

The Permanent Campaign in Canada

Student # 7409798

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Abstract:

This paper makes the case that a postmodern, permanent campaign has entered Canadian politics. Via the need for aggressive donor machinery based on the current state of campaign finance legislation, the continued presence of negative pre-writ advertising campaigns and the technological markings of the postmodern campaign's extended reliance on various forms of media offerings, a permanent campaign is at the very least a plausible institutional outcome in the Canadian context, despite the lack of explicit literature on the topic. By firstly defining the permanent campaign and its American origins, this paper dissects the history of campaigns in Canada along a pre-modern, modern and postmodern delineation. It then proceeds to analyze the history of campaign finance law and technology's influence on political branding in Canada. The paper concludes by posting some recommendations about how to isolate and remedy some of postmodern campaigning's potentially harmful effects on voter turnout and engagement in the spirit of fostering a more inclusive and less cynical democracy by altering legislation on political advertisement, campaign financing and the electoral system.

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Abbreviations

PMO – Prime Minister’s Office

CPC – Conservative Party of Canada

NDP – New Democratic Party

MP – Member of Parliament

CFO – Chief Financial Officer

CEA – Canada Elections Act

CEO – Chief Electoral Officer

CAD – Canadian Dollar (\$)

FPTP – First-Past-The-Post

Introduction:

Political campaigns have evolved enormously over time via the influence of a number of factors including communication technologies, transportation technologies and legal frameworks such as campaign finance law and the electoral system. Campaigns strategies and tactics have changed continually to keep up with the onslaught of technical progress.

On the flipside; however, campaigns are fundamentally the same enterprise. From the ancient Athenian democracy to modern campaigns in Canada today, candidates vie for a position of power. Human nature presides over the same basic horse race (Flanagan, 2014).

This paper investigates the evolution of political campaigns for national elections in Canada over time, as well as the permeation of a *permanent* campaign in Canadian politics today (Marland, 2012; The Canadian Press, 2013; Flanagan, 2014). Numerous features attest to this latter development, including the increased focus on political branding and carefully crafted messaging (Marland, 2012; Flanagan 2013). These trends are reflected in the centralization of the Prime Minister's office and the professionalization of the political process through consultancy and polling (Whittington, 2015; The Canadian Press, 2013; Sparrow & Turner, 2001; Tempas & Mccan, 2007). The evolution of campaign finance legislation has not hindered these developments, despite the impression that Bill C-24 and subsequent government's efforts have curtailed the influence of money in Canadian politics (Flanagan, 2009).

Additional changes to mainstream media and voter demographics compound and assist in explaining the permanent campaign's infiltration into the Canadian political system. These

include the shortening of traditional media formatting from long form reporting to short online posts as well as increasing civic disengagement and cynicism towards politics reflected in voter turnout, as well as a centralization and professionalization of political party strategy (Beck & Heckfeldt, 1998; Chen, 2010). The ramifications of these changes include the politicization and simplification of complex policy problems in the media, to the detriment of these problems' technical needs, for the sake of appealing to the broader electorate's understanding (Bennett & Entman, 2002).

Does postmodern campaign strategy and the entry of a permanent campaign have any quantifiable negative impacts? This paper discusses its potential to problematize compromise in government and decrease voter turnout through structural incentives.

This paper begins by defining the concept, permanent campaign. Referring principally to a constant, image- and message-focused style of governance (Blumental, 1981), the permanent campaign sheds light on a new style of political interaction. It is not a new term, dating back to the 1970s, but the view that it is now spreading to Canada is growing among mainstream media journalists (The Canadian Press, 2013; Toronto Star, 2015). Sufficient peer-reviewed literature for the Canadian case is sparse on the topic, but a general understanding of the concept, particularly as it is exemplified in the American political system (Medvic & Dulio, 2004; Needham, 2005; Alan, 2010; Culbertson, 2007) will be useful for contextualizing further discussion of the experience in Canada.

The next section characterizes the evolution of political campaigns in Canada, including the ways in which they have changed via the influence of technological revolutions and legal

frameworks. This history will be divided along Pre-Modern, Modern and Postmodern delineations. These time periods are differentiated by major fundamental changes to political campaigning such as national mediatisation and then digitization as well as the set of electoral policies enacted in 1878 by the Liberal government of Wilfred Laurier which modernized campaigning as we know it today (Engeli & Tonka, 2010; Stevenson, 2009). This discussion highlights the impact that the structure of the electoral system has had on the nature of campaigning. The Postmodern campaign is defined by the new age of digital media, a niche industry-like reliance on professional political services such as polling and consultancy as well as the presence of a variety of other factors including the *advanced* inculcation of marketing techniques, mobile internet, social media and the many-to-many model of information dissemination which have ushered in a new era of politics (Needham, 2005; Sparrow & Turner, 2007; Culbertson, 2007; Bennett & Entman, 2002, Engeli & Tonka, 2010).

This section is followed by a summary of major campaign finance legislation in Canada, including a variety of alterations that occurred after 2003's Federal Bill C-24. This section will elaborate on the funding mechanisms required of postmodern campaigning. The primary conclusion drawn from this section is that the legal regulations, combined with the advanced donor machinery invested in by major political parties is funding a permanent campaign in Canada (Flanagan 2009; 2014).

The following section discusses the impact of technology on political branding, specifically; new digital and social media enabled through modern communication technologies. With an appropriate nod to the influence of newspapers, radio and television, this section will build the case that these new modern medias fundamentally alter the face of

politics and facilitate a permanent campaign. This section continues the use of marketing techniques in the postmodern era of campaigning. It determines that a variety of communication theory concepts including oppositionism, priming, issue ownership and brand loyalty may be employed to fuel a permanent campaign in Canada (Gutmann & Thompson, 2010; Medvic & Dulio, 2004; Chen, 2010; Mendelsohn, 1996).

To conclude, a recommendation is made firstly warning that the permanent campaign has both assiduous and potentially positive benefits. These include a capacity to foster greater engagement, transparency and accountability (Medvic & Dulio, 2004; Sparrow & Turner 2001), but at the same time a more cynical, disengaged electorate that is focused on the sexy details of complex policy problems (Bennett & Entman, 2002). Certain institutional adjustments may therefore be required, including limits on political advertising and a return of political allowances to offset the need for aggressive fundraising.

