

The 16th-17th of May 2017

Centre Urbanisation Culture Société, Institut national de la recherche scientifique,

385 Sherbrooke Est, Montréal, H2X 1E3 ROOM 2109

Colloquium organized by:

Jérôme Couture (INRS-UCS)
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Presentations by

Laurence Bherer

Université de Montréal

Sandra Breux

Centre Urbanisation Culture Société, INRS

Jérôme Couture

Centre Urbanisation Culture Société, INRS

Jack Lucas

University of Calgary

Michael McGregor

Ryerson University

Anne Mévellec

University of Ottawa

Zachary Spicer

Brock University

Fanny Tremblay-Racicot

UQÀM

Commentaries by

Cameron Anderson

University of Western Ontario

David Siegel

Brock University

Andrea Perrella

Wilfried Laurier University

General Conclusion by

Guy Chiasson

Université du Québec en Outaouais

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

LABORATORY ON LOCAL ELECTIONS



May 16th

9:00 Greetings, café & croissants

First session: Discussing Representativity

- 9:30 Partisan Lenses and Municipal Politics, Michael McGregor, Laura Stephenson
- 10:00 What Municipal Political Parties do the day after the election?, Anne Mévellec, Guy Chiasson, Mario Gauthier
- 10:30 The democratic contributions of local political parties: A view from Canada, Laurence Bherer
- 11:00 Commentary by Andrea Perrella
- 11:30 Open discussion
- 12:00 Lunch on the premises

Second session: Discussing political parties

- 13:30 The Rise and Fall of Proportional Representation in the Western Canadian City, Jack Lucas
- 14:00 What are the factors that affect the number of candidates in the 100 biggest Canadian municipalities?, Sandra Breux, Jérôme Couture et Royce Koop
- 14:30 Commentary by Cameron Anderson
- 15:00 Coffee Break

Third Session: the seek of a local advantage

- 15:15 The Development of Smart Cities in Canada, Zachary Spicer, Nicole Goodman
- 15:45 Transit-oriented developments: A regional strategy for sustainable development or a tool for inter-local competition? Evidence from suburban Montreal and prospects for a canadian comparison, Fanny Tremblay-Racicot, Florence Paulhiac
- 16:15 Commentary by David Siegel
- 16:45 Concluding remarks by Guy Chiasson

May 17th

8:00 Breakfast

Workshop

Competition and Cooperation among Canadian local governments: meaning, dynamics and scope

The dynamics and duality between competition and cooperation is a commonly studied topic in political science. Though the school of Public Choice's contributions to the field have meticulously detailed the various forms of competition exercised on the local scale, discussion of Canadian municipal electoral competition remains a largely under-documented subject.

Over the last three elections in the 100 largest cities of Canada (2004-2014), 70% of the mayoral candidates were incumbents. Of these, 74% were re-appointed to their positions. The average electoral participation rate is nearly 36% —some 20 to 30 points lower than the participation rates seen for other levels of government (Breux et al., 2015). Consequently, these figures question the nature of electoral competition being exercised on the municipal level.

The electoral campaign, the election itself and the elected official's arrival into power are also elements which can run counter to the formation of political competition. For elections, political competition can be realized via the choice of candidates, the funds raised as well as the selection of issues and their promotion. Municipal political parties, when they exist, are necessarily the fruit of a collaboration between candidates. How does this happen? What role is played by gender, ethnic background, political experience, etc. and what are the criteria that feed competition or cooperation between the potential candidates to reach the ranks of specific training? What happens in the absence of political formations? Additionally, how is competition for political financing exercised? What factors are taken into account? Which issues take centre stage and how are they selected? Does ideology eventually intervene, or is Peterson's (1981) assertion that 'local issues are by nature non-ideological' ring true? In other words, what is the connection between political offerings and the structure of competition?

When it comes time for the election, to what degree does political influence affect electoral participation? In their analysis of municipal electoral participation in California, Hajnal et al. showed that "The degree of competition for office has only a limited association

with voter turnout rate" (2002:64) Is this type of finding also applicable in the Canadian context? Are the dynamics of electoral participation and competition also a function of the type of position being sought (mayor or city councillor) (Schleichler, 2012)? Additionally, how does a candidate's party affiliation with other levels of government affect the elector's choice and does it eventually contribute to destabilizing the political dynamics taking place?

Once elected, how does cooperation and competition between representatives influence public decision making? How does the presence or absence of political parties contribute to changing the dynamics in place? What happens when cooperation between elected officials is informal but real? Additionally, does this system of electoral competition and cooperation affect the way in which public problems are addressed by municipal governments?

