



ORANGE CHINOOK: Politics in the New Alberta

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ISBN 978-1-77385-026-9

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A League of Their Own: Alberta's Women Party Leaders

Lori Williams

The 2015 Alberta election was unprecedented in many ways, but particularly with respect to the successes and failures of female political leaders that preceded it. The leaders and events analyzed here include Alison Redford's premiership and resignation, Danielle Smith's party leadership, floor-crossing, and subsequent defeat, and the ascent of Rachel Notley as premier. All raise questions about the challenges and opportunities faced by women in political leadership, both in Alberta and elsewhere.

This analysis will focus on key factors affecting these leaders, including the histories and internal dynamics of their respective political parties, the debates in which they were involved, and their responses to various controversies.¹ The 2015 election highlighted gendered expectations around political behaviour, issues, and personal attributes as amplified in traditional and social media. All this has exposed obstacles and opportunities faced by women in politics, and particularly those in political leadership. These will be used to illuminate the challenges that confront female political leaders, the constraints and possibilities they negotiate, the risks of failure they face, and the innovations that have yielded success.

By focusing on the three Alberta women who came within reach of the premiership, I will trace how some leaders have built winning strategies by combining the lessons of the past with creative approaches to politics, and conclude with some of the challenges that remain.

Challenges and Opportunities for Women in Politics

The world of politics was created by men, and the standards of political practice have historically been defined by male politicians. This means that the role models, practitioners, and norms associated with the notion of a “good politician” are primarily male. Of course, gender stereotypes by their very nature do not necessarily apply to all women and men. However, they do tend to create expectations of male and female political candidates that have significant implications for political success. Political judgments made by voters, contributors, the political community, and the media all tend to focus on and exaggerate counter-stereotypical behaviour, creating pressure to conform to expectations around gender norms.²

Stereotypical traits associated with men are also identified with politics; these include strength, toughness, assertiveness, independence, autonomy, competitiveness, decisiveness, self-confidence, aggression, forcefulness, and emotional detachment.³ Politics rewards adversarial power seeking, ambition, seeking credit for accomplishments, and detached, logical analysis. The hierarchical organization of politics (e.g., within party structures and governments) is also more often associated with masculinity.⁴ The language and coverage of politics tends to focus on authoritativeness, aggression, conflict, battles, war (e.g., “war room,” “war chest”), and winning.⁵ Those considered best suited for political office, and most successful political practitioners, make effective use of stereotypically masculine characteristics.

The stereotypical traits associated with women are less compatible with these traditional understandings of politics. The positives include co-operation, collaboration, orientation toward others, and networking.⁶ Research shows that women tend to be consultative, focusing more on finding solutions than getting credit for their accomplishments, and less concerned with their own ambitions than with the impact that a decision has on those affected by it.⁷ Some women are uncomfortable with the expectation that they raise their personal profiles or connect their names and ambitions to their initiatives, a factor that may impede their success as political leaders.⁸

Stereotypes about gender-appropriate behaviour, while significant, don't tell the whole story. There are also expectations about which issues are better suited to female and male politicians. Research shows that men are seen as having more affinity with and support for things like national

security, foreign affairs, military spending, finance, and free trade. Women, on the other hand, are seen as having more interest and competence regarding issues like health care, education, and social welfare.⁹

This can be an advantage for female candidates in elections or races where issues associated with women's perceived competencies dominate. Leaders, however, are expected to have competence on all issues a government faces, which can make it more difficult for women to contest leadership positions.

Nice, But Not Too Nice . . .

Gender stereotypes do not simply describe masculine and feminine characteristics and issues, they prescribe often unconscious expectations of how men and women ought to behave, and as such are often difficult to identify or counteract.¹⁰ Benevolent sexism is subtle, affirming women's abilities and virtues within traditional or stereotypical parameters, and rewarding or protecting women who conform to them.¹¹ Conversely, benevolent sexism generates discomfort or negative judgments of women who do not conform. The former sees women as warm, likeable, less threatening and nice—but incompetent; the latter as capable but cold.¹² Those who are less conformist may be evaluated as competent, but less likeable, and labelled with a host of negative epithets. Female political leaders, then, “must be simultaneously perceived as competent and likeable, and these two perceptions may conflict.”¹³ On the other hand, when they focus on feminine issues, female politicians tend to be perceived as more competent, and this can sometimes be put to political advantage.¹⁴

Gender stereotypes and norms are reflected and exaggerated in traditional and social media, which tend to emphasize the appearance and personal lives of non-traditional candidates, including women and minorities. A woman's hair, clothing, makeup, weight, wrinkles, voice, sexuality, and relationships are considered newsworthy.¹⁵ Such emphasis on women's appearance can reinforce the belief that their primary value is aesthetic, and divert attention from their intelligence and competence.¹⁶ Women's family status—as opposed to men's—is more often mentioned by the media, raising questions about their ability to balance their political and personal responsibilities. Since scrutiny of political leaders is more intense than for

other politicians, the focus on female leaders' personal lives can magnify doubts about their suitability.

Women tend to have less and more limited access to resources conducive to political success. These include money, networks, political contacts, leisure time, and experience in the adversarial culture of traditional politics.¹⁷ Often conducted in a winner-take-all manner, politics focuses on scoring "gotcha" points at the expense of substantive debate.¹⁸ Those who prefer collaboration and co-operation may prefer to work in the background, choosing not to run for office, much less party leadership. Another factor at play is what is often described as the confidence gap: women are more likely to undervalue their suitability to and qualifications for politics, even when they possess comparable qualifications and skills as their male counterparts.¹⁹

The Players: Alberta's Women Party Leaders

Alberta has seen three women closely contest the premiership, Alison Redford, Danielle Smith, and Rachel Notley, two of whom became premier. In this section, I will connect the hurdles faced by female politicians to the aspirations, challenges, and innovations associated with each of these women, and explore the lessons learned from their experience.

Alison Redford

Alison Redford was elected to Alberta's legislature on 3 March 2008 in the riding of Calgary Elbow, the seat long held by Ralph Klein. Premier Ed Stelmach chose her as his justice minister and attorney general. She came to government with experience as a human rights lawyer and as a policy advisor to prime ministers Joe Clark and Brian Mulroney, and she aspired to rejuvenate the progressive strain of the provincial Progressive Conservative Party. This positioned her to overcome some of the institutional barriers commonly faced by women, as well as the confidence gap. She self-identified as a Peter Lougheed conservative, crediting his mentorship and hearkening back to his government's willingness to invest in the province.

Lougheed's was an activist government; he established human rights legislation, bought an airline to serve Alberta's northern communities, created an oil company (Alberta Energy Company), raised royalties, invested

in health care, education, and the arts, and professionalized the civil service. Among Lougheed's political talents was a keen sense of the importance of collaboration and consultation, of constantly communicating with voters in their communities, with riding associations, and with his caucus. Indeed, many of his policy initiatives originated within caucus.²⁰ Such consultation and networking tools are often associated with women's leadership styles. This, and the fact that Redford claimed to be inspired by Lougheed's leadership, enhanced her appeal to voters hoping for more democratic governance.

