



Public Opinion and Polling: Understanding Alberta's political culture

Janet Brown

Pollster, Political Commentator and Principal,
Janet Brown Opinion Research

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9:00am – 4:30pm

Summary

Alberta is on the verge of a provincial election. Fixed election date legislation calls for the next election to happen between March 1 and May 31. In this workshop, Janet Brown will discuss Alberta's evolving political culture and the mood of Albertans going into this critical campaign.

Ms. Brown will draw upon her extensive database of polling data to provide an in-depth understanding of the following:

- How the NDP was able to defeat the Progressive Conservatives in 2015, after 44 years in power,
- The current values and attitudes of Albertans, and whether traditional stereotypes still hold,
- Where Albertans get information about provincial politics, and the extent to which social media has changed the game,
- Current attitudes toward the political parties and their leaders, and what this means for the 2019 election.

Ms. Brown will also discuss the performance of polls in past Alberta elections, and lessons for interpreting polls during the upcoming election.

Outline

Morning (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

- Introduction: context and definitions
- Polling methodology and the unique issues of polling in Alberta
- An historical overview of Alberta public opinion

Afternoon (1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

- The public attitudes underlying voting behaviour: leader evaluations, economic evaluations, and policy preferences.
- The values and beliefs behind public opinion: does the stereotype of a “conservative” Alberta hold?
- Sources of provincial political information: social versus mainstream media.





Required Readings*

*Note: the two book chapters are forthcoming in an edited volume to be released January 2019. The authors have provided pre-publication versions for use in this workshop.

Brown, Janet and John Santos. 2019. "Marginally Better: Polling in the 2015 Alberta Election." Forthcoming in *Orange Chinook: The Politics of the New Alberta*, Duane Bratt, Keith Brownsey, Richard Sutherland, and David Taras, eds. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

Draft copy: <http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?14EF353F>

Sayers, Anthony M. and David K. Stewart. Forthcoming in "Out of the Blue: Goodbye Tories, Hello Jason Kenney." In *Orange Chinook: The Politics of the New Alberta*, Duane Bratt, Keith Brownsey, Richard Sutherland, and David Taras, eds. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

Draft copy <http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?14EF37CA>

Thomas, Melanee. "What we mean when we talk about Alberta conservatism." *CBC News*, December 12, 2018.

Accessed January 2, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-populism-melanee-thomas-polling-data-1.4939893>

Anderson, Drew. "Albertans aren't as conservative as you might think, poll suggests." *CBC News*, April 30, 2018.

Accessed January 2, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/albertans-not-conservative-road-ahead-survey-1.4639232>

Workshops on Social Science Research (WSSR)
1455 de Maisonneuve W. – H1 2Z5 30
Montreal, Qc H3G 1M8
Telephone: 514-848-2424 x7854, x5473

