

Masters of Our Own Destiny: The Nationalist Evolution of Newfoundland Premier Danny Williams

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Résumé de l'article

Au Canada, à Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador, le nationalisme est presque aussi important qu'au Québec et le régionalisme y est comparable à celui que connaît l'Alberta. Depuis que Terre-Neuve est devenue une province canadienne en 1949, ses premiers ministres ont employé une variété de tactiques pour exercer des pressions politiques sur le gouvernement fédéral et ses représentants. Récemment, le premier ministre Danny Williams a eu recours à des moyens peu conventionnels pour obtenir de nouveaux flux de rentrée tout en faisant valoir la primauté de l'exécutif dans le milieu politique provincial, tout comme ses prédécesseurs charismatiques. En dépit d'un fort mécontentement chez les étrangers et les dissidents, son parti a adopté un discours de plus en plus nationaliste et adhéré à une forme de politique identitaire. Cet essai retrace la conduite des membres de l'administration Williams au cours de son deuxième mandat et fournit des explications au phénomène nationaliste, populiste et régionaliste observé à Terre-Neuve.

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Danny Williams*

Abstract

Within Canada, the strength of Newfoundland and Labrador's nationalism is perhaps second only to Quebec's, and its regionalism is most comparable to Alberta's. Since Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949, its premiers have alternated styles of exerting political pressure on the federal government and its representatives. Most recently, Premier Danny Williams has used unconventional means to obtain new revenue streams whilst, as with his charismatic predecessors, exerting an executive dominance over provincial politics. As frustrations with outsiders and dissenters have mounted, his party has further embraced nationalist rhetoric and identity politics. This essay records the related actions of the Williams administration into its second term and provides a foundation for explaining nationalism, populism, and regionalism in Newfoundland.

Résumé

Au Canada, à Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador, le nationalisme est presque aussi important qu'au Québec et le régionalisme y est comparable à celui que connaît l'Alberta. Depuis que Terre-Neuve est devenue une province canadienne en 1949, ses premiers ministres ont employé une variété de tactiques pour exercer des pressions politiques sur le gouvernement fédéral et ses représentants. Récemment, le premier ministre Danny Williams a eu recours à des moyens peu conventionnels pour obtenir de nouveaux flux de rentrée tout en faisant valoir la primauté de l'exécutif dans le milieu politique provincial, tout comme ses prédécesseurs charismatiques. En dépit d'un fort mécontentement chez les étrangers et les dissidents, son parti a adopté un discours de plus en plus nationaliste et adhéré à une forme de politique identitaire. Cet essai retrace la conduite des membres de l'administration Williams au cours de son deuxième mandat et fournit des explications au phénomène nationaliste, populiste et régionaliste observé à Terre-Neuve.

Introduction

The expression *maîtres chez nous* is a political flashpoint in Canada. It was used by Quebec Premier Jean Lesage in 1962 to urge support for public ownership of hydroelectric resources and it marked the beginning of Quebec's Quiet Revolution. The "masters of our own house" slogan dates back to at least the early 1900s and reflects a deep psychological desire among Quebecers for an end to economic colonialism (Thomson). So its recent appearance in

Newfoundland and Labrador's throne and budget speeches, along with other nationalist language, indicates that there are national unity issues on Canada's eastern flank.

My Government will affirm Newfoundland and Labrador's status as a distinct people... Our people are proud nationalists who believe it is only by affirming our identity as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that we will realize our goal of economic equality within the federation... our province will achieve self-reliance by becoming masters of our own house. (Newfoundland, 2007 Speech from the Throne)

Premier Danny Williams' explanation itself raises questions:

Mine wouldn't be a quiet revolution—mine would be a noisy revolution, because that's me. The choice of terminology, "masters of our own house"... that fits the situation. We do want to be masters of our own house... If anything, I've been trying to dampen [separatist] fires, as much as I can... [But] we're not going to be slapped repeatedly in the face by federal governments. (CBC, "No thirst")

