents. This is articulated well by Bennett in *Why We Fight* (2003), where he argues that righteous judicial anger is appropriate and morally correct. Gairdner argues that Canada has adopted a misguided restorative justice approach mentality. Here he is:

The “Hug-a-Thug” mentality now operating in the Canadian justice system has eroded the free-choice-and-responsibility view of crime. This is bad for society, and especially bad for criminals... (2010, 340)

Mandatory minimums for crimes in an attempt to strengthen the crime-imprisonment connection in would-be-criminals minds, is favored by cultural conservatives.

A second position held by cultural conservatives is the scaling back or complete abolition of welfare. While one unfamiliar with conservative politics might expect the libertarians to be the most vociferous opponents of welfare, they would be incorrect as the libertarian objection is only economic whereas the cultural conservatives have both moral and economic arguments against welfare. Here is Gairdner:

The financial and moral cost of this disastrous shift in moral responsibility and self-reliance, from our tradition of personal freedom and responsibility for self and family, to a new ethic placing blame on “the system”, has been nothing short of catastrophic. It is designed to foster resentment and dependence at every turn because it specifically positions the State as an agency able to provide equal outcomes for all.

While the financial cost is highlighted and rationalized in Gairdner’s texts, it is the moral argument he articulates most clearly and unreservedly. The excessive use of welfare entails a moral shift which creates a group of individuals reliant on the state. Again, the argument made is nuanced because Gairdner simultaneously believes certain moral-less individuals to be simultaneous victims of a predatory government and its chief benefactors. The IMFC is more nuanced in its treatment of welfare, but consistently argues that the dollars spent on welfare would be better off supporting functional families.

A report entitled *Private Choices, Public Costs: How Failing Families Cost Us All* (2009) argues that welfare costs could be significantly scaled cut if couples would remain married. Ideally money would be channeled away from welfare towards tax benefits/credits to married cohabiting couples with families.

Finally, and more briefly, a recent policy forwarded by the IMFC and the current government (it appeared in the 2013 budget and again in the 2014 budget) is income splitting for families with children under the age of 18. The policy is one which would allow families to split their incomes for tax purposes, thus reducing the tax burden for families where the parents have significantly different annual incomes. In effect, the policy encourages “stay-at-home” parents. In an Ottawa Citizen article, the Executive Director of the IMFC, Andrea Mrozek, the, argues the point as follows:

The government is failing to do their part, where they recognize this and tax you accordingly. Instead, they tax your family as individuals, as if you had nothing to do with the man or woman you sleep beside every night, and the children you get up to care for...Importantly, income splitting bestows value on the man or woman who stays home to take care of children and helps with the additional costs that all families pay, regardless of whether they are using official daycare or not. (2014)

This policy flows from the third axiom of cultural conservatism: the family is the central constituent unit of society. Income splitting has been championed by cultural conservatives because it would institutionalize greater government support for families. Or rather it would reduce government taxation, or interference, with the family.

3.5 Appeals

Like all ideologies, cultural conservatism is rich in symbolism, appeals, key sites of opposition and an internal narrative. Our last lens of analysis here will examine the non-explicit transmission mechanisms employed by cultural conservatism. The core narrative of cultural conservatism is that society is crumbling and that salvation (biblical reference intended) in traditional family values. References are common to ‘core values’,

morality, 'responsible freedom', 'righteous anger' and the key enemies are identified as statism, moral decay, feminism, socialism and atheist. Many passages in this chapter contain these elements but have not been subjected to closer scrutiny for these affective themes. Two key passages, one from Gairdner and one from Mrozek will be examined here in an effort to pin down some of these affective themes.

So often those of us who are against the legalization of prostitution are portrayed as prudish. Scared of sex. Moralistic... but the legalization of prostitution is not wrong because it is an "us versus them" battle. It is wrong because the legalization of prostitution will affect every household, every family and every person in similar ways. This is because human nature is the same. We face the same temptations in our hearts...I happen to have been raised by loving and committed parents who protected me as best as they could from the bad choices of this world. Not so for those who are homeless, who are abused, who are addicted; they are all more vulnerable. And yet, they are not substantively different from me. (Mrozek 2014)

In the passage above, we see a number of themes. Immediately what should strike the reader is the natural sin-temptation theme. Obviously the writer is deeply informed by a biblical interpretation of human nature. However, the language extends beyond a simplistic and predictable biblical invocation. The words: 'loving and committed parents' appear and household and family are prioritized over the individual. Mrozek is making an appeal to the family, said to be an inherently good institution, in addition to the biblical themes. In doing so, Mrozek ties prostitution to the degradation of the family unit. Prostitution will not necessarily weaken the family, and no evidence is presented to that effect, but Mrozek wants to define the legalization of prostitution as an attack on the family. This type of logical leap is a common symptom of affective argument found in any ideological discussion.

Gairdner adopts these biblical themes frequently in his works, but here is a passage more indicative of the anger and militancy and value-laden language found in cultural conservatism:

While no political system, nor any analysis of it can be pure, it seems clear that Canada has been

changed from what I call a bottom-up society (the original, classical liberal ideal) to a top-down state in the mere space of a few decades. The first kind of country rests upon the imperfect, but nonetheless inspiring belief that in a free society, the people's representatives, the government, should set the rules, and referee the game, but never play the game. Individuals are expected to behave as moral agents under a set of universal rules, equal for all, and lead themselves to the good life by their own efforts. This is a pragmatic and inexpensive way to run a country.

The top-down state, in contrast, rejects this notion entirely. Here we find the belief that individuals and their families who express their different freedoms will never lead themselves to the good life, but only to social and economic chaos. So a class of political, academic, and media elites, experts, bureaucrats, and specialists, that has decided the good life must be based on substantive equality, is required to lead the people to this good life, whether they wish to follow or not. This is a very impractical and expensive way to run a country. (n.d.)

Two key themes of the above text are worth highlighting. The first is the pitting of moral, responsible (hard-working) individuals against a paternalistic, faceless bureaucratic machine intent on controlling others. The second is that society used to be better but we have since degraded and been subverted by the above bureaucratic forces. Gairdner and other cultural conservatives articulate these themes frequently, with different enemies including socialism, relativism, feminism and atheism. By framing itself as moral and traditional (and therefore correct) each of these isms becomes a contemporary aberration to be fought rather than celebrated. Greater social and economic opportunity brought about by contemporary social movements are somehow said to be products not of freedom and bottom-up pressure but instead have been imposed upon others. This framing of the civil and political movements of the past decades as elite and technocratic is commonly found in cultural conservative texts and is a key example of the power of framing. If the frame is explicitly or tacitly accepted, then contemporary social movements, no matter how organic, are grouped in with all deviances from the original, and better articulation of Canadian society.