By the time Alison Redford rose to political leadership, the commitment and engagement of Lougheed's caucus had given way to indolence and entitlement. PC candidates were primarily seen as party members. During Ralph Klein's premiership most identified simply as members of "Ralph's team," and if their names appeared on campaign signs, they were dwarfed by that of the premier. As members of the "natural governing party," they were largely unaccountable to voters, who tended to focus more on the premier or the party than individual candidates. Some MLAs didn't bother attending legislative sittings or committee meetings, as illustrated by the infamous "do nothing committees" allowing MLAs to pad their salaries without the inconvenience of attending meetings. This culture also permeated cabinet. Many cabinet ministers left the work to their deputies. If they attended cabinet meetings, many arrived unprepared, some not even sober.²¹ This may have been the genesis of Redford's apparent disdain for some of her caucus colleagues, and likely fueled her leadership ambitions. She thought Alberta was due for a change, and when Ed Stelmach resigned on 25 January 2011, she entered the race to be the agent of that change.

Redford launched her leadership campaign with the support of outsiders—teachers, nurses, union supporters, women, and even some aligned with other parties. Many joined the PC Party in order to vote for its next leader, and premier. Dubbed opportunists or "two-minute Tories," these supporters won Redford the race. Her strategy appeared to hinge on broadening the support for her policies and her party. Appealing to voters outside the fiscal-conservative base, Redford appeared poised to resurrect the PC's legendary big tent, building a new coalition of progressives and conservatives. She promised a more transparent, accountable government. Many hoped she would exercise the kinds of leadership qualities and embrace issues associated with women and the Lougheed years. The breadth of her

support suggested a capacity for building consensus, and she promised action on issues such as health care, education, and social welfare.

However, Redford's ascent to the PC leadership was not a resounding victory. The front-runner in the race was Gary Mar, who led the first ballot with 41 per cent; at 19 per cent, Alison Redford came in a distant second. A second vote was held with a preferential ballot, and while Mar maintained his lead with 43 per cent, Redford jumped to 37 per cent, and Doug Horner came in third with 20 per cent. With Horner out of the race, the second choices marked on his ballots were counted, and Redford pulled ahead with 51 per cent to Mar's 49 per cent. Though Redford won, she was many voters' second choice.²²

In the 2012 election campaign Redford promised to transform the party from within, a time-honoured PC strategy that had sustained it in power for four decades. Her government was threatened by concerns about the growing debt, reports of intimidation and bullying of health care workers, and publicity around the "do nothing committees." She gestured toward a better future with the "Not Your Father's PC Party" slogan, yet welcomed the endorsement of that party's founder, Peter Lougheed. Many Albertans wanted better from their government, but most had only known one governing party, and were cautious about entrusting the reins of power to neophytes. As election day approached, Danielle Smith's Wildrose Party was rising in the polls, threatening to topple Redford's government. Then a series of missteps derailed their momentum. Already squeamish about the Wildrose Party's social conservatism, voters recoiled at the anti-gay, racially insensitive views expressed by Wildrose candidates. The ensuing controversy was worsened by Smith's refusal to censure these candidates. On 23 April 2012, Redford emerged victorious with 61 seats; she had been on the brink of losing government, but in the end lost only 5 seats. Smith gained 14 seats, winning a total of 17, and so became leader of the Official Opposition.²³

Redford had become the fourth woman in Canadian history to be voted premier in a general election. Her premiership began with promise as she eliminated pay bonuses for committee work and introduced greater transparency and accountability by requiring the disclosure of some public servants' expense records and salaries. Her rise to power rested on a new coalition drawing support from across the spectrum with promised investments for teachers, union supporters, health-care workers, and universities.

The collaborative tone of her campaign tapped into gendered expectations around teamwork and consultation, and most expected this to extend into her government.

Within a year, however, Redford's new-found supporters felt betrayed by a series of broken campaign promises. Facing declines in energy revenues, a so-called "bitumen bubble," Redford cut spending, and worse.²⁴ She froze wages and suspended the right to arbitration for the province's largest public-sector union, cut university funding by 7.2 per cent, and engaged in negotiation tactics that infuriated teachers and health-care workers.²⁵ Her imposition of penalties for driving with a blood-alcohol level above .05 angered rural Albertans who didn't have the option of taking a taxi home. And she transgressed gender norms by appearing emotionally detached, overly independent, and self-confident to the point of arrogance.

The austerity imposed on Albertans under Redford's government stood in sharp contrast to the premier's own extravagant use of taxpayers' money. She spent \$45,000 for herself and an aide to travel to South Africa for Nelson Mandela's funeral, rather than flying with the prime minister's entourage for a fraction of the cost. As criticism mounted, she persisted in defending her South Africa trip, and when she finally apologized, and only under further pressure said she would reimburse the province, the damage was irreparable. Moreover, she used government planes for non-government travel, excluded caucus members from her flights, and incurred exorbitant expenses, salaries, and severances for her staff, leading Auditor General Merwan Saher to attribute her abuse of government resources to an "aura of power."²⁶

Redford's leadership bid had begun with the support of only one caucus member, Art Johnston. This needn't have been an enduring liability, especially since the 2012 election injected new talent into her caucus. But unlike her mentor Peter Lougheed, Redford failed to connect with caucus, thereby severing a crucial source of support. Christy Clark, who also won the leadership of the BC Liberal Party with the backing of only one caucus member, swiftly moved to broaden her support within the party.²⁷ By contrast, Redford alienated her base, failing to connect with her old caucus, or draw from her new one, depriving her government of considerable talent, insight, and support.²⁸

By March 2014 simmering caucus dissent erupted. Len Webber, already planning to leave provincial politics to run for the federal Conservatives, quit, citing Redford's anger. "She's just really not a nice lady," he said. "I cannot work for an individual who treats people poorly."²⁹ His use of the term "nice lady" echoed a well-documented intolerance of aggression and anger in female politicians. Next, Donna Kennedy-Glans, an associate minister, resigned her position and left the party to sit as an independent, saying her departure was "not just about the leadership," but also about whether change from within the party was possible.³⁰ And at least ten other MLAs met to express their dissatisfaction with Redford's leadership, threatening to sit as independents.

Two days later, on 19 March 2014, Redford announced that she would resign. She had begun and ended her leadership appealing for support from outside her party and even her province. Her leadership on a national energy strategy (ratified after she left office) yielded national and international support, and was one of her greatest achievements. But it wasn't enough to counter her growing alienation from voters and her party. While she enjoyed some success advocating for Alberta's interests on the national front, dashed hopes led betrayed supporters to lash out.

While gender stereotypes often inhibit women's electoral prospects, in Redford's case, these stereotypes initially worked to her advantage. Studies have shown that gender stereotypes tend to hurt women when they campaign on "masculine issues," but can help them when elections are focused on "feminine issues," or when women's outsider status signals positive change.³¹ Redford promised a renewed government and rallied support by pledging improvements on issues where women are often viewed as more competent: education, health care, and social welfare. Voters assessed her as competent and worthy of their confidence in these areas, and felt betrayed and abandoned when she acted against these interests. Many supporters hoped that as a woman and a proponent of Lougheed's legacy, Redford would be a collaborative, consultative leader. Her leadership, however, centred more on ideas and issues, and less on the political foundations and collaboration needed to bring them to life. Initial signs of collaboration and consensus building gave way to a leadership style seen as antagonistic, cold, and dictatorial.