Defining the permanent campaign:

The concept of a permanent campaign has been around in politics for a long time (Blumental, 1980; Blaemire, 1993). In 1976, a leaked briefing note between President Jimmy Carter and advisor Patrick Cadell celebrated the new Commander-in-Chief's election victory, but noted "governing with public approval requires a continuing political campaign" (Breslin, 2010, p. 155). This acknowledged a burgeoning 24-hour news cycle that put a consistent spotlight on politicians. The need for public approval was impossible to avoid and thus necessitated a focus on what people thought about political and policy decisions. The

ramifications of this include a polished and omnipresent communication and public relations strategy, a virile and active donor machine, and outsourced, professional political services such as polling and consultancy.

Sidney Blumental, a journalist and eventual advisor to Bill Clinton coined the term, Permanent Campaign in a book by the same name in 1980. He spoke at length of the professionalization of politics, and the blurred divide between an electoral campaign and the period of governance that was *expected* to follow. Specifically, he defined the permanent campaign as a “combination of image-making and strategic calculation that turns into a perpetual campaign and remakes government into an instrument designed to sustain an elected official’s popularity” (Blumental, 1980, p. 7).

The permanent campaign is a concept that should be understood quite literally. Campaigns are efforts to win elections; therefore, the permanent campaign should be viewed as an elected official’s unceasing effort to hold office (Medvic & Dulio, 2004). Note the emphasis on the incumbent here; many of the tools and privileges that sustain the permanent campaign are taxpayer funded, such as advertising, polling and consultancy (Van Onselen & Errington, 2007). Thus, the government of the day might be in a comfortable position to pursue a permanent campaign.

The permanent campaign’s origins are distinctly American, where the influence of money in politics is exponentially larger than in Canada and many other democracies. So too do the U.S.’ institutional characteristics emphasize a state of constant campaigning: the U.S. Congress’ bi-annual election cycle necessitates that a politician be looking continuously forward to the next trip to the polls.

Bill Clinton, whose two terms as U.S. President some label the apogee of the permanent campaign, saw an unprecedented rise in the use of polling, advertising and a general marketing-like approach to governance (Medvic & Dulio, 2004). His use of advertising and campaign-style war rooms during *legislative* battles between elections was unheard of. During his time in office, Clinton also traveled much more than his predecessors. His visits often comprised small town hall meetings and speeches, in which he would tout policy and talk legislation. These tactics suggested an almost campaign-like approach to the pursuit of his policy agenda. It has been argued that Clinton's marketing-based approach is highly evident in these instances, where the former President would sell himself and his ideas directly (Medvic & Dulio 2004).

The professionalization of politics is not a new phenomenon. Modern political campaigns have employed outsourced polling, consultancy and public relations services for decades (Engeli & Tonka, 2010). Evidence suggests; however, that their role is growing and varying. Third-party providers are the primary beneficiaries of this new focus. Sophisticated social science research techniques including polling, consultancy, outreach, database services and focus groups were once confined to the campaign period, but such services are now finding a purpose in the offices of standing politicians, to an ever-increasing degree (Marland, 2012, Medvic & Dulio, 2004, Sparrow & Turner, 2001).

Campaigns in Canada:

In Canada, even prior to Confederation, election campaigns were established in the burgeoning British colonies of Upper Canada, Lower Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to democratically elect the government of the day (Stevenson, 2009). With the adoption of the

notion of responsible government -- that is, a government's dependence on continuing public support for the authority to govern – election campaigns became the primary vehicle for the vesting of a legitimate mandate.

Pre-modern: While the goal of a campaign has almost always been the same, the tactics and methods have changed dramatically, often as a result of the legal frameworks that have shaped them. This is highly evident when examining early campaigns in Canada. This period is defined from the late 18th century when elected legislatures were established in the French and British colonies of Upper Canada, Lower Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick until the late 19th century (Stevenson, 2006). During this time, elections were nowhere near as free and fair as we would consider them today. Several striking differences characterized these pre-modern elections: firstly, constituencies voted on different days and in an order determined by the sitting government. Ridings that were known to support the government would often go first, creating momentum and a bandwagon effect for the incumbent to solicit support. Opposition strongholds would vote last. Furthermore, under this system, a candidate who lost in one riding could run again in another.

More generally, pre-modern campaigns have been defined as locally concentrated, and this is evidenced by the historical Canadian example. Most citizens were not privy to the same degree of mass media influences, and politics had not professionalized to the level observed today. According to Engeli & Tonka (2010), this resulted in a far more personalized political experience, anchored in loyal community bases. Elections in this time were far more personal, restricted to a much smaller segment of the population, leading to candidates knowing many of

their supporters by name, as is characteristic of pre-modern campaigns (Engeli & Tonka, 2010; Stevenson, 2009).

A number of policies implemented by the Liberal government of Wilfred Laurier in 1874 modernized some aspects of the pre-modern campaign. These included the stipulation that all votes be cast on the same day, and that a secret ballot be used. Candidates were also required to hire an official agent to submit a campaign finance report (Stevenson, 2006). In the following election, virtually all candidates were registered to one of the main parties, either the Liberal Party or the Conservative Party. These policy changes has the effect of granting a far more national character to Canadian federal elections, requiring centralized strategy (Johnston, Blais & André, 2012).

Technologically; however, this period of campaigning in Canada remained pre-modern as there was yet no source of national mediatisation, as candidates' support was still anchored in localized communities (Engeli & Tonka, 2010).

Modern: The second phase in the historical development of campaigns has been defined as the period during which a national mediatisation occurred; firstly, at the behest of radio, and then television. In Canada, this occurred in the early to mid-20th century. Campaigns became a coordinated, professional affair with centralized strategies aimed at 'selling candidates' through the mass media (Johnston, Blais & André, 1992; Engeli & Tonka, 2010). This necessitated the use of professional services such as polling and consultancy and ushered in a new era of politics (Engeli & Tonka, 2010).

Johnston, Blais & André (1992) note that “if a party’s objective is to direct, or redirect a national campaign, then it has little choice but to work through television” (p. 114). While this sentiment may be changing in light of the communicative power of web-based media, it was certainly true of the modern era of campaigning when television was the primary gatekeeper of the most dynamic and zoetic political messages.

The importance of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is subsequently noted as an extremely influential institution during over this period. Even at the time of writing, survey data discussed by Johnston, Blais & André (1992) indicate that half of Canadians still looked to the CBC for almost all their national and political news. Less than one third did not watch the CBC.

The nature of campaign strategy would evolve in tandem with these developments, as the franchise was spread beyond its traditional male, property-owning faction, the views and opinions of other groups e.g. women, youth and minorities had to be considered (Stevenson, 2009). This was perhaps spurred by the more blanketing reach of television, which entered living rooms across the nation and spoke to all members of the household equally.