We see in cultural conservatism the building of a frame and a set of associations meant to contrast a faith-based moral founding moment of society against a contemporary set of moral transgressions. Violent crime, higher rates of divorce and increased

dependency on welfare – realities that many in society find troubling – are said to be products of a moral failing of collective government and thus call the whole institution into question. These links are not necessarily linked to evidence, in fact crime has reduced substantially over the past decades and restorative approaches to justice have significantly reduced recidivism rates, but through clever positioning, all government policy becomes just another violation of the individual, and more importantly the morally righteous family.

3.6 Tensions and Challenges

There are a number of high level tensions and challenges within cultural conservatism. The two that will be explored here are: a mistrust of individual choices and the uneasy relationship between personal autonomy and traditional gender roles.

Cultural conservatism fundamentally mistrusts individual actions. While individuals can be moral agents, they also desire to be free-riders and thus to support government policies and practices that are to their self-benefit through contemporary democracy. This means that, while rights-based democracy is a potent check on tyranny and collectivism, it can also be a deeply destructive practice which results in a socially-aggressive state. Gaidner attempts to address this contradiction through delineating two distinct types of democracy: ‘organic democracy’ and ‘hyperdemocracy’. Gaidner argues that contemporary democracy has been corrupted and no longer is about freedom but now is about demanding positive rights and protections from government. Here he is:

Once we do this, what becomes immediately apparent is that democratic instruments are really only value-neutral tools used to decide the distribution of policy and power. Just as a shovel can be used to dig a foundation for a house, or to beat someone to death, the tools, and especially the language of democracy, can be used to create a virtuous, free, and good society, or an oppressive, and very bad one. In quiet moments I worry that we North Americans have been flirting with the latter category for some time, and that the refinement and vigour of any society have little to do with democracy, or with the act of digging, and everything to do with the underlying moral and political culture, or what is dug. (2002)

This step is consistent with the axioms of moral degradation from government and faith-based morality (he references the Christian origins directly in the above article), however, seems to tip the balance of moral-immoral individuals clearly in the immoral category. If individuals are fundamentally immoral, as he suggests numerous times throughout his texts, then the chief impetus for decentralizing power, ie. allowing individuals to make moral decisions, is weakened significantly. Gairdner might respond that individuals not subject to governments tend to make more moral choices, but fails to explain why that would be the case. What instructs and reinforces morality is social organization, in the form of a church, family or local judicial council but those institutions are democratic and subject to precisely the same kind of moral corruption ‘hyperdemocracy’ is said to achieve. Gairdner’s ‘value-neutral tool’ of democracy could be said to translate to a similar ‘value-neutral tool’ of government or social organization, which could undermine one of cultural conservatives fundamental critiques of government.

A second challenge to cultural conservatism seems to be an inherent contraction between a commitment to family and commitment to individuals. The traditional family is often highlighted as an example of an ideal state and moral center for society, but this understanding ignores the unequal and immoral elements of a traditional family. The IMFC, in a publication arguing for greater government support for the family has this to say:

What about cases where divorce really is the best solution for everyone. There are circumstances in which divorce is the least harmful option...today’s perpetual emphasis on making divorce easier has promoted the view that divorce is just another choice which adults can make on their own terms. Defining when divorce is truly necessary is difficult... (2009)

This paternalistic approach – individuals need to be supported (pressured?) to stay in marriages they believe are no longer functioning, is inconsistent with allowing greater

freedom and autonomy for individuals. While cultural conservatives wish the state to be removed from the social sphere, that does not mean that they desire other institutions to exercise similar discretion in the social sphere. Indeed the family, the community and the church should remain involved in the private social sphere (indeed they are said to be inherent to it). While this decentralization of social influence is consistent with one axiom, this paternalistic move seems to be infringing on the personal responsibility axiom. If support for traditional marriage is going to come from local institutions, is it unclear why that type of support is not similarly corrupting. Cultural conservatives may argue that the family and local community is exempt from the pernicious and morally damaging nature of government, but again it is unclear why those institutions are not equally undermining of personal morality. Proximity and adherence to religious tenants do not seem to be sufficiently good reasons to interfere in the social realm. While religious families might agree that having church support through difficult times in their marriage is valuable, many families would also say that having government support through difficult circumstances is equally valuable. Cultural conservatives seem to dismiss the social and democratic nature of government – it is unclear what about government makes it so different from locally binding administrations and cultural/civic institutions.

Chapter 4: Equal-Opportunity Conservatism

...for Canadians to answer some very basic questions about the nature of our society. What is a right? What is a freedom? Is there a difference? The terms often are used interchangeable, but they are different. One has a right to something and freedom from something. So we have a right to life; a right to vote; a right to own property, for example. And we have rights that we create voluntarily, through contracts – and the right to sue to enforce those contracts. Freedoms are a negative right. It's the right to be left alone, really. (Levant 2009)

To favour liberal individualism is not to deny the importance of groups and collectivities in liberal democracies. After all, freedom of association is an important component of individual freedom. The question is not whether one is for or against groups and collectivities but whether and to what extent they should be given legal and constitutional status and recognition – especially since we know from long experience that special legal status for some groups will always generate ill-will among others; it is not a recipe for comity among one's fellow citizens. (Bercuson and Cooper 1994)

The fourth and final strain of conservatism examined here is a recent and powerful conservative phenomenon in Canada. Strongly grounded in western alienation and a particular notion of equality, equal-opportunity conservatism concerns itself with a perceived change in social institutions which has generated state-induced inequality. This chapter begins with a brief look at the chosen exemplars of equal-opportunity conservatism, continues with an examination of the emergence of equal-opportunity conservatism and its ideological opponents, axioms and underlying appeals, explores two core policies and concludes with a brief look at the tensions and challenges existing within equal-opportunity conservatism.