Women politicians tend to be perceived as more honest and trustworthy than their male counterparts, and less likely to participate in political corruption.³² This may have made voters more inclined to embrace Redford's pledge to enhance transparency and accountability. She raised expectations for government support, leadership style, and trust. When she failed to meet these expectations, the censure was doubly harsh; she had reneged on promises *and* violated gender norms. This could at least partly explain why Redford was vilified for her use of government airplanes, when Ralph Klein escaped censure for much worse (including flying a government airplane to Nova Scotia for a golf game). Of course Klein was skilled in employing an elusive "common touch," and was quick to admit mistakes and apologize. Redford lacked such a personal connection, and her apologies, when they were offered at all, were too little, too late. Albertans had grown impatient with the PC's arrogance and entitlement, and had entrusted a woman to govern differently.

In her rise to leadership, Redford managed to navigate the institutional barriers that normally inhibit women's political success. She generated public support to compensate for whatever she lacked in networks and connections, using gender expectations and her outsider status as assets rather than liabilities. And Redford didn't appear to suffer the effects of the confidence gap whereby women self-assess as less qualified than men with similar experience.

As criticism grew, however, the public began to perceive her as arrogant and entitled. In media coverage she wasn't often described as likeable, though many who met her personally found her intelligent, approachable, and even charming. She appeared to focus on competence rather than likeability, leaving little to balance against criticisms of her performance. Media coverage of her personal life was limited, with two notable exceptions. During the leadership race, her mother passed away just before the leaders' debate. Her heartfelt appreciation of her mother's legacy and her determination to continue with the planned debate earned public sympathy and respect. When the issue of flying her daughter and her daughter's friends on government planes emerged, the media coverage was less favourable.

Redford could have benefitted from a more collaborative relationship with the media. She failed to take advantage of opportunities to shore up support through effective communication with her party or with the public.

As she faced a growing barrage of criticism from voters, the media, and her own party, she responded by becoming increasingly isolated, seen in news footage emerging from black-glassed vehicles, or responding abruptly to media queries. She surrounded herself with a revolving door of staff, and had only limited contact with her caucus. During the 2013 floods in Southern Alberta flood, she earned praise from some, but failed to collaborate closely with Opposition leader Danielle Smith, whose constituency included High River, the most devastated area in the province. Redford's response to the flood was eclipsed by Calgary mayor Naheed Nenshi, who was compared to a rock star as he provided continuous updates and reassurances to Calgarians. Redford came to politics without extensive media experience, and this hampered her ability to effectively communicate her leadership or policies through the media. Instead of connecting with potential supporters in her party or the public, she retreated. Redford's leadership became increasingly focused on control, and her caucus feared being seen with members of the media.³³

Alison Redford was initially a beneficiary of gender expectations. Facing high hopes created by her promises and her gender, her failure raised questions about the prospects for female political leaders. After her departure, in a conversation intended to promote more women in politics, a man closely associated with Redford's campaign suggested that Albertans weren't ready for another woman premier. Redford's defeat, however, owed as much to the PC Party's checkered history as it did to her leadership, as was detailed by Duane Bratt in chapter 2.

Danielle Smith

Danielle Smith rose to the Wildrose Party leadership with a background in economics, politics, and journalism. Her previous experience with elected office was less extensive than in other areas. She was elected to the Calgary Board of Education in 1998, but this board was dissolved by Learning Minister Lyle Oberg eleven months later due to dysfunctional infighting. She worked as a journalist and lobbyist, championing business interests and fiscal conservatism. A longtime PC supporter, Smith became disillusioned with the fiscal record of the Stelmach government and defected to the Wildrose Alliance Party in 2008, ascending to its leadership in 2009. Her communication skills, her public profile, and her laser focus on the

governing PCs' culture of entitlement and corruption catapulted her party out of the political wilderness, from a single legislative seat in 2009 into a serious contender in the 2012 election. Smith was media savvy, was often described as telegenic, and received generally positive media coverage.

During the 2012 election campaign, Smith challenged the PC government's history of economic mismanagement and entitlement, and proposed credible alternatives. Polls predicted that she was on the brink of victory when a series of blunders diverted voters' attention away from anger at the PCs to doubts about Wildrose. When public outcry erupted over Wildrose candidate Allan Hunsperger's blogpost claiming gays and lesbians would suffer eternity in a "lake of fire," Smith invoked a libertarian defence of personal freedom, saying that her party "won't be legislating on contentious social issues," and "we accept that people have a broad diversity of viewpoints, but the way we get along is that we focus on the things on which we can agree."³⁴

The party's fortunes suffered another blow when Ron Leech, the Wildrose candidate for Calgary Greenway who had previously penned a *Calgary Herald* editorial opposing same-sex marriage, told a multicultural radio station that he could best represent his ethnically diverse constituency because, as a Caucasian, he could speak for the entire community and not any particular ethnic group. When informed of Leech's comments, Smith replied: "I think every candidate puts forward their best argument for why they should be the person who can best represent the community."³⁵ Hunsperger's and Leech's comments, Smith's responses to them, and her public questioning of climate change were blamed for blowing the Wildrose lead in the polls, and ultimately for losing the 2012 election.

Social conservatism has consistently posed problems for conservative parties at the federal and provincial level. It had been blamed for the failures of the federal Reform and Alliance Parties, and when Stephen Harper won the leadership of the newly united federal Conservative Party, he saw that distancing his party from such issues was key to winning and governing. He imposed strict controls on his caucus, with threats of harsh discipline, and decisively rejected legislating on controversial moral issues. He was criticized for being dictatorial and controlling, but he was effective at containing internal divisions and suppressing socially conservative views.

In an attempt to avoid recurring controversies around social conservatism, Smith sought support for more inclusive policies. In the fall of 2013, with Smith riding high in the polls, Wildrose MLAs voted unanimously at their AGM in favour of equality for gays and lesbians, and against the elimination of Alberta's Human Rights Commission. Her caucus even rejected "conscience rights" for health-care workers that would have allowed them to opt out of providing medical services based on their personal beliefs.³⁶

Smith's popularity owed much to her scathing campaign against the "entitled" PCs, by which she steadily eroded the governing party's brand. However, she suffered a setback when Jim Prentice became premier in September 2014. Seeking seats in the legislature for himself and two of his cabinet ministers, Prentice called by-elections in four constituencies for 27 October. Smith overestimated her party's support, and invested heavily in a failed attempt to defeat the new premier in Calgary Foothills. The PCs won all four seats, though by just over 300 votes in Calgary West. Had she funnelled more resources into that race, Smith likely would have picked up a seat. Smith nonetheless valiantly spun the PC sweep, saying it was not a blank cheque, and that Albertans had put Prentice on probation. But internal party divisions began to surface again.³⁷ At the Wildrose AGM in November, amid doubts about whether she could lead the party to victory, party members voted *against* equal rights for all minority groups regardless of sexual orientation.³⁸ This reversed the position adopted a year earlier, and exposed an irreconcilable rift between the leader's principles and her party's policy. It was now evident that Smith could no longer contain her party's internal fractures—popularity was too fragile a foundation to sustain internal control. Her leadership was over.