Postmodern: The final stage of political campaigns is defined by massive transformations to traditional media offerings, notably the many-to-many model of information dissemination (Engeli & Tonka, 2010; Bennet & Entman, 2002). It is furthermore demarcated by an *extensive* reliance on professional political services: star candidates parachuted in to electoral jurisdictions and negative attack advertising (Engeli & Tonka, 2010; Nai, 2013). While many of these tools are not new, the degree to which they are employed, and the varied mediums in which they are used points to a postmodern phase in political campaigning,

characterized in part by a permanent campaign that readily employs these tools and techniques on a continuing basis.

The Canadian political system is entering a postmodern phase of campaigning, one which has begun to embrace the principles of permanent campaign politics. It is characterized by extensive pre-writ advertisement and an uncompromising mindset among political parties enforced by rigorous communications and public relations strategies (Flanagan, 2014; Guttman & Thompson).

It is an 'Americanization' of electioneering, in which a convergence of campaign tactics have been oriented around the marketability of political parties and the ability to 'sell' candidates (Ward, 1999).

Campaign Financing

One cannot discuss the evolution of political campaigns without reviewing campaign finance law alongside it. Critiques of the American political system often centre on the influence of money and the leverage large corporations or wealthy individuals thus yield over who gets in to power (Cain, 2014). This storied criticism is by no means limited to the United States. Canada's history with campaign finance law is ripe with lessons learned.

Dating back to 1873, the Pacific Scandal encouraged Canadian lawmakers to pay closer attention to campaign finance legislation (Quinn, 1997). A generous donor had exchanged funds for privileged access to government contracts. The Dominion Elections Act (1874)¹ that

¹ *Dominion Elections Act, S.C. 1874, c. 9.*

followed instituted the need for candidates to hire an independent Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for their campaigns and submit a campaign finance report after every election. Sadly; however, oversight and enforcement of these principled new laws was lacking and the finance report was not required to detail *where* campaign donations were coming from (Quinn, 1997). This led to numerous similar scandals over the next thirty years.

Ultimately, the regulations were repealed, and it was not until 1960 with the passing of the Canada Elections Act (CEA) that significant campaign finance reforms were reintroduced (Quinn, 1997). Although the CEA's tenets were not entirely novel, compared even to the much earlier Dominions Act, they this time included harsh penalties for violators, including the rescinding of victory to proven perpetrators.

The CEA would form the basis of campaign finance law for the next thirty years, although it was bolstered in 1974 by the Elections Expenses Act, which was spurred by the United States' Watergate scandal (Quinn, 1997). New provisions included a cap on campaign spending, the reimbursement of some campaign expenses by the government through tax credits, as well as free air time on radio and television for political parties.

Major change would not again be enacted until Bill C-24 (2004), when the Liberal government banned union and corporate donations, and capped individual donations to \$1,000 per year (subject to inflation increases). The parties scuttled millions of dollars of potential donor funds. Surprisingly, it was the Liberals who had traditionally benefitted the most from corporate donations, and yet they proposed the legislation to curtail them (Flanagan, 2014). New quarterly allowances were introduced, paid from tax coffers to political parties for an amount commensurate with their number of votes. This was meant to offset the loss in

revenue from corporate and union sponsors, but liberate the parties from the influence of these big donors.

The impact of campaign finance regulation is complex. On the one hand, a permanent campaign may be inoculated by the reduction in funds afforded to political parties based on the caps implemented in Bill C-24. On the flipside; however, this spurs a greater dependence on small donors and professional database management services. To reach these small donors, parties must be very active in terms of mass communications and outreach; hallmarks of the permanent campaign (Flanagan, 2009)

Total Contributions from Trade Union / Corporate / Association Donors to Major Federal Political Parties, 2000-2003

PARTY	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000-2003
	(constant 2007 \$)				
Liberal	13,101,019	6,691,023	5,448,848	11,339,963	36,580,853
Canadian Alliance	7,686,049	873,989	1,121,519	1,530,311	11,211,868
Progressive Conservative	2,843,576	1,478,274	1,076,865	1,168,986	6,567,701
New Democratic	3,225,986	1,511,464	1,121,680	5,308,675	11,167,805
Bloc Québécois	595,785	70,605	105,450	87,509	859,349
Green	0	1,075	1,600	63,300	65,975
Total	27,452,415	10,626,430	8,875,962	19,498,744	66,453,551

SOURCE: Elections Canada

The above table highlights the financial ramifications that Bill C-24. The Liberals, Canadian Alliance, Progressive Conservatives and New Democratic Party all made a push in the final year of the previous finance regime to maximize corporate and union donations before

they could no longer receive them. This is clearly demonstrated in the heavily augmented figures, particularly for the Liberals and NDP, in 2003, the final year before Bill C-24 kicked in.

Another major change during this period was an increase in the reimbursement of campaign expenditures. The figure increased to 50%, up from the 22.5% that was reimbursed previously. This facilitated the ability of national parties to prepare for elections, without the need for a vast war chest or extensive fundraising campaigns. With four elections during an eight-year period from 2003-2011, an endless parade of campaigning was funded by the amendments made in Bill C-24 (Flanagan, 2014).

Further changes in 2006 implemented by the new Conservative government expanded Canadian campaign finance law's emphasis on grassroots fundraising. By curtailing individual donations to \$1,000 and completely eliminating all corporate / union donations, the government established an emphasis on membership and small donations, which was a hallmark of one of the Conservative Party of Canada's forerunners, the Reform Party. The latter had never been able to rely on corporate donations during the previous era of big donors (Flanagan, 2014).

The Conservatives have raised much more than their political opponents over the last decade. They are using this money to fund a permanent campaign (Flanagan, 2014). This money was used to great effect in the form of negative advertising directed at former Liberal leaders, Michael Ignatieff and Stephane Dion during the pre-writ period. They raised this money through detailed and well-managed database technologies, which again harken back to the CPC's Reform Party forerunner which relied more so on a large number of small donors and

individual supporters, managed by analytics and novel database technologies at the time (Flanagan, 2014).

Quarterly Allowances Paid (yearly total) for Major Federal Political Parties since 41st Parliament was formed, 2011-2014

Party	2011	2012	2013	2014
Conservative Party of Canada	\$11,212,744	\$9,670,137	\$6,695,973	\$3,719,985
Liberal Party of Canada	\$6,508,786	\$4,612,080	\$3,193,579	\$1,774,210
New Democratic Party	\$7,141,852	\$7,477,910	\$5,177,992	\$2,876,661
Green Party	\$1,530,755	\$948,068	\$656,478	\$364,710

Source: Elections Canada (2015)

The per-vote subsidy was phased out completely on 1 April 2015. The above table details its slow decline since 2011, when the Conservative government announced it would wind down the program. It has been noted that while critics believe this was a government attempt to bankrupt opponents, the majority government that was finally achieved in 2011 deflated some of the financial needs that had kept political parties so busy from 2003-2011. No less than four elections were held during that time, a symptom of unstable minority governments and facilitated by the financial windfall of the subsidy program (Flanagan, 2014).