The objective of this colloquium is to explore the dynamics of competition and cooperation on the Canadian municipal level. The questions given above are by no means exhaustive, and all the proposals related to the theme will be considered (particularly those dealing with existing eventual competition between municipalities or between municipalities and other service providing organizations).

Proposals, written in English, must be a minimum 500 of words and no more than 1,000 words in length. Please address your proposals to Jérôme Couture (jérôme.couture@pol.ulaval.ca) and Sandra Breux (sandra.breux@ucs.inrs.ca) before December 16, 2016. The proposals received will be subject to a joint review by the signatories of this call. Notification of acceptance will be sent to the authors by January 16, 2017 at the latest. Authors whose proposals are accepted, will have to submit their text of a length not exceeding 8,000 words prior to the colloquium. A publication (format TBD) is planned following the colloquium.

The colloquium will take place in spring 2016 (May, 16-17) and will be held at the INRS-UCS in Montreal. It will be organized by the Laboratory on Local Elections.

Commentators

Cameron ANDERSON

University of Western Ontario

He is currently working on a SSHRC-funded project entitled Partisan Ties in a Social Environment with Prof. Laura Stephenson. This work considers the influence of interactions within social networks on political attitudes, partisanship and behaviour in Canada. They take a particular focus on the role of personality and generation in these dynamics.

He continues to work on topics relating to the relationship of the economy and elections. Currently, he is focussed on the relationship of economic conditions on incumbent mayoral success in Canada. Separately, he studies the sources of responsibility attributions for economic conditions made by citizens.

David SIEGEL

Brock University

My current research project involves examining the leadership qualities of municipal chief administrative officers.

Andrea PERRELLA

Wilfried Laurier University

Main research areas: Political behaviour; participation; electoral politics; political communication; Canadian/Ontario/Quebec politics.

Guy CHIASSON

Université du Québec en Outaouais

Forthcoming

Opening words and greetings

9:00 Greetings, café & croissants

First Session: Discussing political parties

9:30 Partisan Lenses and Municipal Politics

Michael McGREGOR Ryerson University Michael McGregor is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at Ryerson University. His scholarly interests include a variety of questions related to the study of elections and electors at the federal and municipal levels in Canada. He is the Principal Investigator of the Toronto Election Study, a SSHRC funded examination of the attitudes and behaviour of voters and non-voters in the 2014 Toronto municipal election.

Laura STEPHENSON

University of Western Ontario

Abstract

Scholars have famously declared that politics is "unthinkable" without parties, but non-partisan contests happen quite frequently in Canada. Indeed, the vast majority of elections in Canada occur at the local level, and most municipal contests are officially non-partisan. As Canadians function in a multi-level context, most electors are accustomed to partisan races at the federal and provincial levels, but non-partisan local elections. Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, previous work on the 2014 Toronto election has shown that many voters view municipal candidates in partisan terms, and associate them with parties. Additionally, the partisanship of electors was an important determinant of vote choice in this election, even after controlling for a variety of ideological and policy indicators (McGregor et al. 2016).

Given that even formally non-partisan local elections can be seen in partisan terms, it becomes important to understand how electors reason about, form attitudes towards, and act in such a quasipartisan scenario. There remains, however, very little research on the effects of partisanship and parties in non-partisan municipal contests. Moreover, the aforementioned piece by McGregor et al. is based upon the 2014 Toronto election, and it is uncertain whether the study's findings are generalizable past this specific election. The 2014 Toronto mayoral contest was unique in that a former NDP Member of Parliament was competing against a former provincial Progressive Conservative leadership candidate, and the other major candidate had well-known ties to the federal Conservatives. The election was also possibly the highest profile mayoral race in Canadian history.

In this study we try to circumvent some of the unique features of the 2014 election to get a sense of how electors in Toronto understand their municipal government (in partisan terms or not). We draw upon data from a mid-term (2016) survey of Torontonians to assess the extent to which voters

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First Session: *Discussing political parties*

use partisan lenses to understand their local government in 'normal' (non-election) times. When the stakes are lower and the information context weaker, how do voters understand municipal politics?