Rather than continue in such an untenable position, or resign as leader, Smith led eight other party members to cross the floor, joining Jim Prentice's PCs on 17 December. This shocked Albertans, along with members of both parties, who remembered Smith's castigation of two other Wildrose MLAs who had defected just three weeks earlier, on 26 November. Smith had vowed there would be no more floor-crossings, and that she would continue to hold the government's feet to the fire. The floor-crossing appeared more opportunistic than principled, violating expectations that women politicians are more trustworthy. It was now Smith's brand that was tarnished. When she ran for the PC nomination in her riding the following March, she

was repudiated on the same day the Wildrose Party elected Brian Jean as their new leader.³⁹ It now appeared that her political career was over.

Though many women politicians struggle to overcome gender stereotypes, the media rely less on such norms when female candidates have an established public profile.⁴⁰ Smith's political and journalistic record had established her reputation, and her experience had sharpened her skills as a leader and communicator. She largely escaped the typical focus on female politicians' appearance and personal life, with the exception of those who described her as attractive, young, and telegenic.⁴¹ The one time her personal life became an issue, when a PC volunteer tweeted a question about her support for family policies since she was herself childless, it worked to her advantage. Alison Redford, in a rare show of support, expressed her horror and apologized "woman to woman." Both Redford and Smith were credited for rising above an issue that often plagues political women.⁴²

Smith's approach to leadership was widely seen as consultative and conciliatory. Formidable in opposition, she focused on issues and policies, avoiding personal attacks. In contrast to Redford, who was harshly judged for being controlling or angry, Smith demonstrated no real anger in her leadership style.⁴³ Anger can be a particular liability for female politicians,⁴⁴ and Smith's collaborative leadership approach enhanced her public appeal. Unfortunately, it ultimately jeopardized her support. Her search for consensus undermined the strength and decisiveness demanded of political leaders.

Institutional barriers were not a significant factor in Smith's rise to leadership. Her public profile, media presence, and policy background more than compensated for any lack of money or party connections. Soon after she joined the Wildrose Alliance Party, she was recruited to run for the leadership. Party officials recognized that her talent and media profile could improve the party's brand. However, internal party dynamics were a persistent, and eventually fatal, problem. Such divisiveness would have been a challenge for any leader, but was a particular liability given her consultative, collaborative leadership style.

Despite her less-controlling manner, Smith's popularity was a powerful tool for constraining her party's ideologues. Most party members recognized that Smith was their best hope for governing, and supported initiatives to prevent a recurrence of the 2012 "bozo eruptions" (like Hunsperger's

and Leech's comments) The ideologues within the Wildrose Party were persuaded to subordinate their principles for a better chance in the next election. However, whenever Smith's poll numbers dipped, her critics began to agitate and erode her support.

Smith's facility with the media was one of her greatest assets. She managed to appear competent and warm, often described as likeable, but also as a capable leader and formidable opponent. During debates and in the legislature, she landed tough questions and challenges without transgressing gender norms. She often smiled while delivering a critique. She was evaluated as nice, but ultimately was too conciliatory, lacking the ability to control her fractious party. This, combined with her stances on certain issues, which seemed to defy gender norms, made it more difficult for voters to trust her with government. Her fiscal conservatism raised doubts about her commitment to health care and education, as her opponents often pointed out. Perhaps the most problematic issue was her failure to protect vulnerable groups.⁴⁵ Whether because of her libertarianism or her inability to restrain intolerance within her party, Albertans weren't confident that a Wildrose government would protect the rights of minorities, or could be trusted to advance the interests of all Albertans.

Rachel Notley

Rachel Notley's political roots stretched back to her early childhood. Her father, Grant Notley, became leader of the Alberta NDP in 1968, when Rachel was four, and served in the legislature from 1971 until his death in a plane crash in 1984. Her mother, Sandy Wilkinson Notley, set an example of political engagement, taking Rachel to her first protest when she was ten. Rachel Notley was active in politics while attending Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto, providing community legal services, co-founding an Osgoode NDP club, and participating in the 1989 federal NDP leadership race. After graduation she advocated for workers seeking compensation in Alberta, and worked for the BC government as a health-and-safety officer and in Attorney General Ujjal Dosanjh's office.⁴⁶ She earned a reputation as a gifted communicator, able to make people feel understood, but was also a persuasive advocate, able to find common ground between adversaries.⁴⁷

Notley was elected to the Alberta legislature in 2008, as part of a tiny, four-member NDP caucus that was remarkably effective in opposition.

Moving beyond mere criticism of the government, they proposed better alternatives, and their challenges were often more compelling because they were less negative than other opposition parties. Notley was elected as leader of her party on 18 October 2014, and as premier less than seven months later.

Notley encountered a rare set of opportunities in the lead-up to the May 2015 election, as detailed in the chapters by Melanee Thomas, Duane Bratt, and Keith Brownsey. Capitalizing on every opportunity, she rarely set a foot wrong. She anticipated an early election call and moved quickly to recruit candidates. When she did make mistakes, she was quick to take responsibility and correct them. For example, upon discovering a billion-dollar costing error in the NDP's proposed budget, she immediately acknowledged and fixed the error. When premier Prentice said, "Alberta is not an NDP province," she agreed, stating that "Alberta is not an NDP province. It's not a PC province. It's not a Wildrose province. Alberta belongs to Albertans."⁴⁸

Notley's political dexterity was particularly evident in the televised leader's debate on 23 April. She was articulate and lightning-quick on her feet, demonstrating command of the issues. She managed a rare combination of toughness, competence, and likeability. She smiled as she challenged Prentice's claims, and even winked at the camera. When Prentice claimed that Notley was planning a 20 per cent corporate tax, she interrupted:

Notley: What are you talking about? Our proposed corporate tax rate is 12 per cent. I'm not sure who's briefing you but I just do need to clarify that that's absolutely incorrect.

Prentice: 10 per cent to 12—I know the math is difficult, but 10 per cent to 12 percent is a 20 per cent increase.

Notley: You said a 20 per cent tax, you didn't say increase. I just need to make clear we are not proposing a 20 per cent corporate tax. That would be ridiculous.⁴⁹

Prentice had made an awkward dig at the NDP's fiscal plan miscalculation, but it badly backfired. Twitter exploded with #mathishard and other hashtags ridiculing Prentice's blunder. Rather than objecting to his remarks

about math, Notley pivoted to a populist defence against elitism. Later, when the subject of oil and gas royalties came up, she challenged the PC government's treatment of the issue by asserting that "Albertans are always told, 'Don't worry your pretty little heads.'"