Individual donations are now the only source of income for Federal parties. Despite the relatively low annual donation cap (\$1,200 / year), a Parliamentary Review article noted that wealthier Canadians still shoulder a disproportionately higher share of yearly political contributions (Carmichael & Howe, 2014). The original intention of the subsidy introduced in 2004 was not only to offset the loss in revenue created by the elimination of corporate and union donations, but to render more equal the Canadian political finance landscape, with each voter indirectly contributing money to political parties by virtue of their ballot entry (Carmichael & Howe, 2014).

Some generous public funding mechanisms will remain after the end of the subsidy, including a tax rebate on donations for individuals and the reimbursement of campaign expenses (Flanagan, 2009) Nonetheless, the subsidy mechanism connected popular support with revenue in a way the old and new systems do not comparatively appreciate.

There has been little to no fanfare or public debate on the elimination of the per-vote subsidy quarterly allowance. This is because the new system can easily be *perceived* as more egalitarian in that it asks political parties to engage their supporters and rely on many small donations to accrue a sufficient war chest (Carmichael & Howe, 2014).

While the relatively low cap on donations would appear to create an even playing field, in practice, higher income as well as older Canadians tend to donate more, and more often (Carmichael & Howe, 2014). It is furthermore the case that these wealthier Canadians and their 'large' donations carry a disproportionately higher weight of total fundraising dollars. In other words, there are not as many small donors giving \$25-50 dollars per year as there are a smaller number of large donors maxing out what they can give per annum (Carmichael & Howe, 2014).

Donations to Major Canadian Federal Political Parties in fiscal year 2014

Political party	Conservative Party	Green Party	Liberal Party	New Democratic Party
Total amount of contributions CAD\$	20,113,303.63	3,002,189.70	15,063,142.28	9,527,136.75
Total number of contributors	91,736	23,726	77,064	46,355

Source: Elections Canada (2015)

The Conservatives are well-renowned for their delineated donor machinery (Flanagan, 2014). As the above table indicates, they receive the most donations on the backs of the most donors. They employ a detailed and once-novel database technology known as Constituent Information Management System (CIMS), which amalgamates voter and donor information (The Hill Times, 2012). It was initially introduced following the 2003 merger of the Canadian Alliance and Progressive Conservative Party were a novel technological revolution at the time (Flanagan, 2014).

The ramifications of this are seen today as the Conservatives consistently maintain the most number of donors, and the highest average donation, CAD \$219.25 in 2014 compared to

\$195.46 for the Liberals, \$205.53 for the NDP and \$126.54 for the Green Party (Elections Canada, 2015). This forms the basis of some criticism of the Government's decision to end the subsidy program, as the Conservatives relied the least on the subsidy to fund their partisan expenses.

The other parties took considerably longer to adopt centralized database technologies. The Liberal Party purchased the software used by Barack Obama during his 2008 campaign and rebranded it under the name, Liberalist: Voter Management and Relationship Management System, in 2009 (The Hill Times, 2012). They've since seen their donations increase, to the point that in the first quarter of 2015, they raised money from more donors than the Conservatives for the first time since 2005 (Globe and Mail, 2015).

Campaign financing is an integral component of postmodern campaigning, which emphasizes the use professional services (Engeli & Tonka, 2010), such as database management technologies. Naturally, such services cost money. In the context of a permanent campaign, these services are used on a continuing basis, bolstered by aggressive advertising campaigns (Culbertson, 2007; Flanagan, 2014). The importance of dedicated and thorough donor machinery is all the more important given the campaign finance legislation now in place for Canadian federal politics, which places the onus squarely on small, individual donations.

The contrasting situation in the United States is cause for some respite. Public funding from individuals south of the border is effectively dead, with corporate Political Action Committees (Super PACs) dominating the donor system (Cain, 2014). These independent organizations are permitted to raise unlimited sums of money from corporations, unions and individuals in anonymous support of political candidates' campaigns or a variety of other

initiatives. This practice was upheld by a controversial U.S. Supreme Court ruling that precluded even the possibility of meaningful reform in the near future, principally by deciding that Super PACs can continue to use unlimited private monies to fund political campaigns.²

As noted in Cain (2014), so-called 'counter-factual' readings of the constitution problematize efforts at campaign finance reform, as some contemporary lawmakers attempt to interpret what James Madison and the other founding fathers *would have wanted* in today's modern polity.

The Permanent Campaign requires advanced fundraising machinery (Flanagan, 2014). It stands to reason; therefore, that the obstacles facing campaign finance reform in the U.S. will allow its notorious permanent campaigning to continue. Consider for instance the case of Newt Gingrich during the 2012 Presidential Election. Over the course of the primaries, his polling numbers were never remarkable; however, his relevance was maintained by multi-million dollar donations from Super PACs organized by billionaire investors (Huffington Post, 2012). The individual donations from which his campaign profited exceed total amounts dispensed by Canadian political parties. The power of these vested monies is unfathomable, and speaks to the fundamental obstacles blocking meaningful reform in the United States of America.

A changing demographic landscape and voting tendencies

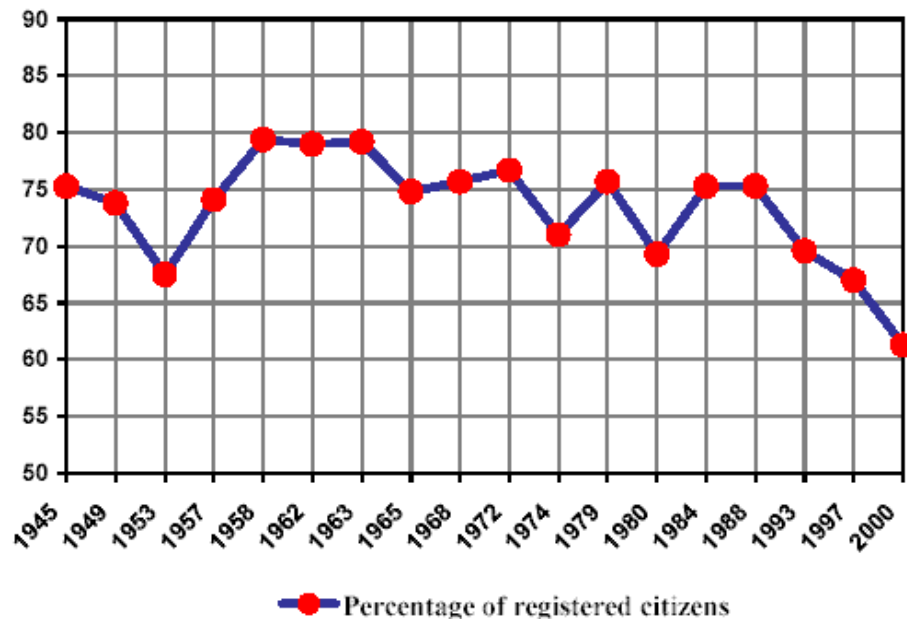
As campaigns attempt to persuade voters to go to the polls and vote, changes to voting demographics over the past few decades are extremely relevant to any discussion of campaigns' impact. At the societal level, a number of other factors greatly determine the