The paper consists of three sets of analyses, drawing upon several questions in the survey. First, we provide a descriptive analysis of whether electors have a desire to see formal parties at the local level, and discuss the reasons for why or why this might not be the case. Next we evaluate the extent to which electors associate politicians with political parties. The survey asked respondents about the party affiliations of the mayor and their city councillor, as well as their own partisanship and their ratings of the city politicians. After controlling for projection effects (where a partisan who likes a politician considers them to be a co-partisan), we are able to evaluate whether voters actually see their city politicians as non-partisans. We are also able to test whether the level of interest and attention paid by the respondent makes a difference in their assessments. Finally, we make use of a unique survey experiment to evaluate the effect of providing information about party positions on evaluating the ideology of politicians. We designed the experiment so that we can understand where voters place politicians vis a vis themselves; whether being informed about the party positions affects self-placement; and whether the party information also affects the placement of politicians. Again, we can control for projection effects and consider the conditioning effects of political interest and information.

Together, these analyses provide us with a clear sense of the extent to which Torontonians view their municipal representatives through a partisan lens. Whereas McGregor et al. (2016) have shown that voters viewed the 2014 mayoral race in partisan terms, we consider here whether councillors and the mayor are seen in such terms during the inter-election period. If voters continue to impose partisan structure on municipal politics even in unlikely times, then it suggests that the idea of a non-partisan politics at the local level may be an illusion.

First Session: *Discussing political parties*

10:00 What Municipal Political Parties do the day after the election?

Anne MÉVELLEC *University of Ottawa*

Anne Mévellec is an Associate Professor at the School of Political Studies at the University of Ottawa. Her research focuses on the sociology of territorial public action in Canada, and in particular on the formation and professionalization of municipal officials. In that context, she explores the profiles, backgrounds and practices of elected officials as well as municipal political parties, the representation of francophones outside Quebec and the role of elected officials in forest governance.

Guy CHIASSON

Université du Québec en Outaouais

Mario GAUTHIER

Université du Québec en Outaouais

Abstract

This presentation seeks to bring both empirical and theoretical light on the question raised by the organizers: How does the presence of political parties contribute to changing the dynamics in place?

Our starting point is neo-institutionalism which takes seriously the formal existence and recognition of municipal political parties (MPP) by Quebec law. Neo-institutionnalism does not question the existence of MPP but questions to what extent they differ from parties at other levels of government. Since the 2011 election, there has been a rapid growth in the number of MPP both in medium and bigger cities. While, in a not so distant past, Montreal and Quebec City were the only places where municipal political parties existed, the Quebec Chief Electoral Officer currently lists 117 parties present in 72 municipalities. Some research has been dedicated to the impact of political parties on municipal elections (see for example Tremblay, 2014 on women's electoral participation). However, little is known about the parties contribution in daily work at city hall (Mevellec and Tremblay, 2013). Belley and Lavigne (2008) suggest that the presence of many political parties in one municipality leads to a more politicized municipal scene.

In this presentation, our aim is to shed some light on the question of the impact of municipal political parties on the operations of municipal assemblies in Quebec. In other words, we will attempt to capture the consequences of MPP both in procedural and substantive terms.

On the procedural side, we will look at the operations of municipal councils. Does the "westminsterization" thesis put forward by Mevellec and Tremblay (2013) still hold some value in a broader set of cities beyond their sample? In other words, can we observe a systematic split between a majority and a de facto opposition or is the more traditional model based on compromises between independent councillors the prevailing mode? In order to answer this question, we will rely on a sample of more than 20 cities, where we will assess how the presence of political parties determines

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the distribution of key appointments (finance, land use planning, executive committees, etc.) and therefore shapes council's operations. Two main criteria have been used to select the municipalities for our study: 1) their size (from 20 000 to 500 000 inhabitants), 2) the mayor had to be the leader of an MPP.

In substantive terms, the question is how the presence of political parties politicizes municipal decision-making. Politicization should not be seen as only the presence of a left-right divide (Bherer and Breux, 2012) but also includes the will to allow and support public debate (involving both citizens and elected officials) on urban issues. In other words, to what extent do MPP promote clear and different political stance by councillors or mayors? A case study on the City of Gatineau (265 000 inhabitants) will allow us to take a closer look at politicization of a number of land use planning issues. Studies on Gatineau (Chiasson, Gauthier and Andrew, 2011; Chiasson, Gauthier and Andrew, 2014) have shown elements of such politicization during and after the 2009 and 2013 elections, that is in a context where the only MPP was in the opposition. Empirical research on the current mandate will allow us to look at how these tendencies evolve in a context where the party leader is the mayor.

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First Session: *Discussing political parties*

10:30 The democratic contributions of local political parties: A view from Canada

Laurence BHERER Université de Montréal Laurence Bherer is an Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science at the University of Montreal. Her research mainly deals with participatory democracy and urban policies. Her current research projects focus on the professionalization of public participation and on the structuring of municipal politics.