4.1 Exemplars of Equal-Opportunity Conservatism

Again, based primarily in the west, equal-opportunity conservatism emerged rapidly and powerfully in the late 1980s, early 1990s in Canada. David Jay Bercuson and Barry Cooper are two well-known conservative academics, also said to be part of the aforementioned Calgary school, who contribute a number of texts outlining the core ideas of equal-opportunity conservatism. Together, they provide *Derailed: The Betrayal of a National Dream* (1994) and *Deconfederation: Canada without Quebec* (1991), two texts

that lament the changing character of the Canadian nation. Barry Cooper more recently wrote *It's the Regime Stupid: A Report from the Cowboy West on why Stephen Harper Matters* (2009) which heralds an end to the corrupt self-enriching liberal regime said to have been strangling Canada since the end of WWII. Like many other authors highlighted in this text, both Bercuson and Cooper are academics but write more popular texts intended for non-academic audiences and have had a degree of popular success in these endeavors. They both have held a range of positions with conservative think-tanks in Canada.

Ezra Levant, a controversial media personality, provides a more explicitly political author. He contributes two texts aimed at specific targets said to perpetuate inequality: *Ethical Oil: The Case for Canada's Oil Sands* (2010) and *Shakedown: How Our Government Is Undermining Democracy in the Name of Human Rights* (Levant 2009). The second text catalogues Levant's run-in with the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission as a result of his work with the *Western Standard*. Levant has achieved success for his publications, his public speaking and his work with Sun TV.

Allan Bloom, while himself not from the west, serves as the senior intellectual of equal-opportunity conservatism. Like the other exemplars covered in this chapter, Bloom is extremely concerned with the decline of western civilization, particularly due to a well-meaning but pernicious academic, social and bureaucratic elite. The language and themes of Bloom's most popular text, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (1987) is found again and again in texts by equal-opportunity conservatives. Bloom does not contribute much text to this chapter, but his articulation of the decline of modernity

and his penchant for invoking Greek conceptions of democracy and the good life inform equal-opportunity conservatives in the way that Burke informs tory nationalism and Hayek informs economic and social libertarianism.

4.2 Origins and Opposition

If economic and social libertarianism emerged in response to the growth of state influence in the economic realm and cultural conservatism emerged in response to the growth of state influence in the social realm, equal-opportunity conservatism can be said to have emerged in response to government economic and social policies that discriminate between citizens. Libertarianism and cultural conservatism both are concerned primarily with restricting the power of government over individual (and familial) life, whereas equal-opportunity conservatism has two distinct driving concerns: 1) the identification and disruption of individual policies and programs which discriminate between citizens, and 2) a condemnation of a supposed human weakness driving us to sustain and strengthen central governing authority.

In 1980, Pierre Elliot Trudeau's liberals were elected to a majority government without a single Member of Parliament elected to the west of Manitoba. Trudeau then implemented the National Energy Program (NEP) which redistributed revenue earned from the oil industry across Canada. Many westerners perceived the NEP as an attempt to steal the natural resource wealth of the west to enrich the populations in central and eastern Canada (Jackson 2006). This perceived theft gave rise to strong feelings of resentment in western Canada. This resentment gave way to many shifts in the western political landscape, among them the emergence of a group of intellectuals and politicians concerned with equality in the Canadian project.

Trudeau and the liberals of the 1980s would have argued that the redistribution of wealth across the country was itself a decision to improve equality across the country. Unemployment, particularly in the Atlantic Provinces, was high and the wealth brought in from the west would decrease unemployment and raise GDP per capita across the region. However, equal-opportunity conservatives would say that this type of equality is equality of outcome rather than equality of opportunity (or treatment).

While these east-favoring economic policies were being implemented, a second and unrelated set of philosophical shifts had been occurring for many years and reached a perceived breaking point in the 1980s. Allan Bloom captured the zeitgeist with *The Closing of American Mind* by poignantly describing what baby boomers and their parents find so troubling about their generation X children and grandchildren. The conflict is a complex one to understand and there is insufficient room to explore the fundamental philosophical disagreements said to divide the generations. However, where Generation Xers would describe themselves as accepting of diversity, as creatively driven, and as protected and supported by a strong state, equal-opportunity conservatives would describe those same traits as nihilist, indulgent and opportunistic. Or so the narrative goes. Similar to cultural conservatives, equal-opportunity conservatives responded to a shift in sensibilities and expectations among the general population by lamenting a supposed decline in contemporary Canadian society.

4.3 Axioms

We now turn to the mapping of our last strain: an examination of the axioms, core policy recommendations and emotional/intellectual appeals of equal-opportunity conservatives. Equal-opportunity conservatives, in writing on a diverse array of subjects,

are bound by a strong articulation of five key axioms: (1) a firm belief in equality, specifically, political equality; (2) the individual is the fundamental unit of society; (3) citizenship is simultaneously a privilege and a responsibility; (4) a veneration for so-called ‘common sense’; and (5) strong and depoliticized courts informed by negative rights.

The first axiom of equal-opportunity conservatives concerns a fundamental belief in the equality of every individual. This is a particular sort of equality, however. Here is Bloom, during a not-uncommon reference to Plato’s *Republic*, explaining the equal-opportunity conservatives understanding of equality.

The real community of man, in the midst of all the self-contradictory simulacra of community, is the community of those who seek the truth, of the **potential knowers**, that is, in principle, **of all men to the extent that they desire to know**. (1987, 381, emphasis added)

Each individual citizen is potential knower and will participate in the social [and financial] economy to the extent that they would like. This is an assertion of equality but also an assertion about how individual humans will behave. Some will participate and others will not, it is not up to others to determine what the acts and preferences will be of others. This first axiom is deferential to the equality found in the *Republic* and is further deferential to the idea of direct democracy also existing in Athens at the time. In *Shakedown*, Levant argues that the real offence of Human Rights Commissions is that they undermine the ability of an individual, any individual, to have their say in the public marketplace of ideas.

The second axiom, a commitment to individual rights, is common among the strains of conservatism covered in this text. Like libertarians, equal-opportunity conservatives measure society as a sum of individuals acting in concert to generate social

and economic well-being. This commitment to individual rights is strong in equal-opportunity conservatism and is found implicitly or explicitly in all texts examined here.