² Citizens United v. FEC, 558 U.S. 448, 469 (2007).

likelihood of voter turnout in constituencies. In a report documenting voter turnout to the 2009 provincial election in B.C., it was determined that constituencies with more active, aggressive election campaigns saw greater turnout (B.C. Stats, 2012). While this is a positive sign for electioneers, it comes against a backdrop of stumbling voter turnout nationwide. In B.C., in 1983, 71% of voters went to the polls. In 2009, this figure had dropped to 55% (BC Stats, 2012).

A similar trend has existed at the Federal level. While turnout fluctuated in the years following WWII, it stayed relatively close to a mean of 75%. This has dropped significantly over the past thirty years, with a record low of 58% being posted after the 2008 election (Elections Canada, 2014).

Percentage of Registered Voters Casting a Ballot per Election (1945-2000)



(Elections Canada, 2014)

This drop in voter turnout is a dynamic trend, with multiple causes that are not explored in this paper. Of key interest; however, is the reinforcing impact such a drop may have on the permanent campaign and its tactics. To elaborate, consider how in a study of Swiss voter turnout, it was hypothesized by Nai (2013) that negative campaign advertisement *can* have an effect on voter turnout. This is caveated; however, by differentiating which camp 'goes dirty' first and between 'status quo' campaigns seeking to pursue the same path (usually an incumbent government's tactic) and 'policy-change' campaigns. Negativism in the former tended to decrease voter turnout, while negativism in the latter had the opposite effect. What this suggests is that for a party unconcerned by declining voter turnout, pursuing a status-quo campaign strategy, permanent campaign tactics are a way to reinforce the brand on a continual basis (Needham, 2005), and erode support for an opponents' 'policy-change' campaigns at the same time.

Permanent campaigning can be practiced by any and all parties, but as several have noted (Ward, 2013; Medvic & Dulio, 2004), it favours incumbent governments due to structural advantages bestowed on the party in power e.g. government advertising, in-house statistical and consulting resources etc. An argument could therefore be made that status-quo campaigns that use negative advertising in Canada could decrease voter turnout. This issue has not been thoroughly studied in the Canadian context.

Furthermore, in a study on voter turnout following the introduction of Bill C-24, it was questioned whether eliminating the quarterly allowance would disincentivize voters and parties from maximizing turnout (Loewen & Blais 2006). The logic went that a correlated benefit of the quarterly allowance subsidy mechanism was that it would *monetize* every vote, inviting parties

to seek the maximum number of votes in all ridings. It would further incentivize voters to cast a ballot -- even for third or fourth-place parties -- because it would result in direct funding for their party of choice (Loewen & Blais 2006). The study determined that the subsidy mechanism did not have these intended effects on turnout. Largely because voters were unaware or indifferent to the subsidy inherent in their vote. Similarly, the parties did not re-orient resources to maximize votes, as the overall structure of the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) system still demands seats, as opposed to votes to maximize influence in Parliament.

The Impact of Communication Technologies on Campaigns and Political Branding

In referring to modern or contemporary communication / media technologies, this paper (and this section in particular), focuses on the internet and social media. Ample literature has documented the impact of radio and television on campaigns and politics (Ward, 1999; Hart, 1994). This paper takes a more contemporary focus on the use and impact of social media on political campaigning.

Twitter, Facebook and YouTube have transformed the way supporters interact with politicians. Sitting politicians and candidates for office alike are able to communicate directly with citizens and supporters. The key feature of this change is the ability to circumvent the media as a gatekeeper to the public. Schudson (1995) once mused that the advent of internet communications spelled the end of journalism. This has not proven to be the case, but citizens are nonetheless able to view elected officials' communications directly, unfiltered and uneditorialized. Social media presents a paradox; however: voters think they relate more

meaningfully to politicians through these mass communication mediums. They may believe they are seeing the genuine, personal side of their favoured candidate. Just as they are authentic through their own use of social media. It is important to note; however, that politicians rarely post their own submissions and that during a campaign in particular, everything is heavily revised by a slew of communication advisors and social media strategists. In essence, social media becomes an advertising platform.

Social media has also had an important impact on mainstream media through the rise of so-called iReporters and Citizen Journalism (Chen, 2010). This phenomenon has partially subverted the traditional role of mainstream journalistic outlets as the primary gatekeepers between the world of public affairs and the public. These days, anyone can snap a photo, record a video or simply report an event. Anyone's perspective can turn viral and have an influence. Many politicians have felt the ire of a social media firestorm after saying something controversial at a small rally or in what they presumed was private conversation. CBC, CNN and BBC now have to compete with Joe and his smartphone for coverage of a leading event. With so many iReporters, there is a simultaneous process of production and consumption, creating a *prod-user* (Chen, 2010). What impact does such a transformation have on the permanent campaign? As Chen (2010) notes, it renders the need for even tighter image and message control. With such a dynamic and fluid media space, political parties must be cognizant that they are not fully in control of their image. This is the double-edged sword of new media; the public is equipped for greater engagement, and this can foster unpredictable outcomes.

There were real fears at the onset of the internet era that traditional journalism would disappear completely, with politicians and other officials able to communicate directly with the

public via the internet, eliminating the need for the media entirely (Schudson, 1995). These fears have so far been proven false, with traditional journalism continuing to serve a purpose, although its methods have changed to take advantage of social media and the internet. Schudson (1995) predicted that traditional journalism would remain despite the advent and interlocuting potential of the internet, as the general public would still seek out established media outlets' credibility and third-party neutrality when assessing the words and actions of political offices.

Gatekeeping is a communications concept that refers to those who hold the keys to the dissemination of information in society. Whilst once top-down and uni-directional, it has since been altered tremendously. It is clear now that neither political offices nor major media outlets can claim the ability to filter down the narrative they prefer. It is now multi-directional and dynamic. The very same technologies that enable the permanent campaign's big brother-like totality have the same potential to empower both the public and journalists to be more scrutinizing and analytical.