Abstract

Forthcoming

- 11:00 Commentary by Andrea Perrella
- 11:30 Open discussion
- 12:00 Lunch on the premises

Second Session: Discussing Representativity

13:30 The Rise and Fall of Proportional Representation in the Western Canadian City

Jack LUCAS

University of Calgary

Jack Lucas is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Calgary. He studies institutional and policy change in Canadian cities, with a focus on urban political authority, urban policy institutions, and the long-term development of multilevel governance and the local state in Canada. He also has theoretical interests in comparative political development and historical political science. He teaches courses on urban politics, urban governance, Canadian federal and provincial politics, and political institutions.

Abstract

Local democratic competition and cooperation are profoundly influenced by the basic institutional structures of local politics. Canadian urban scholars tend to think of such structures as generally stable and unvarying over time and – with a few noted exceptions, such as Vancouver – across Canadian cities. Through much of the twentieth century, however, political leaders and activists in Western Canadian cities like Calgary, Vancouver, and Winnipeg led North America in their willingness to make profound changes to local electoral institutions – changes that included at-large voting, urban political parties, and proportional representation electoral systems. This period remains one of the most fascinating – and remarkably understudied – moments of democratic experimentation in Canadian political history. Today, amidst widespread discussion of urban democratic reform – ranging from electoral reform to voting rights for non-citizens (Siemiatycki 2015) – these debates remain important and timely.

This paper will explain the rise and fall of proportional representation electoral systems in twentieth-century Western Canadian cities. Between 1916 and 1925, each of Western Canada's largest cities – Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Winnipeg – introduced proportional representation (STV) systems; in fact, the city of Calgary continues to hold the record for the longest-lasting proportional voting system at any level in North American history (Johnston and Koene 2000). While historians and political scientists have occasionally discussed these urban electoral systems (Johnston and Koene 2000, Masson and LeSage 1994, Pilon 2013), they are nearly forgotten today – a remarkable fact, given ongoing debates about electoral reform in Canadian cities. Using original research in local newspapers and archives in Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Winnipeg, this paper will answer three sets of research questions:

- 1. Why was the PR system introduced in each city? How did advocates of reform build coalitions in support of the reform? Who opposed it?
- 2. How, if at all, did PR reshape electoral competition in each city? Is there evidence that the system advantaged or disadvantaged particular local candidates or political parties?
- 3. Why was the PR system eliminated in all four cities and why did it last so much longer in Calgary and Winnipeg than in Edmonton and Vancouver?

To answer these questions, I will draw on published accounts, newspaper research, and local / provincial archival materials – including correspondence, council minutes, and internal reports – to understand which local actors supported and opposed the change and how the institutions were (or were not) sustained by coalitions of support (Béland and Cox 2016, Thelen 2014). To explore the impact of PR systems in each city, I will carry out basic descriptive statistical analysis using a new dataset I have constructed on parties, elections, and electoral competition in each city. While the reforms themselves were similar across cities, I will argue, the coalitions by which the reforms were introduced varied considerably, reflecting differences in patterns of electoral competition across Western Canada. I believe that this paper will offer a useful contribution to our broader discussion of local competition and cooperation at the LABEL conference, and will help to illuminate the processes by which the basic structures of local democracy – the institutions that provide the structure and incentives for local competition and cooperation – have been created, challenged, and changed in Canada over time (Lucas 2016).

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Second Session: Discussing Representativity

14:00 What are the factors that affect the number of candidates in the 100 biggest Canadian municipalities?

Sandra BREUX

INRS-UCS

Sandra Breux is an Associate Professor at the Centre Culture Urbanisation Société of the INRS (Institut national de la recherche scientifique). Over the years she has developed a research area on the Canadian municipal level. Her research interests focus on municipal representative democracy and the role of territory on individual behaviour. She is also interested in notions of urban design and housing as well as in innovative methodological approaches.

Jérôme COUTURE

INRS-UCS

Jérôme Couture has a background in political science and is presently a postdoctoral fellow, under the supervision of Sandra Breux, at the INRS (Institut national de la recherche scientifique). His thesis is about municipal elections in Quebec. He is also a specialist in quantitative methods, which he has been teaching for four years at Laval University.

Royce KOOP

University of Manitoba

Royce Koop is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba. He received a PhD in political science from the University of British Columbia in 2009, and had held postdoctoral positions at Memorial University, Queen's University and Carleton University. Royce writes about political representation, political parties, local politics and online political communication

Abstract

Forthcoming

14:30 Commentary by Cameron Anderson

15:00 Coffee break

Third Session: *Seeking a Local Competitive Advantage?*

15:15 The Development of Smart Cities in Canada

Zachary SPICER

University of Western Ontario

Zachary Spicer is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at Brock University, where he teaches and researches local government, public policy and public sector management. His research has been featured in a number of academic journals, including the Journal of Urban Affairs, Canadian Public Policy, and Canadian Public Administration. His first book, The Boundary Bargain: Growth, Development and the Future of City-County Separation will be released by McGill-Queen's University Press in 2016.