The debate played poorly for Prentice, who was seen as elitist, patronizing and sexist, and the PCs dropped in the polls, as Janet Brown shows in chapter 4. In this case, benevolent sexism worked against Prentice. Male politicians are negatively evaluated if they are too harsh or critical of women, because women are perceived as less competitive and less aggressive, and such attacks on them are therefore seen as unfair.⁵⁰ Notley herself declined to call Prentice's comments sexist or condescending. When asked about it by reporters she replied that "NDP math means that those who can afford it—wealthy corporations and individuals—would pay 'a little bit more' to ensure that Albertans get the health and education they deserve." She focused on the government's treatment of voters, asserting that "Albertans sometimes feel that they're being talked down to by their government. . . . And I think that's what they're looking to change."⁵¹

When the media projected that Rachel Notley's NDP would form government on 15 May 2015, Don Martin, in CTV's Calgary studio, pronounced that "she has the royal jelly." She had toppled the PC's nearly forty-four-year dynasty, and jumped from 4 seats in the legislature to 54 of its 87 seats. Following her win, Notley drew on her considerable skills and the experience of others as she got down to the work of governing—a daunting task after more than four decades of PC rule. Her approach was characteristically pragmatic, collaborative, and consultative. At the press conference announcing her Climate Leadership Plan, she shared the stage with some unlikely allies: industry executives, environmental and Indigenous leaders. Notley had drawn from the expertise and won the endorsement of traditional adversaries: Canadian Natural Resources, Suncor, Cenovus, and Shell, along with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers—while also securing the support of environmental advocates such as Greenpeace.⁵²

Sharing the microphone was also a feature of Notley's leadership when the Fort McMurray wildfire descended on Northern Alberta (described by Kevin Taft and Chase Remillard and Sheridan McVean in their chapters). A mandatory evacuation order displaced almost 90,000 residents who needed information on the availability of services and what was happening to

their homes. She updated Albertans with at least two news briefings a day, at which she was joined by various experts, Opposition leader Brian Jean (whose house had been destroyed by the fire), Municipal Affairs Minister Danielle Larivee (who had survived the 2011 Slave Lake fire), Wood Buffalo mayor Melissa Blake, fire chief Darby Allen, and others. She conducted regular telephone town halls with evacuated residents, included Brian Jean in daily briefings, and visited For McMurray personally while limiting media fanfare. She also put social media to effective use. Her leadership was widely praised, including by the leader of the Opposition, whom she had allowed to visit the city during the evacuation. Danielle Smith described Notley's communication during this event as "brilliant," and a welcome contrast to Alison Redford's approach during the June 2013 floods.⁵³ Notley expressed confidence in the courage, compassion, and generosity of Albertans, and choked back tears when she spoke of the disaster's only two fatalities, killed in a traffic accident while fleeing the fire. She assured Albertans that "we have your backs."⁵⁴ Unlike many politicians who crave the limelight, Notley shone a light on Albertans.

On the national stage, Notley promoted interprovincial co-operation in support of a national energy strategy. She rejected anti-federalist rhetoric, presenting herself and her province as a partner and leader, especially on balancing the environment and the economy. Her preference was to work collaboratively with other provinces, but she could also be blunt. At Notley's first Council of the Federation meeting, Saskatchewan premier Brad Wall accused Quebec of trying to veto future projects, criticizing Central and Eastern Canada for taking transfer payments funded by the economies of the West. Notley admonished Wall, and spoke of the importance of getting negotiations back on track rather than "standing in a corner and having a tantrum."⁵⁵ She asserted that "relationships among the provinces will only be developed through mature consensus-based dialogue. It's not about showboating."⁵⁶ Even at her toughest, she left the door open for co-operation, as seen in her advocacy for pipelines (discussed below).

Notley demonstrated her ability to listen and compromise on a number of issues. One of her campaign promises had been to increase Alberta's minimum wage to \$15 an hour, but in response to concerns raised from the business community, she agreed to phase it in more slowly. She promised a royalty review to ensure that Albertans received a fair return from energy

revenues, and when the review panel did not recommend an expected increase in royalties, she focused on the proposed improvements in fairness and production incentives.⁵⁷

There have of course been missteps. Perhaps the most damaging was her government's failure to effectively consult and communicate with rural Albertans over Bill 6, the Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act (discussed in Gillian Steward's chapter). This legislation was intended to bring Alberta in line with the rest of the country and protect farm workers under occupational health and safety and workers compensation legislation, but government representatives made critical errors in meetings with farm groups fuelling fears, distrust, anger, and protests. This was an inexplicable blunder, especially given Notley's childhood roots in rural Alberta and her years of experience with workplace safety and workers compensation. Perhaps so focused on principle, she may have forgotten the importance of process. In response to the backlash, and after further consultation, the bill was amended to clarify that family members and unpaid workers were exempt from the rules.⁵⁸ However, the anger in many rural communities has yet to subside, and this will pose a persistent challenge for her government. In another misstep, Notley's decision to ban Ezra Levant's Rebel Media from attending government news conferences—they were not a "journalistic source," as she put it—was criticized for contravening her promises of government accountability. She reversed the decision and apologized within days, saying she had heard from Albertans.⁵⁹

As Notley ascended to the premiership, she appeared to have found the Goldilocks zone for a female political leader: not too tough, not too soft . . . She was depicted as tough and feisty, escaping more pejorative descriptors like "strident" or "angry." She was described in terms that rarely go together for female politicians, including capable, bright, and knowledgeable, while also being approachable, unpretentious, and down-to-earth. She was seen as politically savvy, yet sincere, honest, and trustworthy. She was characterized as capable but compassionate.⁶⁰

As discussed earlier, many women are uncomfortable with the competitive, adversarial cut and thrust of politics, and indeed Notley herself has resisted heckling in the legislature. But she seemed to thrive in debates about ideas and policies, energized by advocating for her beliefs and for Albertans. One of her advisers said, "She just comes right back at you. She is spring

loaded to be an effective debater.”⁶¹ Notley has performed ably on issues considered soft or feminine, but has defied expectations for women (and NDP leaders) with her support for business, the oil industry, and pipelines. She is in the news on jobs and the economy more often than her finance and labour ministers combined. She clearly has command of a variety of subjects, deftly navigating complex files.

She has faced fewer institutional barriers than most female leaders. Immersed in politics and the party from childhood, her political acumen and connections run deep. Notley does not appear to lack confidence, but her confidence has grown from experience, and she recognizes when advice and support are needed. When she first entered the legislature she was quite intimidated, relying heavily on former leader Brian Mason’s experience and presence. She was nonetheless her party’s critic on twelve different cabinet portfolios in a lean NDP caucus, giving her a strong foundation in the substantive issues of government.⁶²

Notley’s ability to communicate through various media has charted new territory. She seems able to reach through the camera to connect with viewers. During the Fort McMurray wildfire, her media presence was sensitive, informative, and reassuring. She has often managed to turn the words and attitudes of others to her advantage, as seen in her responses to Jim Prentice and others. Notley has also skillfully employed the time-honoured strategy of using humour to deflect attacks, and to appear less threatening and more likeable.⁶³ When Wildrose candidate Rick Strankman invited voters to a pie auction, suggesting they “BYWP (Bring Your Wife’s Pie),” Notley quipped, “It’s clear he has a sweet tooth, but he needs a wisdom tooth.”⁶⁴

Social media has been particularly challenging for Notley and her government. She and female ministers like Marg McQuaig-Boyd have been frequent targets of cyberbullies. Online videos have portrayed gleeful golfers driving their carts into posters featuring Notley’s image, and depicted her in the crosshairs of a gun. Although she has often declined to respond to such vitriol, when she has commented she has appealed to Albertans’ better natures, saying such behaviour does not represent Alberta.