The third axiom, that citizenship is simultaneously a privilege and a responsibility again finds Greek roots. Here is Cooper reinforcing the first axiom and outlining the third:

For Aristotle, democracy meant ruling and being ruled in turns. This was the essence of citizenship because citizens share equally in the privileges and the responsibilities of the regime. In contrast, a regime that operates chiefly by rules and administration, which is to say, bureaucrats, trains not active citizens but patient subject. For Aristotle, justice meant treating equals equally and unequals unequally. Today justice means fairness...and such fairness demands dependence on the state (2009, 59)

While Cooper is invoking Aristotle, the words are not Aristotle's but his own. He goes on to describe how those who view the state as a giver and not a partner causes anger and resentment among citizens. He characterizes politics of fairness (or in his words, dependency) as "seamy, slutty politics". Similarly, Levant frequently issues calls for action where he appeals to everyday citizens to help him take responsibility for social and political change, lest they become subjects of the state (2009, 191). Here he is worrying about the decline of the active citizen:

If there's no need to write letters to the editor, call in to talk-radio shows, join political campaigns, and go to public town halls – because a government agency is already supposedly taking care of all of it for us – we lost track of our responsibilities, to build a proper civil society through our own actions. (2009, 16)

The fourth axiom, an appeal to 'common sense', finds its origins in the populist rhetoric of equal-opportunity conservatism. More than any other strain, equal-opportunity conservatives frequently ask the rhetorical question: "does that make sense?" with the expectation that the average Canadian will answer with a resounding "No!". Levant invokes this line of questioning in both *Ethical Oil* and *Shakedown* and frequently

invokes common sense in his writings and on-air appearances.¹³ While the dependency on ‘common sense’ is often derided as a rejection of empiricism, the equal-opportunity conservatives reliance on ‘common sense’ is more than just a suspicion of authority, it is a fundamental belief about the ability of any individual to contribute in a meaningful way to dialogue.

The fifth and final axiom of equal-opportunity conservatism is a belief in strong depoliticized courts informed by negative freedoms. In condemning the Human Rights Commissions¹⁴, Levant appeals to what he calls “real courts” (2009, 185), arguing that courts have their place in the protection of freedoms and that respect for human rights has become “one of Canada’s great hallmarks” (2009, 16) Levant draws a comparison between negative rights, or freedoms, and positive rights, or entitlements. A negative right is the right to be free from other things whereas a positive right is the freedom to do something. For example, freedom of speech is a negative right whereas attending post-secondary education is a positive right. The distinction is an important one for Levant, as he believes that negative rights or freedoms are absolute whereas positive rights or entitlements are matters of social policy and not ones that courts should be directly involved in. Strong courts protecting freedoms are of paramount importance to equal-opportunity conservatives precisely because they are the best safeguard from the burdens positive rights can entail (taxation, self-censorship, etc.).

¹³ A search of ezrelevant.com yields 66 articles from 2008-2011 that invoke the term. (The Official Ezra Levant 2014)

¹⁴ Parliament established the Canadian Human Rights Commission in through passing the Canadian Human Rights Act in 1977. The Commission is an independent body tasked with promoting the development of human rights cultures. (Canadian Human Rights Commission 2014) The Act also established the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, a quasi-judicial body tasked with hearing cases on discrimination. Levant has been subject to Tribunal proceedings a number of times for various incendiary comments.

4.4 Core Policy Recommendations

Equal-opportunity conservatism, like cultural conservatism, is brash, self-certain and righteously uncompromising in forwarding a large number of policies that would significantly change the Canadian political landscape. This work covers two of them: the removal of state funding for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the abolition of Human Rights Tribunals. Both policies find wide-support amongst economic and social libertarians and cultural conservatives as well.

The CBC is Canada's national broadcaster and is supported by the Canadian government to the tune of \$1 billion annually (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation 2013). Levant in particular is known for attacking the state broadcaster on a range of issues. A search of his website yields dozens of articles criticized the broadcaster for misspending, distorting local media markets and perpetuating 'leftish' ideas (2014). Cooper, while showing a broader interest in journalistic bias, contributing to *Hidden Agendas: How Journalists Influence the News* (2003) has not explicitly called for the abolition of the CBC. However, in his earlier years Cooper did write *Sins of Omission: Shaping the News at CBC TV* (1994), in which he performs a detailed analysis of CBC TV programming in 1988-1989 and finds that the CBC perpetuates leftish and marginalizes non-progressive positions. His conclusion is that either CBC needs to be more neutral in its programming or that it should be abolished.

Equal-opportunity conservatives see the CBC as a violation of its first axiom. Through supporting one broadcaster and not others, the government is choosing to privilege a certain group and set of perspectives over another. The fact that the perspective is contrary to that of equal-opportunity conservatives is certainly an

additional motivator in calls for abolition. Levant has been working with SunTV which recently accessed a subsidy of sorts through the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications commission, however, the effective dollars received by SunTV continue to be dwarfed by the CBC.

The second core policy is the abolition of the Human Rights Commission and its Human Rights Tribunals. In the best known attack on Human Rights Tribunals, Levant argues in *Shakedown* that they seek to entrench the privilege and rights of interest groups by compromising the freedoms of Canadian citizens. Here is Levant:

What mature society makes it illegal to “affront” someone’s “dignity”? That’s how kindergarten teachers treat their children. But this law applies to adults. This law makes it illegal to “likely” cause someone to feel the emotion of hatred...It’s time the Supreme Court ended this politically abusive censorship. It’s time the Canadian government treated free speech with respect...because we believe in a society where freedom is more important than hurt feelings. (2011)

Indeed, Levant’s considerable efforts to abolish the Human Rights Commission and Tribunals helped propel the issue to one of national importance in 2009. While the Commission has not been decommissioned, Levant continue to argue forcefully that traditional courts can cover the legally relevant issues and the issues of “hurt feelings” can be dealt with privately or not at all. While Cooper and Bercuson have not written on the Human Rights Commission as extensively, Cooper recently waded into the debate through an article in the Calgary Herald entitled *One more reason to ditch the human rights commission* (2014).