Such may further the case as to why mainstream media have celebritized politics to capture the segment of the population less vested in political outcomes. Mainstream media pounce on every gaffe or misstep. This has created what is known as media malaise, a highly critical view that believes mainstream media is responsible for growing civic disengagement (Norris, 2004). The current spout of cynicism towards politics reflected in the media is not that different from the late 19th to early 20th century 'Yellow Journalism' -- the flood of political tabloid newspapers, printed on cheap newspaper that would quickly turn yellow. The 24-hour news cycle has put the entire trend on overdrive (Norris, 2004).

Such pessimism towards the presentation of politics extended to the television era as well, notably Roderick Hart's famed criticism, which stated that television created an illusion of political participation by bringing it right in to your living room; in reality, you've never left the couch, having been seduced by your television screen into pacifism (Hart, 1994).

Whereas traditional media was once grain fed to consumers in the form of one-directional newspapers, radio and TV broadcasts, new media on the internet is far more dynamic. Whence journalists would previously take glossy press releases at face value and essentially report the story that the government wanted, mobile internet has enabled them to fact-check and cross-reference on the go, reporting a far more nuanced and balanced perspective on news of the day (Flanagan, 2014).

In reaction to the influence of these technological shifts on the public and mainstream media, political offices have been transformed dramatically. Communication roles are paramount, with every Member of Parliament (MP) relying heavily on a press secretary and other communication specialists. These offices are far more enclosed entities than they once were, with few entitled to speak to the media other than the MP and one senior communications director. Social media is highly polished and an image-centric focus reigns in the hunt for the next photo-opportunity. The centralization of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) further attests to this development: its number of staff and the roles played by those staffers has changed dramatically in the last quarter century, and in particular the last few years. From 2005 to 2010, the number of staff working in the PMO ballooned from 68 to 109, a 62% increase, many of these new positions are communication-centric (McGregor, 2014). This trend is similarly reflected in the public service, where the growth of 'information services' --

which the treasury board describes as roles which include writing, editing, media monitoring, media relations, strategic planning, publishing, social media and internal communications (The Canadian Press, 2013) -- increased by 15.3% from 2006 to 2012.

A staunch focus on branding has been observed in politics. The marketing techniques employed by Tony Blair and Bill Clinton in their re-election efforts are curiously similar to those of established brands trying to maintain market share (Needham, 2005). They used a combination of familiarity, loyalty and fear to hang on to the voters who made them successful the first time. Incumbent parties will seldom go out on a limb with new policies aimed at different segments of the population, but will instead rely on the base that thrust them to power in the first place. Much like a storied brand that differentiates itself based on aesthetic familiarity alone, incumbent governments will tout safe hands and portray the opposition as scary, inexperienced alternatives. As many have determined (Needham, 2005; Sparrow & Turner, 2007), the permanent campaign is characterized by an extensive focus on marketing techniques to support and ultimately re-elect a government.

The Economist (2014) noted that Stephen Harper has employed some of these techniques to win over conservative voters, but unlike Blair and Clinton, his personal popularity was never the key driver to his party's success. Rather, Harper has focused on the classic conservative teachings of Edmund Burke, espousing ideals such as private property and smaller government. This more policy-based form of political branding has succeeded thus far.

Contrary to this strategy, the Liberal party is employing the personal popularity of its younger, more charismatic leader in Justin Trudeau to counter the Conservatives' experience and safe hands. As noted in Needham (2005), the established incumbent will try to paint the

opposition as scary and foreign, a tactic similarly employed by established brands to protect their consumer base from trying alternative products. The Conservatives have attempted such a strategy since the latest Liberal chief won the leadership in 2012. They will likely begin to adopt a similar strategy towards the NDP; not for their leader, who is an experienced politician in Thomas Mulcair, but for his party's left-leaning policies.

Issue ownership is an important and often decisive factor in elections (Iyengar & Simon, 2000). Political parties must adopt a position, but also make sure they carve out a niche to attract a particular segment of voters. To achieve this, a technique known as priming is employed. Voters are doused with pre-writ advertising to make them aware of a party's position, or of another party's position. This view is also based on the belief that voters rank issues based on their perceived salience. In other words, the issues that a voter thinks are important are directly related to the ones they hear the most about, regardless of whether they are affected by them. Priming thus forms an important part of political parties' strategy for courting voters (Iyengar & Simon, 2000). Issues that a particular party wants to champion cannot be parachuted in after the writ drops, they must be casually and continually inserted to form a longer-term narrative as part of a broad campaign strategy. Platforms like social media allow this with minimal cost, as thousands of supporters can be reached instantly and continuously.

Pre-writ advertisement was used to great effect by the Conservatives since 2005 (Flanagan, 2014). They used it to effectively blast four consecutive Liberal leaders and position themselves favourably in battleground ridings both for by-elections and general elections. Furthermore, the current government has expended approximately \$750 million in taxpayer

funds on advertising since it took power in 2006 (Toronto Star, 2015). Although it is important to note that these funds are entirely separate from the money used for blatant attack advertising. This money is used to promote government programs, a practice customary in Canada. The total figure is nonetheless quite staggering.

This constant barrage of media outside the context of an election is the inevitable by-product of new communication technologies. The professionalization of political uses of media and the rise in the dissemination of packaged visuals by political offices is the result of economics and institutional accommodation (Marland, 2012). As news outlets transition to a more sensory-rich online mode of delivery, the need for multimedia content grows. A two-tier media system may be emerging, where small outlets welcome the visual handouts that enrich their otherwise basic reporting, but large media outlets who have the personnel to follow leaders to events or in Question Period abhor the partisan narrative that these releases attempt to write (Marland, 2012). This speaks to the intrinsic ability of mass communication technologies to widen the diversity of perspective available to the public, but not necessarily deepen it.

The regulations on political advertising are an important dimension to this debate. The Chief Electoral Officer for Elections Canada released a 2015 interpretation of the Canada Elections Act, hoping to shed light on the use of social media and its relation to internet advertising. Since a placement cost is required for official political advertisement, the 'free' cost of placing ads on social media and / or YouTube exempt it from virtually all regulations. This is a curious concession, considering the growing reach and impact of social media advertisement.

One of the purposes of the CEA's advertising framework is to impose spending limits in the pursuit of egalitarian opportunity for political parties of varying size.³ Social media, as a tool at the disposal of all political parties and candidates, should therefore be exempt by the limits implied by the spending cap.