Rachel Notley’s government is noticeably different from its predecessors. This is partly due to her leadership and partly to the composition of her party. She continues to be unpretentious, down to earth, and the antithesis of elitist. For example, at a cabinet retreat in Banff she declined,

unlike previous premiers, to occupy the only deluxe room available. A veteran columnist who has analyzed seven Alberta premiers, observed that she earns loyalty and support through competence and warmth. Unlike under previous premiers, including Stelmach and Redford, there is no apparent fear of the leader.⁶⁵

Notley's experience has equipped her well to overcome the confidence gap experienced by prospective female recruits. She understands that women need to be asked to run more than once, and that they need support as they campaign and work in the legislature. The high proportion (47 per cent) of women in Notley's caucus has freed her from some of the resistance faced by other female leaders. This confirms studies that show increased numbers of women in legislative bodies change the way that government business is conducted, creating a different dynamic, one that is "more in touch with life." The difference is seen in commitment to mentorships, the less adversarial tone or culture of government, fewer late-night sittings, and policies that reflect a more diverse range of experience.⁶⁶ Indeed, Notley's government has changed the usual schedule of the legislature, setting morning hours so that MLAs would have more time with their families.⁶⁷

Political observers also report a more profound egalitarianism than seen in previous governments. For example, policies for selecting the "best candidate" used to exclude people who were different from those already at the table. In contrast, the composition of boards and committees in Notley's government is more representative of society as a whole. In the past it was common to have female assistants, but in Notley's government women have been hired to top positions, and female ministers have female aides. There is no pressure for female caucus members to be tougher than male colleagues, a common phenomenon where the proportion of females is low.⁶⁸

Notley provides encouragement and support to her caucus, standing on principle but eschewing harsh discipline. For example, when social media exposed compromising images associated with newly elected NDP MLA Deborah Drever, Notley suspended her from the caucus, vowing to review the decision in a year. Drever sat as an independent, but she was not simply left in the political wilderness. She received extensive support in drafting a private member's bill, introduced in the fall of 2015, to protect victims of domestic violence by allowing them to move out of rental accommodation without penalties. When the bill was introduced, Drever shared some of her

own experience with abuse that had motivated her to change the law. The bill was unanimously supported, Drever's reputation was at least partly redeemed, and she was welcomed back into the NDP caucus in January 2016. Likewise, Notley's response to Irfan Sabir's mismanagement of the tragic death of a child in "kinship care" was nuanced; she demoted him to a less problematic portfolio and appointed Danielle Larivee to the newly created Department of Children's Services. This restructuring appeared to focus on solving the problem rather than on punishment.⁶⁹

Notley's government has been quite active, motivated by the knowledge that a second term is by no means assured. Her legislative initiatives include reforms in employment law,⁷⁰ enhanced protections for students,⁷¹ consumers,⁷² patients and health-care workers.⁷³ Her Climate Leadership plan introduced incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for industry and individuals,⁷⁴ but also contained a controversial carbon tax, spurring sustained and widespread criticism. Most notable, however, have been her focus on rehabilitating Alberta's economy and the related pipeline file.

Alberta's economic recovery has been significant; in 2017 it expanded by 4 per cent and was rated the fastest-growing economy in the country.⁷⁵ Tens of thousands of jobs have been created since 2015, including in the private sector and the energy industry, while oil prices have significantly increased,⁷⁶ and Notley's government has invested in infrastructure and economic diversification. The deficit has become secondary to Albertans' concern for funding social programs like health care and education.⁷⁷ However, economists and Albertans agree that unemployment is still too high.⁷⁸

Central to Notley's plan to rehabilitate the economy is the relentless pursuit of pipelines and getting Alberta's resources to market. In March 2017 the Keystone XL pipeline was approved by the US government, which previously had been the most significant impediment to the project. The Trans Mountain pipeline, however, has been the target of persistent challenges. Although the project has faced protests, regulatory delays, and court challenges by municipalities and Indigenous groups,⁷⁹ the most significant opposition has come from the BC government. In January 2018, Premier John Horgan raised the possibility of restricting bitumen shipments through the expanded pipeline. Notley stated categorically that he lacked the constitutional authority to do so, empaneling a team of high-profile experts to explore the constitutional options available to both the provincial

and federal governments.⁸⁰ She also launched a campaign highlighting the economic and environmental benefits of Alberta's and Ottawa's energy and climate policies, openly pressuring the federal government to decisively support the pipeline.

She announced a ban on BC wine on 6 February, a move that captured the attention of Canadians and their political leaders. The initiative was both tough on the BC government and expressive of Notley's concern for the economic and environmental well-being of British Columbians, Canadians, and Albertans. Having shown she was willing to play hardball, and cautious about alienating BC voters, she suspended the ban on 22 February after Horgan referred the question to the courts—a case Notley is confident he will lose. On 12 March she introduced a motion in the Alberta legislature to support the government's fight on behalf of Albertans to ensure that the pipeline is built.

The political uncertainty surrounding the project led Kinder Morgan to announce on 8 April that it was suspending all non-essential activities and spending related to the Trans Mountain expansion project, specifically citing the uncertainty caused by the actions of the BC government and setting a 31 May deadline to establish the certainty necessary for the project to proceed.

On 16 April, Notley introduced Bill 12 (the Preserving Canada's Economic Prosperity Act) authorizing Alberta's environment minister to limit energy shipments to British Columbia. This move invoked the legacy of Peter Lougheed, who restricted energy exports in response to the federal National Energy Program.⁸¹ When British Columbia announced it would challenge Bill 12 in court, Notley quipped, "It's very interesting; on one hand they don't want our oil, on the other hand they're suing us to give them our oil."⁸² Throughout, she worked with the federal government to respond to concerns, both in the media and behind closed doors. These initiatives appeared to pay off as polls saw increased support for the pipeline, with a majority of Canadians, including British Columbians, favouring the project.⁸³ And just before the 31 May deadline set by Kinder Morgan, Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced that the federal government would purchase the pipeline for \$4.5 billion, with Alberta promising an additional \$2 billion to cover "unforeseen circumstances."⁸⁴

Perhaps primary among Notley's challenges is that despite successes in moving the pipeline and economic files forward, she may face issues with public perception. A Janet Brown poll commissioned by the CBC and conducted from 13 March to 5 April 2018 revealed that Albertans are not happy with the economy or job growth, and, despite the absence of any significant policy proposals, trust Kenney's party over Notley's to manage the economy.⁸⁵ This is perhaps not surprising, since the economy has not yet returned to pre-recession levels, and incumbent governments tend to be blamed for lagging economies. Despite her government's investments in infrastructure and economic diversification, directing carbon tax revenues to green initiatives and alternative energy, Albertans think that Notley has not done enough to diversify the economy. Perhaps most surprisingly, Notley's government lags behind the United Conservative Party on files considered Notley's home turf, including education and health care.⁸⁶

Notley is more popular than her party, while the UCP is more popular than Kenney.⁸⁷ The poll found that Albertans have more confidence in Kenney and his party's ability to get pipelines built, despite Notley's significant progress. This may relate to Kenney's relentless criticism of the federal government and Justin Trudeau, especially when contrasted with Notley's co-operation with the federal government. It may also illustrate the challenges faced by female leaders. Notley has enjoyed considerable success in being perceived as competent, collaborative, and likeable, but her tenacity, however effective, may not be something voters feel entirely comfortable with. When it comes to traditionally "male" preserves, such as economic management and high-stakes political battles, she may still face challenges to being seen as equal. Her consultation with leaders and experts has laid the groundwork for considerable successes, however this, and her willingness to adopt Jason Kenney's suggestion to restrict energy shipments to British Columbia, may make it more difficult for her to win credit for her pipeline initiatives.