Levant and Cooper’s explicit calls for abolition of the Human Rights Commission are grounded in a broader attack on the changed role of the judiciary in Canada. Levant’s popular critique is given a more rigorous and academic voice in two texts by other equal-opportunity conservatives. Ted Morton and Rainer Knopff, academic and ideological colleagues of Cooper and Bercuson, wrote *Charter Politics* (1992) and the *Charter*

Revolution and the Court Party (2000) in which they argue that the traditional role of Canadian courts has been changed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. No longer are courts just protecting against negative right infringements, they are actively pursuing a political agenda through pro positive rights judgments. More concerning, courts are no longer being deferential to parliamentary or democratic supremacy. Knopff and Morton are worried about the undemocratic nature of this new page in Canadian history:

Our primary objection to the Charter Revolution is that it is deeply and fundamentally undemocratic, not just in the simple and obvious sense of being anti-majoritarian, but also in the more serious sense of eroding the habits and temperament of representative democracy. The growth of courtroom rights talk undermines perhaps the fundamental prerequisite of decent liberal democratic politics: the willingness to engage those with whom one disagrees in the ongoing attempt to combine diverse interests into temporarily viable governing majorities...courtroom politics promoted by the Court Party, in short, is authoritarian, not just in process but, more dangerously, in spirit. (Knopff and Morton 2000, 149)

By Levant, Morton, and Knopff, the Human Rights Commission and efforts by other courts to uphold positive rights is demonstrated to violate three of the axioms of equal-opportunity conservatism: a firm belief in equality, specifically, political equality, and the belief that citizenship is simultaneously a privilege and a responsibility and the desire for strong and depoliticized courts informed by negative rights.

A third core policy recommendation explored here is the abolition of the equalization payment system. The equalization payment formula is a financial phenomenon that sees the distribution of federal dollars to the provinces in unequal amounts. The policy, first instituted in 1957 in an effort to help the Atlantic provinces is now a system of unconditional transfer payments to the provinces based on the ability of each province to raise revenue. The purpose of the policy is to allow provinces to provide “an average level of public services to their residents without resorting to excessive levels of taxation” (Jackson 2006). Equal-opportunity conservatives are staunchly opposed to any such redistribution scheme as it supports provinces with uncompetitive economies at

the expense of those with competitive ones. Again, this is a policy which seeks equality of outcome rather than equality of opportunity. Economic and social libertarianism is also strongly opposed to the policy as it creates a system of perverse incentives that distort the market.

4.5 Appeals

Equal-opportunity conservatives tend to employ similar emotional and rhetorical appeals to cultural conservatives. While not explicitly explored here, equal-opportunity conservatism shares with the other strains the themes of morality, individualism, freedom and the situation of modernity, the New left and a large government apparatus as the enemy. This last lens of analysis of equal-opportunity conservatives explores some of the most common themes invoked including an appeal to ‘common-sense’ or to the ‘common Canadian’ and the frequent invocation of the word and theme of ‘fairness’ or ‘equality’.

Equal-opportunity conservatives frequently refer to ‘common-sense’ as the driving force behind their politics. The website www.commonsensecanadian.ca, the policy document ‘Common Sense Revolution’ under Mike Harris in Ontario and the frequent invocation of common sense by Toronto Mayor Rob Ford are all examples of the success equal-opportunity conservatives have had at mainstreaming so-called ‘common sense’ into public policy. What precisely ‘common sense’ entails for complex policy phenomenon is not always clear, however. Here is Levant:

It’s a pointless law. It’s a busybody law. It doesn’t make sense economically or environmentally... Plastic bags are environmentally sound — inert, non-toxic, low energy to make and ship, and are a natural byproduct from clean natural gas.... Toronto is looking for a new city motto. Unofficially, it used to be Toronto the Good. If city hall is the example, I propose Toronto the Stupid.

Levant is arguing here that a ban on plastic bags goes against ‘common sense’ and is just generally a stupid decision. However, not everyone would agree with him; a commenter

on a news site covering the ban invokes ‘common sense’ to say that instead of an outright ban, Toronto should just force producers of bags to produce and sell only fully biodegradable bags (Canadian Press 2012) – something Levant would similarly oppose. Perhaps Levant’s sense is more common but the other perspective could just as easily be argued to be the true ‘common sense’. However, for equal-opportunity conservatives, the invocation of ‘common sense’ is a remarkably successful tool of shaming – the framing of one position or person as stupid and another one as fundamentally intelligent, regardless of their relative policy considerations and merits. In this way, equal-opportunity conservatives have been very successful at framing their policies as intelligent without accompanying evidence.

A second common appeal found in equal-opportunity conservative texts is the language of ‘fairness’. Equal-opportunity conservatives wish to situate their positions as ‘fair’ in a very particular sense of the word. Those across the political spectrum would believe their positions to also promote fairness in society; indeed a communist government would have a debatable but not entirely illegitimate claim to promoting fairness in their society. However, equal-opportunity conservatives attempt to promote an exclusive version of fairness based on the earlier Platonic ideal that individuals should have equal opportunities to share their thoughts, but not an equal expectation that their thoughts will be heard or considered. Here is Cooper situating fairness and equality while also invoking the ‘Canadianness’ of the equal-opportunity conservative position:

The formal principle of Canadian political life, as of other liberal democratic regimes, is equality. No one can argue in such a regime in favour of two or several classes of citizens. Canadians will not listen to such arguments. This is why one speaks of equality of *rights*, for rights are formal and legal; the content, as distinct from the form, of rights will, of course, vary in terms of the choices, talents and abilities of the holder. If they were, the strong – fighting intellectuals, for instance – could exercise them on behalf of the weak. And that would mean that rights flowed from weakness, not from strength. (1994, 201, emphasis the authors)

We see here that equality is situated as fundamental but in a way that allows for individual self-determination. In order to strengthen this understanding of equality, the equality of outcome many ideologies prefer, must be situated as weak – as the purview of ‘fighting intellectuals’, whereas the exercise of our choices, talents and abilities is seen as strength. Bercuson and Cooper are making a complex and likely unsustainable (or at the very least in need of significant philosophical buttressing) normative claim here about positive rights being rights of weakness and negative rights being those of strength. They do not support that complex normative claim, but instead seek to discredit alternative means of promoting equality through a socially situated appeal to strength and weakness.