While Twitter has been hailed as revolutionary as the Gutenberg press, it is curious to question its actual impact considering only 3-5 million Canadians actually use it (Balan, 2011). More likely, an interested subset of stakeholders in the political class are enriching themselves and furthering the divide between those in the know and those who may feel disenfranchised by the inaccessible nature of politics (Balan, 2011). Subsequently, Balan does not believe social media has had a transformative influence on federal politics in Canada. Although he believes the speed and visibility of political communication has been increased, it has not given force to grassroots movements in the same way municipal and presidential elections were transformed. This may be owed to the different electoral systems in U.S. Presidential and Canadian municipal versus Canadian provincial and federal elections, in which the former are concentrated on individuals whereas the latter are focused on a field of candidates. The individualism of non-partisan municipal races and American Presidential nominee bids is a better fit with the 'open-source' nature of social media. Strict party discipline in the Canadian political system creates a very rigid top-down communication model (Flanagan, 2014).

The risk is undoubtedly higher in the provincial and federal Canadian systems, where each candidate in a field of potential representatives have a Twitter or Facebook page which could become a source of great embarrassment to the entire party if the wrong thing is posted.

³ Canada Election Act. S.C. 2000, c. 9

There have been examples of young politicians coming to the spotlight after an unlikely election victory, only to have their most embarrassing or controversial social media postings be unearthed.

There are risks associated with social media and user-generated content as well. As Cogburn (2011) notes, candidates are not entirely in charge of their own image. Users can respond, comment and influence through posts, comments and blogs. Consider a scathing 'top-comment' on a popular politician's Facebook post, or a heavily re-tweeted cynical tweet to some campaign message from the candidate's official account. As Sparrow & Turner (2007) describe details the inculcation of marketing techniques in permanent campaign politics, the uncertainty of user-generated content requires a strict control of the product, including its image and message.

It is worth noting the difference between mass communication technologies versus other forms of tech that have altered campaigns. In particular, it the complimentary, rather than substitutive nature of contemporary communication technologies should be kept in mind. Another stream of technological innovation that has impacted political campaigns is transportation (Stevenson, 2006). We often speak of the former nowadays since the last transportation revolution occurred when planes and buses replaced trains in the 1960s. John Diefenbaker's 1968 campaign is reputed to have been the last election to feature a so-called 'whistle-stop' campaign in which an organized tour by train would briefly stop at countless towns across the country. This had been a hallmark of campaigns for a century prior (Stevenson, 2006).

Rather, technology discussions today focus on mass communication tools, which have similarly altered campaigns in fundamental ways. Newspapers to radio, television and now the Internet, communication mediums continue to change the way voters interact with politicians during a campaign. Notably however, unlike transportation technologies, which replace each other outright, communication technologies are complementary (Flanagan, 2014). The Internet, compared with newspapers, radio and television is not so much a medium itself, but rather a means to view a variety of mediums all in one place. Viewers can read articles or listen to radio and TV broadcasts from the net, with a degree of versatility, portability and accessibility not afforded by traditional AM/FM radios or cable TVs. While the Internet has further allowed niche providers to enter the fray, it has not decimated traditional forms of media or the outlets that generate them. As Schudson (1995) predicted, traditional media journalism has adapted to the internet era, as the intangibles it brings to the table e.g. credibility and third-party neutrality are not so easily replaced by digital mediums and social media.

Recommendation

This paper makes the case that the institutional and legal structures are in place in Canada to facilitate the entrance of a postmodern campaign employed on a permanent basis. Postmodern campaigning is defined by the inculcation of advanced marketing techniques and the reliance on professional services (Sparrow & Turner, 2007; Engeli & Tonka, 2010). Employing these tools on a continual basis is a hallmark of the permanent campaign. Evidenced by the state of campaign financing by the major political parties, the centralization of the PMO, the growing role of communication strategists and the use of database technologies by two of

the four major political parties, the case has been made that Canadian politics displays characteristics of permanent, postmodern campaign tactics.

A subsequent normative question is whether this is a bad thing? While the barrage of photo-ops, packaged visuals and reticent press conference answers may be annoying, the more concerning aspect of the permanent campaign in this writer's opinion is its capacity to interfere with every day government. Oppositionism denotes a political party that takes an opposing side on an issue purely for the sake of differentiation. Doing so may accrue media coverage and carve out a niche for that party along the political spectrum. As noted in Gutmann & Thompson (2010), this uncompromising mindset has the capacity to disturb governance by incentivizing parties to adopt rigid party stances as opposed to compromise. Furthermore, as noted in Sparrow & Turner (2007) and Needham (2005), political parties operating in the context of a permanent campaign are likely to do everything possible to differentiate themselves in manners similar to products in an open market. Structurally speaking, compromise does not flow naturally from this scenario.

Furthermore, in the context of a minority parliament, compromise may be even more problematic. Although determined in Conley (2011) that Canadian minority parliaments are only marginally less effective at passing legislation than their majority counterparts over the course of a given parliamentary session, this does not speak to the degree that meaningful legislation may get watered down via political posturing. A minority parliament may therefore problematize compromise as parties vie for political posturing due the unstable nature of such a parliament. This is a structural fact about minority parliaments, where the risk of an election is omnipresent.

Furthermore, as noted in Loewen & Blais (2006), failed efforts to increase voter turnout are only marred by the per-vote subsidy mechanism's elimination in April 2015. Could permanent campaigning amplify this potentially moot effect on voter turnout, which has been descending for decades? The case has been made in Nai (2013) that status-quo campaigns that use negative advertising could indeed hamper turnout. As the permanent campaign is structurally slighted towards incumbent governments (Culbertson, 2007; Van Onselen & Errington, 2007), a case could indeed be made that postmodern, permanent campaigning is hurting turnout and voter engagement. As noted in Bennett & Entman (2002), the way political issues are communicated to the public can often simplify and generalize their complexity for the sake of political palatability, while it is no doubt important that the general public is aware of the major issues facing government, postmodern campaigning may attempt to 'sell' party stances on issues as a marketing technique (Sparrow & Turner, 2007), as opposed to really debate them.

If these potentially assiduous effects of the permanent can indeed be quantified and measured in the Canadian context, what positive benefits could there be? Postmodern campaigning, projected in part by a variation of digital mediums available to voters (Engeli & Tonka, 2010) could potentially increase engagement by facilitating voters' ability to interact with candidates and parties. The potential is clear, as the internet provides a direct channel to voters, but also a means for them to fact-check and understand promises and policies being touted.