Kenney, leading a newly consolidated UCP,⁸⁸ has a long-standing reputation for toughness, as was partly reflected in the CBC poll showing that Albertans trust him over Notley to fight for pipelines and the economy. His attacks on the Alberta government have focused on policy, primarily the carbon tax and the deficit, while he has reserved more personal attacks for Justin Trudeau. This may reflect a recognition on Kenney's part of Trudeau's

diminished popularity in Alberta, and of Rachel Notley's popularity. It may also be that he has learned from Jim Prentice not to be too critical of a female leader, particularly Notley.

The CBC poll predated the federal government's 29 May announcement of an agreement to proceed with construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline; this leaves open the possibility that Notley's pivotal role will be recognized by voters. Indeed, Notley's best chance of electoral success continues to hinge on Albertans' personal experiences of economic recovery, her championing of the social programs cherished by voters, and her ability to persuade them that her collaborative, nuanced approach equips her to better promote and protect Alberta's interests.

Lessons

Redford, Smith, and Notley were each able, at least to some degree, to turn what have historically been liabilities into strengths. They managed to navigate around gendered expectations or use them to their advantage in their rise to leadership, and in two cases, to government.

Alison Redford, a capable policy analyst, speaker, and campaigner, was initially able to employ gender norms to build political support for her leadership and her agenda. Like many Alberta premiers, she succumbed to the twin challenge of dwindling oil revenues and growing deficits. When she failed to meet the high expectations created by both her promises and traditional gender expectations, the backlash from voters and her own party was devastating. Her experience illustrates the importance of effective communication, consultation, and party support.

Danielle Smith built a strong public profile over years of experience in the media and as a political advocate. This enabled her to overcome some of the challenges that gendered assessments and institutions can create. Her experience illustrates the challenges faced by the leaders of divided parties, particularly those who practise the collaborative kind of leadership associated with women. The tension between her position on some issues and gender expectations illustrates the challenges posed by embracing counter-stereotypical issues.

Rachel Notley appears to have learned a great deal from her predecessors, managing to bring a new approach to government and avoiding many of the

landmines faced by female political leaders. She embraces many stereotypically female characteristics while also managing traits more commonly associated with masculinity by putting her own stamp on them. There aren't many models for such novel political success; Notley has learned from the successes and failures of leaders like Lougheed, Klein, Redford, and Smith, but she has ultimately forged a new path. The best political leaders are innovative, seeing new possibilities and seizing opportunities.

However formidable Notley's talents, many challenges remain. Alberta's urban-rural divide is deepening, as Roger Epp shows in chapter 13, and closer consultation and collaboration with rural communities will have to be a crucial feature of any future government's success. If Notley's policy initiatives bear fruit, and Alberta's economy grows stronger and more diverse, she may have an opportunity to fine-tune her innovative approach to leadership and policy. If not, opposition to things like Bill 6 and the carbon tax, along with the economic perceptions of Alberta voters, may leave future innovations to other leaders inspired by her example.

NOTES

- 1 This analysis is informed by research on women in politics and power, and based on an examination of historical developments, media coverage, polling data, and interviews with former cabinet ministers, campaign insiders, and veteran political observers, including journalists, columnists, and politically-connected Albertans.
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- 4 Carol Gilligan, "Moral Orientation and Moral Development," in *Women and Moral Theory*, ed. Eva Feder Kittay and Diana T. Meyers, 19–23 (Totowa NJ: Rowman and

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- 5 This is also reflected in symbols like the ceremonial mace (originally a medieval war club) kept in the custody of the sergeant-at-arms, and the "two swords length" distance between government and opposition benches—each part of our parliamentary heritage. See Linda Trimble and Jane Arscott, *Still Counting: Women in Politics Across Canada* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2003), 113; Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant, *Gendered News*, 112.
 - 6 Lammers et al., "Iron Ladies, Men of Steel"; O'Neil, "Unpacking Gender's Role"; Gilligan, "Moral Orientation and Moral Development"; Goodyear-Grant, *Gendered News*, 142–3.
 - 7 Karen Ross, "Women's Place in 'Male' Space; Gender and Effect in Parliamentary Contexts," in *Women Politics and Change*, ed. Karen Ross, 189–201 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 193–4, 201; Susan Delacourt, "Put Off by Parliament: Even strong women MPs find it impossible to play Ottawa's macho game," *Elm Street* (February/March 2001), 58–60; Gilligan, "Moral Orientation and Moral Development."
 - 8 Delacourt, "Put Off by Parliament," 60. Women who've expressed such discomfort include accomplished and powerful cabinet ministers like Anne McLellan, former deputy prime minister and minister of Justice, public safety and emergency preparedness, and natural resources.
 - 9 Manon Tremblay and Linda Trimble, eds., *Women and Electoral Politics in Canada* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 7; Elizabeth Gidengil, "Economic Man—Social Woman? The Case of the Gender Gap in Support for the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement," *Comparative Political Studies* 28, no. 3 (1995): 384–408; Luciana Carraro, Luigi Castelli, Ioana Breazu, Giulia Campomizzi, Antonella Cerruto, Massimiliano Mariani, and Ivano Toto, "Just Ignore or Counterattack? On the Effects of Different Strategies for Dealing with Political Attacks," *European Journal of Sociology* 42, no. 6 (2012): 789–97; Goodyear-Grant, *Gendered News*, 122–3.
 - 10 They sometimes take the form of backhanded compliments, as illustrated by Barack Obama's comment to Hillary Clinton during the 2008 nomination race that she was "likeable enough." Although he was criticized for his comment, the question of Clinton's likeability persisted.
 - 11 Peter Glick and Susan Fiske, "Hostile and Benevolent Sexism: Measuring Ambivalent Sexist Attitudes Toward Women," *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (1997): 119–35.
 - 12 Susan T. Fiske, "Managing ambivalent prejudices: The smart-but-cold, and the warm-but dumb stereotypes," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 639 (2012): 3–48.
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- 15 Trimble and Arscott, *Still Counting*, 93.
- 16 Goodyear-Grant, *Gendered News*, 61.
- 17 Tremblay and Trimble, *Still Counting*, 32.
- 18 Jacquetta Newman and Linda White, *Women, Politics, and Public Policy: The Political Struggles of Canadian Women* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2012), 98, 242; “Delacourt, Put Off by Parliament,” 54.
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- 20 Sydney Sharpe and Don Braid, *Notley Nation; How Alberta’s Political Upheaval Swept the Country* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2016), 65. Lougheed bridged Alberta’s vexing urban-rural divide “defly . . . changing not only his suit, but his way of speaking,” 150.
- 21 This information was provided in interviews conducted in 2016 with party insiders on condition of anonymity.
- 22 Sharpe and Braid, *Notley Nation*, 73–4.
- 23 Elections Alberta, “Provincial Results,” n.d., <http://officialresults.elections.ab.ca/orresultspage.cfm?EventId=21> (accessed 9 August 2016).
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- 61 Wells, “My Name is Rachel Notley.”
- 62 Sharpe and Braid, *Notley Nation*, 99.
- 63 In Canada this dates back to the women’s suffrage movement. In 1914 Nellie McClung staged a satirical mock parliament asking whether men should be allowed to vote. When Agnes Macphail, Canada’s first female MP, was taunted by a heckler shouting “Don’t you wish you were a man?” she retorted, “Don’t you?” See Terence Allan