4.6 Tensions and Challenges

Similar to tory nationalism, equal-opportunity conservatism has a troubled relationship with democracy that an astute reader may have inferred from the earlier exploration of democratic concerns of the changing role of the judiciary. Equal-opportunity conservatives are simultaneously strongly committed to direct democracy and debate and a high degree of control over democratic excess through courts strongly supporting negative rights. This is a concern commonly found in the liberal democratic tradition and was covered in the earlier discussion of tory nationalism. However, it is important to note that equal-opportunity conservatism is more strongly committed to the individual and his/her political freedom than tory nationalism was and thus the pendulum has swung away from judicial oversight of democracy. The consequence is a deep mistrust of the courts, fostered by the recent activities of the Human Rights Commission, despite an ideological commitment towards fundamental freedoms. Equal-opportunity conservatives would likely argue that democratic ideals and political freedoms are deeply

entrenched in the Canadian psyche and it is unlikely that society would democratically choose to restrict freedoms. This is a questionable assertion of fact, however, as equal-opportunity conservatives have pointed out that in recent years the judiciary has been increasingly involved in imposing the obligations that positive rights are associated with. The governments that fostered these human rights instruments were democratically elected and those particular initiatives enjoyed broad electoral support at the time.

The second major tension found within equal-opportunity conservatives lies in the Platonic claim that each individual is free to access the public ideas marketplace to the extent that they choose. This commitment to political equality is challenged once one considers the vast inequality between individual citizens. If equal-opportunity conservatives believe that ‘unequals’ should be treated unequally then certain ‘unequals’ will not be able to exercise their political equality due to a variety of situations beyond their control. This inequality to pursue their ‘potential knowing’ is fundamentally unjust and incompatible with the equal-opportunity conservative axiom of every individual being able to exercise their privilege and responsibility in relationship to the state. Through a rejection of positive rights, equal-opportunity conservatives endorse a rather draconian society whose citizens may be more or less able to display their merit. Those citizens will be fundamentally political unequal in an ideology absolutely committed to political equality, or at least the opportunity for political equality.

A final brief tension found in equal-opportunity conservatism concerns the role of experts. In an ideology that celebrates the wisdom of the common-man and his ‘common sense’ and simultaneously calls for success to be celebrated, the value of expert opinion is unclear. An individual like Levant who has extensively studied the Human Rights

Commission system in Canada should, in a meritorious society, be given more weight, when discussing issues of human rights policy in Canada, than an individual who has not studied the Commission at all. And yet the instinct of equal-opportunity conservatives is to rely more on 'common sense' than on a policy or subject-matter expert. It is unclear what weight equal-opportunity conservatives should appropriately give experts, who have earned through hard work a degree of social and economic wealth, as compared to an individual who, under their understanding of engagement, has been disengaged from the social sphere. Both individuals, other things being equal, possess similar levels of 'common sense'.

Conclusion: Mapping Canadian Conservatism

In this sixth and final chapter, we turn to directly answering the central and supplementary research questions outlined early in this text: (1) what diversity is found in contemporary Canadian conservative ideology? And: (2) what similarities unite disparate strains of Canadian conservative ideology? This final chapter is intended as a synthesis of the findings found in the rest of this work and looks closely at the relationships between the four strains of conservative ideology in Canada, the eighteen axioms, the nine core policy prescriptions, and the twelve appeals identified in the earlier chapters.¹⁵ After laying out the findings of this work, this chapter will conclude with a final summation of the tensions and challenges facing the breadth of conservative thought in Canada today.

5.1 Axioms, Policies and Appeals

The following three pages lay out side-by-side comparisons of the axioms, policies and appeals found in the previous four chapters. Each axiom, policy and appeal has been assigned an agreement value that ranges between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree). To facilitate easy reading, each of the values has also been assigned a colour from light blue (strongly disagree) to dark navy (strongly agree). These Figures take the work of previous chapters, with their detailed assessment of specific tenants of the ideological strains, and seeks to assess the extent to which the other three strains are in agreement or disagreement. There are three possibilities: 1) 4-0 consensus where all four strains are in agreement; 2) 3-1 marginalization where one strain is a clear outlier; 3) 2-2 split highlighting sites of genuine and ongoing debate.

¹⁵ These lists should be considered indicative rather than exhaustive. The policies, axioms and appeals have been chosen because they can be found among many of the exemplars highlighted in this work and not because they cover the full breadth of commonly debated policy issues in Canada.

FIGURE 5-1 KEY CONSERVATIVE AXIOMS

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure/Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
	Tory Nationalism	Economic and Social Libertarianism	Cultural Conservatism	Equal-opportunity conservatism
Respect for the role of history	5	3	5	4
Humanity is fallible	4	5	3	2
A partnership exists between a citizen and their government	5	4	1	2
There is a high value of public life	4	3	4	3
A belief in 'enlightened capitalism'	4	1	2	2
Commitment to laissez-faire capitalism	2	5	4	4
Individual is the fundamental unit of society	2	5	2	4
Humanity is ingenious	4	5	3	5
The role of government is to provide safety and order	4	5	4	4
The state should practice fiscal responsibility	3	5	4	3
The welfare state erodes personal moral responsibility	2	4	5	5
Faith-based morality should inform politics	3	1	5	3
The family is the central constructive unit of society	4	2	5	3
Political power should be decentralized	2	3	5	5
We should engage in more direct democracy	3	2	3	4
Individual rights must be protected	4	5	3	4
Common sense should inform policy	2	1	5	5
Strong courts informed by civil rights should exist	4	4	4	5

FIGURE 5-2 KEY CONSERVATIVE POLICIES

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure/Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Issue	Description	TN	ESL	CC	EOC
Living Wage	The establishment of above-poverty line funding for each individual	4	1	2	2
The historical value of regional compromise (Quebec special treatment)	The historical compromise of the Canadian nation is between French-Speaking and English-Speaking populations. That history should inform contemporary policies.	5	4	2	1
Abolition of market distortions in regards to Aboriginal populations	Aboriginal people should cease to receive special treatment as it encourages dependency and fosters other destructive habits and patterns.	2	5	5	4
Elimination of the long-form census	A voluntary census is sufficient to gather data.	2	3	3	4
Tough on crime	The penitentiary system should be based on deterrence and be punitive in nature	2	2	5	4
Abolition of welfare	Welfare should be replaced by alternative systems, including workfare	1	5	4	4
Family income splitting	Families with dual incomes should be able to split their incomes, allowing family units to pay less taxes	3	3	5	4
Remove state funding for the CBC	The state should not provide a public broadcaster	1	4	4	5
Abolition of Human Rights Tribunals	Human rights litigation can go through the regular court process	2	5	5	5

FIGURE 5-3 KEY CONSERVATIVE APPEALS

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure/Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