This paper suggests that a handful of alterations be made to reign in the potentially unsettling influences of permanent campaign politics. It is firstly argued that political

advertising be adapted to suit 21st century requirements, beyond the interpretation given by the Chief Electoral Officer in 2015 on the character of digital and social media advertising (Elections Canada, 2015). The latter should be more meaningfully adapted in to the Canada Elections Act so it is privy to its guidelines on content and duration. These include transparent display or sponsors or other participatory organizations and contact information (Elections Canada, 2015). While social media provides a more egalitarian platform to provide free-of-charge advertisement to voters, it should nonetheless be counted as political advertisement.

Consider the example of Sweden, where political advertisement is banned. There are no newspaper, radio or television ads for political parties. Nonetheless, 80% of voters still make it out to the polls on average, (Nord, 2010). Low voter turnout as studied in Nai (2013) may be partially explained in Canada as a cumulative effect of negative status-quo campaigns that ultimately disengage a large segment of the population. Canadian campaigns have not shied away from negativity (Flanagan, 2014), but their effect is hard to measure. It is further noted that negative campaigning can often create ill-will between parties that problematizes cooperation with other parties later on (Flanagan, 2014). This paper does not advocate the outright banning of political advertisement. Such forms of media educate the electorate about their choices and inform a more robust debate. Instead, a more active and modernized regulatory regime integrated in to Election Canada should be adopted.

The tools and techniques used in postmodern campaigning require greater oversight and regulation. The Robocall scandal in 2011 showcased the potentially disruptive consequences of new technologies employed to curry votes. When citizens in Guelph received automated phone calls giving them incorrect voting location information, political parties and

the general public were justifiably distressed by the problems these new technologies pose for democracy (Commissioner of Canada Elections, 2014). The fact that foul play was not involved poses a more existential concern, that of how to control technology if it can inadvertently create issues like this during a campaign.

It is secondly argued that the per-vote subsidy mechanism should be returned to the finance regime. Firstly, as noted in Flanagan (2009) it connected popular support for Canadian political parties with funding. Despite attempts to make the donations more equitable, Carmichael & Howe (2014) conclude that large, consistent donations still play a large part in campaign financing. The per-vote subsidy avoided this by directly connecting each individual vote with a small token of financial support. If postmodern campaigning, with its high price tag, is here to stay on a permanent basis, a more equitable funding regime should be in place. As previously noted, the subsidy mechanism further alleviated the political parties' dependence on donors, big or small. This was achieved by granting them monies based on popular support (Flanagan, 2009). As analyzed earlier, the phasing out of the subsidy mechanism places an enormous onus on small donors, whose favour must be curried via mass communication campaigns and advanced database technologies. A revival of the subsidy mechanism would alleviate some of these pressures by again granting a quarterly allowance based on the number of total votes received in the last general election.

As noted in Loewen & Blais (2006), part of the reason why the subsidy mechanism did not have the intended effect of mobilizing the electorate was that it was not clear that their votes increased direct funding. A government information campaign, featuring clear indications on official Elections Canada literature should therefore be used to educate the public about the

financial implications of their vote. This would subsequently incentivize the parties to broaden their strategies and maximize the number of votes, as opposed to segmenting the population through political marketing strategies (Bennett & Entmen, 2002).

Thirdly, and perhaps conversely if it is seen as an alternative to a more equitable funding regime, electoral reform should be considered. The Liberals and NDP have promised in the run-up to the 2015 general election to look at reforming the electoral system to make it more proportional. The Liberals noted that “as part of a national engagement process, we will ensure that electoral reform measures – such as ranked ballots, proportional representation, mandatory voting, and online voting – are fully and fairly studied and considered” (Liberal Party of Canada, 2015). Similarly, the NDP have pledged to reform the electoral system, but are in favour of a mixed-member proportional system that would combine FPTP with a more proportional allocation of representation in Parliament (New Democratic Party of Canada, 2015).

Such systems would have the benefit of shifting focus from individual candidates and ridings, towards parties and leaders, as well as incentivize parties to reach a broader public, as opposed to segment voters in to camps based on social science research. This would furthermore solve Balan’s (2011) concern with social media as too delineated and incapable of having a meaningful impact on grassroots organizing and the promotion of singular issues or policies because too many candidates get overlooked in a FPTP campaign.

A mixed-member proportional system would have the benefit of maintaining some of FPTP’s local representation, but still nationalize campaign strategy to the extent that would not

require such aggressive segmentation of the population, in accordance with postmodern campaigning political marketing tactics (Engeli & Tonka, 2010; Bennett & Entmen, 2002).

Conclusion

Postmodern campaigning carried out a continuing, permanent basis need not be an eyesore for the Canadian political system. Nor it is an inevitable by-product of mass communication technologies or the current state of political culture. Appropriate policy frameworks can remedy the negative impacts that the permanent campaign is potentially having. In glancing southbound to our American counterparts, the extended influence of a permanent campaign driven by lax advertising standings and a very liberal campaign finance regime speaks to the dangers of unbridled postmodern campaigning (Cain, 2007). If a permanent campaign is here to stay in Canada, its benefits such as the potential for increased engagement should be acknowledged and encouraged, while its more poisonous attributes such as new channels for negative advertising and voter cynicism controlled.

As explored, postmodern, permanent campaign tactics are inevitable in Canada given its current institutional and societal orientation. Via the widespread availability of mass communications mediums and the subsequent variety of media streams available to consumers, the playground for professional political services such as polling, consultancy and marketing-based messaging is rich and open (Engeli & Tonka, 2010; Culbertson, 2007). Furthermore, given the current finance regime, Federal political parties are in the unenviable

position to embark on ambitious, mass communication campaigns to raise funds from many small donors (Flanagan, 2009, 2014)

The relationship between campaign finance legislation and the behaviour of political parties is complex, but as evidenced by the contrasting policy regime in the U.S., notably the ability of corporations, unions and individuals to raise unrestricted amounts of money through Super PACs, leaves important questions unanswered about the amount of influence cast by large donors on government.

The notion of a permanent campaign has boorish optics. It smacks of Big Brother, omnipresently watching citizens through far-reaching communication technologies. Yet, it need not be interpreted so. Its potential for greater accountability and transparency remain, regardless of the fact that at present its principle manifestations are negative pre-writ advertising and expanded communication roles in government offices.

Of key import is its potential to disrupt stable governance and negatively influence or water down meaningful policy (Culbertson, 2007). As previously noted, there is not sufficient literature on this topic to measure a permanent campaign's influence over the way legislation is drafted and implemented in Canada. The topic should be explored in greater depth, with an optimistic eye to postmodern, permanent campaigning's potential for transparency, accountability and engagement.

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