- Crowley, *Agnes Macphail and the Politics of Equality* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1990). 98.
- 64 Sharpe and Braid, *Notley Nation*, 31.
- 65 Braid and Sharpe interview.
- 66 Karen Ross, “Women’s Place in ‘Male’ Space: Gender and Effect in Parliamentary Contexts,” in *Women Politics and Change*, ed. Karen Ross (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 198, 200–1.
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- 68 Braid and Sharpe interview.
- 69 Carol Gilligan observed a tendency in women to focus more on solutions than punishment. See Gilligan, “Moral Orientation.” See also Paula Simons, “Shuffled but not Out; Irfan Sabir Demoted, as Danielle Larivee Takes Over New Children’s Services Ministry,” *Edmonton Journal*, 20 January 2017, <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/paula-simons-shuffled-but-not-out-irfan-sabir-demoted-as-danielle-larivee-takes-over-new-childrens-services-ministry> (accessed 15 May 2017).
- 70 The changes to employment law include the extension of workers compensation and occupational health and safety protections to agricultural workers, laws to protect workers against harassment and to provide job-protected leaves for illness, caring for a sick family member, bereavement, domestic violence, or attending a citizenship ceremony. These are enshrined in Bill 30: An Act to Protect the Health and Well-being of Working Albertans, and Bill 17: Fair and Family-Friendly Workplaces Act.) UCP house leader Jason Nixon argued against the need for anti-harassment legislation, saying private industry already has policies in place. Later it was revealed that he “fired a woman in 2005 who complained about sexual harassment on a Kelowna worksite.” See “UCP house leader Jason Nixon fired woman after sexual harassment complaint,” *CBC News*, 12 December 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/jason-nixon-fired-woman-for-sex-harassment-complaint-1.4444897> (accessed 15 May 2017).
- 71 Bill 24: An Act to Support Gay Straight Alliances.
- 72 Consumer protections include restrictions on payday lending.
- 73 Enhanced protection was provided to health-care workers and patients around abortion clinics by expanding the buffer zone The UCP walked out of the legislature rather than voting on Bill 9.
- 74 The Custom Energy Solutions Program to promote industrial efficiency announced by Environment Minister Shannon Phillips in May 2018 included \$88 million in provincial and federal funds. See Clare Clancy, “Premier Rachel Notley unveils pro-Trans Mountain ads, project means money for roads and hospitals,” *Edmonton Journal*, 10 May 2018, <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/ndp-spending-1-2-million-trans-mountain-advocacy-campaign-ahead-of-may-31-deadline> (accessed 14 May 2018). The Notley government also invested in wind energy and green transit.
- 75 Chris Varcoe, “Oil price rebound tops list of biggest business stories of 2017,” *Calgary Herald*, 2 January 2018, <https://www.pressreader.com/canada/calgary-herald/20180102/281513636534843> (accessed 16 May 2018); “Year in Review: Alberta

- Premier Rachel Notley touches on province's economy," *Global News*, 1 January 2018, <https://globalnews.ca/video/3941078/year-in-review-alberta-premier-touches-on-provinces-economy> (accessed 16 May 2018).
- 76 In mid-May 2018 oil prices hit their highest point since 2013—about US\$71/barrel. See Chris Varcoe, "Varcoe; Oil prices rally, but Alberta still waits for liftoff," *Calgary Herald*, 23 May 2018, <https://calgaryherald.com/business/energy/varcoe-oil-prices-rally-but-alberta-still-waits-for-liftoff> (accessed 23 May 2018).
- 77 Concerns about the deficit are not as important as opposition to significant cuts in social programs like health and education; 78 per cent of Albertans opposed such cuts, while only 58 per cent thought the budget should be balanced. See Jenn Gerson "The Alberta NDP is probably toast but here's how they could give themselves a fighting chance," *CBC News*, 1 May 2018, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-ndp-probably-toast-but-fighting-chance-1.4641852 (accessed 21 May 2018).
- 78 In April 2018 Alberta's unemployment rate sat at 6 per cent, the highest outside Atlantic Canada, and there were still 28,000 fewer jobs than in June 2015. See Todd Hirsch, "Taking stock of Alberta's labour market," 14 May 2018, available at www.toddhirsch.com/commentary (accessed 21 May 2018).
- 79 On 24 May 2018, the BC Supreme Court rejected challenges brought by the City of Vancouver and the Squamish Nation. The claims questioned whether there had been proper environmental assessment, and whether the pipeline had had been approved without sufficient Aboriginal consultation, as guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. See Jason Proctor "Court throws out Trans Mountain pipeline challenge from City of Vancouver and Squamish Nation," *CBC News*, 24 May 2018, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/squamish-nation-taking-fight-against-kinder-morgan-to-court-1.467669 (accessed 5 June 2018).
- 80 The Market Access Task Force included Peter Hogg, respected nationally for his expertise on constitutional law, Anne McLellan, former deputy prime minister and minister of natural resources, Frank McKenna, former New Brunswick premier, as well as industry representatives and financial and economic experts. Notley's response to the BC and federal governments earned her widespread support, including from key oil industry players. See Reid Southwick, "Premier Notley praised by Alberta's energy industry for tough stance in pipeline dispute," *CBC News*, 15 February 2018, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-energy-panel-trans-mountain-1.4537745 (accessed 5 June 2018).
- 81 Notley announced that "Premier Peter Lougheed took bold action. We will not hesitate to invoke similar legislation if it becomes necessary owing to extreme and illegal actions on the part of the B.C. government to stop the pipeline." In response to the National Energy Program, then premier Peter Lougheed legislated to cut Alberta's oil exports to Ontario by 15 per cent, forcing the federal government to renegotiate the terms of the NEP. See Clare Clancy, "Legislative assembly debates how to push for Trans Mountain progress," *Calgary Herald*, 13 March 2018, <https://www.pressreader.com/canada/calgary-herald/20180313/281629600790247> (accessed 5 June 2018).

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- 84 Kathleen Harris, “Liberals to buy Trans Mountain pipeline for \$4.5B to ensure expansion is built,” *CBC News*, 29 May 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/liberals-trans-mountain-pipeline-kinder-morgan-1.4681911> (accessed 5 June 2018); James Wood, “Alberta ready to pony up \$2 billion for Trans Mountain, but details are scarce,” *Calgary Herald*, 29 May 2018, <https://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/alberta-ready-to-pony-up-2-billion-to-move-trans-mountain-forward-but-details-are-scarce> (accessed 5 June 2018).
- 85 The CBC Road Ahead survey included focus group analysis. One focus group participant perceived no economic recovery: “‘Unfortunately the economy hasn’t improved,’ he said. ‘If the economy improved, I think it would be different feelings, but it hasn’t.’” See Brian Labby, “The politics of personality in Alberta—how Notley and Kenney help and hurt their parties,” *CBC News*, 1 May 2018, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-politics-kenney-notley-leaders-popularity-1.4641898 (accessed 23 May 2018).
- 86 When asked which party is best able to handle education and health care, the UCP polled 34 per cent (NDP 32 per cent) and 35 per cent (NDP 30 per cent), respectively. See Labby, “The politics of personality.”
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Jason Kenney won the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party, then led a campaign to unite it with Alberta’s other major conservative party (and the Official Opposition), the Wildrose Party, winning the leadership of the newly formed party.