	Description	TN	FMF	CC	EOC
Canada	Canadian greatness, Canadian importance, value of Canada	5	2	3	4
Collectivism	Value of working together, building society, role of community	5	3	4	3
Individualism	Individual agency, freedom, remove barriers	3	5	4	4
Human progress	We can improve our social and economic well-being	4	5	2	3
Moral decay	Society is decadent, we have lost our foundation	3	2	5	4
Common Sense	The normal average Canadian should think...	3	1	4	5
History	History informing the present, relevance of historical policies and compromises	5	2	4	3
Core Values	There exists an obvious and central morality	3	2	5	4
Responsibility	Government must exercise...when negotiating between competing conceptions of the good	5	3	4	2
Liberal elite	Problems with society and with government can be attributed to the...	2	2	4	5
Human Rights	Civil and Political rights tradition should be respected	4	2	1	5
Entrepreneurial Spirit	Humans thrive when they are able to create their own wealth	3	5	3	4

There is a significant amount of information contained in the Figures above. While we cannot thoroughly investigate all the 2-2, 3-1 and 4-0 splits that exist, it is useful to highlight several examples from the figures which demonstrate the sites of marginalization, genuine debate, and consensus that exist.

5.2 Marginalization

The most marginalized of the four strains is tory nationalism. This marginalization was hinted at earlier and is principally a product of tory nationalism's worry about laissez-faire capitalism. In fact, if you examine just Figure 5-2, you would find that tory nationalism generally stands opposed to cultural conservatism and equal-opportunity conservatism and only occasionally shares policies of economic and social libertarianism. Key examples include: approach towards welfare, funding for the CBC and supporting access to human-rights litigation. However, tory nationalism is not the only strain that holds marginalized positions.

Economic and social libertarianism finds itself marginalized in its approach towards evidence-based public policy. This is seen through hostility towards faith-based morality informing public policy, their rejection of so-called common sense public policy solutions and a relative lack of emphasis on the role of history informing the contemporary reality. Economic and social libertarianism is more likely than the other strains to rely on expert opinion, particularly in the economic sphere.

Cultural conservatism and equal-opportunity conservatism, as highlighted above, have quite similar policy positions and principally differ on axioms and appeals. Cultural conservatism finds itself alone in approaching public policy from a traditional, family-focused perspective. Examples include: the endorsement of family income splitting, a

heavy focus on faith-based solutions to contemporary political challenges and a discomfort with the belief that capitalism and scientific progress universally enrich humanity.

Finally, the equal-opportunity conservatism emphasis on political fairness and equality finds it in opposition to the other strains in a number of cases as well. Equal-opportunity conservatism favors an increase in direct democracy, holds a strong belief in the ingenuity of individual humans to overcome systemic and social challenges and frequently frames its positions in the language of moral fairness.

These marginalized positions reflect a snapshot of the conservative ideological landscape in Canada. It is possible; however, that today's dominant conservative positions will not be tomorrows. For example, the belief that humanity will continue to improve its relative happiness, material wealth and physical well-being is a dominant theme of contemporary conservatism. It is possible that overpopulation, diminishing returns on scientific advancement and rising unemployment will lead to a shift towards an axiom more pessimistic about humanity's future and a similar survey of the literature in 50 years would find that a belief in human ingenuity was a marginalized position. This serves as a useful reminder that, while the strains do appear fairly well-defined and have not changed significantly over the past decades, they are subject to material and philosophical shifts.

5.3 Genuine Debate

A 2-2 split between ideological strains is indicative of a continuing struggle in Conservative ideology. The axioms, policies and appeals highlighted in this section may be familiar as many of them have been highlighted or hinted at in previous chapters.

However, in this concluding chapter we can assess to what extent the internal tensions and challenges within an ideological strain are also defining struggles in the broader ideological movement.

The key axioms that are sites of genuine debate are: the fundamental unit of society, the relationship between citizen and government as being a fundamentally antagonistic one or a partnership, whether faith has a place in politics and the degree to which human rights should influence public policy. Two of these are discussed below.

Both economic and social libertarianism and equal-opportunity conservatism have an axiomatic belief that the individual to be the fundamental unit of society. This flows from the liberal tradition established by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke and is commonly seen as the hegemonic or dominant frame of society. While tory nationalism and cultural conservatism are also committed to the individual, both also understand society to be constituted from communities. In tory nationalism, an individual is understood in context of their relationship to their community and society. Economic and social decisions cannot be understood, tory nationalism argues, divorced from the behavior and attitudes of an individual's community. In order to build a successful society, we need to focus on the society as much, or more, as on its constituent individuals. Thus, rather than being concerned with the behavior of particular individuals, tory nationalism is concerned with social objectives and outcomes in a way the two strains above are not. Cultural conservatism as well perceives the family to be the fundamental unit of society. While individuals are similarly important, they are guided in a moral sense by their relationship to their family and to their spiritual community. While this understanding of the core unit of society may seem trivial, this site of disagreement is

actually one of the most far reaching as it informs how ideological actors perceive the construction of society.

A second axiomatic disagreement concerns the fundamental nature of the citizen-government relationship. Tory nationalism and economic and social libertarianism find themselves articulation a similar axiom, albeit in a different way. Tory nationalism believes that the social contract between individuals and their governments is an important one that allows society and communities to flourish. Government is simply the manifestation of the will of the community and thus should be respected as such. Economic and social libertarians, also understand government as a social contract between individuals and their collective will. While they believe government should limit itself to policing and enforcing agreement upon laws, they also recognize the fundamentally beneficial relationship between citizen and government. Meanwhile, equal-opportunity conservatism and cultural conservatism both understand government to be an institution that seeks to grow and control its population. Rather than partnering with government, it is our job as diligent and moral citizens to continuously check government power and ensure it is not accumulating too much power and influence.

The vast majority of policies covered in this text are not sites of genuine debate. The key one that emerges is an approach towards justice with tory nationalism and economic and social libertarianism favoring (relatively) a rehabilitative versus punitive approach towards criminals and to a lesser extent the practice of a long-form census. A brief illustration of the four positions on both issues will help to illuminate the actual sites of debate.