Nicole GOODMAN

University of Toronto

Abstract

Cities and communities are largely driving government innovation and adoption of technology in Canada. More nimble and open to integrating technology, there are an increasing number of examples where local governments are leveraging technology to provide better and more transparent services, develop critical infrastructure, and transform the ways in which government officials and citizens converse and engage with one another. These developments are changing the production and delivery of local level services, and have important implications for participatory governance.

Municipal adoption of "smart city" technologies has been uneven. Not all municipalities have the capacity to push ahead with the digitization of public services, while others have eagerly implemented these service changes. We examine the adoption of smart city services through the lens of inter-municipal competition and regional competitiveness. A great deal of past research has shown that municipalities do have a competitive streak, with much of this effort focusing on the outwards appearance of a community and the strength of municipal scope and capacity (Daes and Giordano 2002; Kresl 2002; Begg 2002; Asheim and Isaksen 1997). Lucy and Phillips (2000, 15) summarize this position, arguing that "competition includes struggle by local government officials to retain and attract residents of sufficient means to pay taxes, invest in housing, purchase goods and services, populate and enforce norms of public conduct." Such competitive desire exists on a number of levels, as cities seek a competitive advantage not only locally, but also globally (Graham 2002; Hollands 2008; Florida 2012). Cities also seek to diversify populations, notably by putting the conditions in place to attract middle-class families that may have moved to the suburbs in previous years (Vardy and Rafel 1995).

Schneider (1989) provides a simplified model of local "buyers" and "sellers". To Schneider, metropolitan areas are just like any type of marketplace, where certain actors bring goods to market in the hopes others will purchase them at a certain price. In Schneider's conceptual marketplace, the "buyers" are people and businesses that choose to reside in the communities of any particular metropolitan area. These buyers choose to locate in one municipality over the other and as a result

Third Session: Seeking a Local Competitive Advantage?

then pay for their choice through taxes to their local government (Schneider 1989). These buyers have certain "tastes", which influence their decision to locate (or not locate) in a particular municipality. These "tastes" could include a preference for a variety of local goods and amenities, such as green space, transit, libraries and increased police protection (Schneider 1989). Schneider (1989) argues that these buyers want to purchase such products at the lowest price possible.

The "sellers" in Schneider's marketplace are local governments. He explains: "within each local government, politicians and bureaucrats are the decision-makers with primary responsibility for assembling the particular package of goods and services offered by each municipality...municipalities present a 'bundle' (or product mix) of goods and services to buyers, among which firms and residents choose" (Schneider 1989, 8). The type of goods up for "sale" are diverse, but ultimately if municipalities can get the "sellers" to buy they can enhance their position and grow. Much of this is inline with the incentives for private firms: more "sales" will grow the firm. When municipalities become more focused on achieving these types of gains they often adopt a competitive lens, seeing others, especially those with similar goals, as direct competition (Young 2012; Begg 1999; Parkinson and Boddy 2003).

The digitization of public services and the adoption of smart city frameworks could well fall into this drive for competitive advantage. In this paper, we detail the development of smart city technologies, explore inter-local competition and place several Canadian cities on a spectrum of smart city adoption based on the following criteria: knowledge workforce, e-health, innovation, environment, digital inclusion, broadband use, and digital capacity.

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Third Session: Seeking a Local Competitive Advantage?

15:45 Transit-oriented developments: A regional strategy for sustainable development or a tool for interlocal competition? Evidence from suburban Montreal and prospects for a canadian comparison.

Fanny TREMBLAY-RACICOT Forthcoming UQÀM

Florence Paulhiac *UQÀM*

Abstract

Forthcoming

- 16:15 Commentary by David Siegel
- 16:45 Concluding remarks by Guy Chiasson

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Workshop

8:00 Breakfast

For those who wish to participate, a breakfast will be held on the 18th. On that occasion, we propose to discuss the projects presented and to collaborate on new endeavors.

We plan to address:

- 1) The publication of texts ensued from the colloquium.
- 2) Future projects:
 what works should we join together.
 what ideas should we pursue work on.
- 3) Etc...

Practical details

The colloquium will be held at the <u>Institut</u> <u>National de la Recherche Scientifique</u>.

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