Tory nationalism finds itself concerned with punitive approaches to justice because the poor are disproportionately incarcerated and are likely to recommit even when released. This ends up imposing a significant social burden on some communities and a significant financial burden the federal government. Economic and social libertarianism, while itself committed to law and order governance, is concerned that mass incarceration of its citizenry by a government is an example of an overreaching government and would prefer to reduce government spending through cheaper and often more effective rehabilitative programs. On the other side of the issue, cultural conservatism and equal-opportunity conservatism see the act of committing a crime as a choice by free moral agents who will only change behavior by the imposition of a system of strict discipline and strong punitive disincentives for recidivism. We can see under the current Conservative government a favoring of a punitive approach towards justice – with spending on prisons and the number of inmates increasing significantly over the past decade (The Correctional Investigator of Canada 2013).

A second interesting site of debate is that over the long-form census. Tory nationalism is not opposed to the long-form census because it supports the partnership between citizenry and government and allows citizens, corporations and governments to act in an informed manner to address key social issues. Economic and social libertarianism worries about the intrusive long-form census but is more amenable to a compulsory short-form census to assist with informing the necessary business of government. Cultural conservatism is skeptical of the long form census because it facilitates government overreach and, but does not hold a particularly strong position on the issue. Meanwhile, equal-opportunity conservatism perceives the census to be an

intrusion on personal liberties and would prefer the government not be able to make social policy on the basis of information on differences that the long-form census could provide.

Again, the axioms and policies outlined above demonstrate a continued marginalization of tory nationalism and to a lesser extent economic and social libertarianism. Under the current Conservative government, cultural conservatives and equal-opportunity conservatives have seen the implementation of a number of policies they find ideologically desirable, while the other two strains find much to be desired in the government's failure to significantly reduce the scope of government and foster an engaged and active public capable of building the social economy of the country.

5.4 Consensus

Few consensus emerge from the Figures above. The analysis performed in this work, starting from four distinct strains, will necessarily produce difference rather than similarity and yet some similarities are found. While two key consensus points do emerge from the Figures, it is useful to bear in mind that proponents of the four strains have far more in common than they share with thinkers of other times and places. Common axioms include: a view of government as providing safety and order, an abiding respect for civil rights (particularly property) and fiscal responsibility. No policies surveyed in earlier chapters are adopted by consensus; however, policies that directly flow from the two consensus axioms that are endorsed by all four strains: strong courts informed by civil rights and freedoms and a role of government as the primary provider of safety and order. Examples of such policies (in a broad sense) include an independent judiciary, a strong police force with civilian oversight and a general desire for balanced budgets. It is

in the appeals Figure that we find the most commonality, with different strains of conservatism articulating their positions in similarly themed ways.

Again, turning to appeals we see significant convergence. Conservatives across the spectrum invoke the entrepreneurial spirit, Canadian greatness, the value of collective action, themes of individualism, a moral center, etc. Of all the appeals very frequently invoked by at least one strain of conservatism, only two are not as least occasionally invoked by all three other strains. So while conservative axioms and policies differ significantly, the way the positions are framed and understood are very similar. This finding suggests that the commonality found amongst conservatives lies in their vernacular, a potent site of ideological agreement.

This final chapter has laid out some of the key sites of difference of Conservatism in Canada. We have examined policies, appeals-to and axioms and found a range of agreements and disagreements within the four strains identified. If nothing else, this work should have established two things. The first is that ideology does matter and it is possible to gain insight into the political thinking of a group of individuals through a detailed examination of the compositional elements of their ideology. The second is the recognition that contemporary Canadian conservatism is a complex and multilayered ideology with significant internal disagreement.

The next step in a project such as this is to more closely examine the relationship between political achievements and ideological strains. While this work took a cursory look at key political figures like Stephen Harper and Preston Manning, it did not seek to try and predict or understand political behavior in Canada as a product of these ideological strains. This next step is a challenging one and would require a closer look at

the political impacts of ideology. Some such efforts have been attempted, particularly in the United States. A strong example of what such an effort would look like is found in Anne Norton's *Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire* (2004), where the influence of ideological Straussians on domestic and international United States policy is documented and an attempt to determine the short- and long-term impacts of their particular set of beliefs about the world is made.

This work is not entirely without political merit. Through examining ideology as relational and compositional, we gain the ability to assess the impact of the various conservative strains on Canadian politics. One can understand recent legislative developments as the product of a strain of conservatives having the ear of legislators, of being electorally successful, or of successfully framing the debate so as to make their position seem the natural one. A follower of Canadian politics, in accessing the ideological backbone of the contemporary conservative movement, is able to better understand why policy issues are framed in a certain way and why certain legislative actions are taken. A final note on two of these policies will illustrate this.

The abolition of the long-form census in 2010 was widely decried by the political and bureaucratic establishment. The policy made little sense from a federal, provincial and municipal level – it worsened the ability of governments to help their citizenry and plan effectively. It weakened corporation's abilities to effectively bring their products to market and crippled social scientists seeking to study long term trends in Canadian politics. These, and numerous other complaints, were well documented at the time. However, the government persisted in the abolition because of a belief that government should not be in the business of performing the planning a long-form census facilitates.

Right or wrong, the core issue for economic and social libertarians is one of choking access to that information at a federal level – it is a strategy known as ‘starve the beast’, where government is deprived of the means to exercise a social and economic welfare state and thus its size and scope is diminished. From a public policy perspective the decision was indefensible, but from an ideological perspective it was a brilliant move.

The second policy is the institution of family income splitting for families with young children. There have been a number of high profile publications¹⁶ recently that have pointed out how family income splitting will benefit those families that are already wealthy and will do little to support those families where children are at the highest risk of having poor nutrition and end-of-life income. However, the issue for many conservatives is not one of equality of outcome or long-term social policy but rather an issue of fundamental fairness. Two parents who both work and earn \$50,000 should not have more post-tax income than a family with one parent who stays at home to raise the children and one parent who earns \$100,000. Only by understand the deeply entrenched fairness argument being made, can conservatives and non-conservatives unlike understand the strong attachment to the policy espoused by a range of organizations and political actors.

Any follower of politics should seek to understand the relational, ideological and affective dimensions political decisions. It is not enough to measure the impact of a decision on polling numbers or in dollars spent or saved, political decisions are inherently ideological and treating them as such enriches our understanding of the political process and of the contemporary Canadian psyche.

¹⁶ Both the C.D. Howe Institute (2011) and the Center for Canadian Policy Alternatives (2014) have recently published reports on income splitting.

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