What is going on in Newfoundland?! Why invoke such nationalist language? Are there similarities with the Quiet Revolution? Is there a separatist movement afoot? Since becoming premier in 2003, Danny Williams' leadership has evolved from common regionalism to a populist style of nationalism as he has engaged in high-profile disputes with business and political executives. His nationalist evolution has been a product of deeply held characteristics of Newfoundland politics: executive dominance, agitation with shared decision-making, frustration with capitalism, and a deflection of blame. Williams has been seeking a greater share of financial resources, expressing a desire to be included in federal decision-making, craving local popularity, and conveying feelings of being culturally distinct. This has earned him phenomenally high approval ratings within this ethnocentric province; by comparison, the *Globe and Mail* has derisively dubbed him "Danny Chávez" in reference to populist Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez.

This essay begins by differentiating the contested concepts of nationalism, populism, and regionalism. It then supplies some relevant background about Newfoundland's major premierships and provides a record of the related activities of the Williams administration into the beginning of its second mandate. This includes a review of throne speeches delivered from 1949 to 2009, of recent election platforms, and of political identity literature. This provides us with a contextual understanding of the Danny Williams' regime and an improved awareness of the role of partisanship and regional ministers in Newfoundland nationalism.

Nationalism, Populism and Regionalism

Nationalism

Nationalism is an expression of a politicized ethnicity and identity that may be associated with a romanticized political community (Joireman; McCrone, *Sociology*). It can be found when politicians and citizens mobilize to overcome perceived economic oppression because they share a sense of belonging and a common political agenda to have their collective individuality recognized. In order to substantiate a course of nationalist action, a controlling leader may encourage conformity to group norms, and interpret political history through selective recall. This is not the same as patriotism, which exhibits a defensive love of one's political community, because nationalism aggressively promotes group interests and a populist ideological myth (Lukacs). Nationalism is also not necessarily linked to state-building (Eller) or to separatism (Hall).

There are different forms of nationalism. Economic nationalism exists when the public perceives that a weak or disadvantaged economy can be salvaged by state intervention and may involve a pursuit for local control of natural resources. Cohen (47) distinguishes between the compromise of "benign" economic nationalism and the conflict of "malign" nationalism; in either scenario the state may fund economic development agencies that contribute to a collective identity and that reinterpret or repudiate negative factors (Bond, McCrone, and Brown). This ethnic nationalism involves revisionist culture and an awareness of difference (Eller). It is driven by the dominant "in-group," whose ethnocentrism is characterized by less favourable attitudes and biases towards the minority "out-group," and by perceptions of the superiority of the in-group's views (Raden). The in-group can mobilize to achieve greater recognition of their cultural distinctiveness, such as more political rights within an existing state, though such a group is itself a construction of nationalism (McCrone, *Sociology*). A related concept, cultural nationalism, defends culture and crystallizes a social identity among people who share regional, religious, racial, and/or linguistic connections (Hall; Joireman). All of these are related to the politics of identity.

In Newfoundland, economic nationalism has existed since the early 19th century when residents pinned blame on outsiders for financial problems, and since the 1960s when efforts to preserve local heritage stimulated cultural nationalism (Bannister; Cadigan, *Newfoundland*). Economic identity-building may reflect a selective recall that accentuates the positive; for example, emphasizing whale watching in Newfoundland's tourism marketing, but largely disregarding a history of whale hunting. This transmits into a political culture of false bravado, for local pride and infallibility sometimes mask an inferiority complex. Instead of recalling responsibility for massive economic problems and political incompetence, or celebrating considerable progress since joining Canada, the province's elites tend to promote economic romanticism,

do little to discourage federal conspiracy theories (a condition of populism; see Taggart, also Bannister), and generally absolve Newfoundland society of responsibility for bad economic decisions (as in Quebec; see Eller). The Newfoundland identity is therefore partly a mythical construct.

Expressions of social and political frustrations can be found in Newfoundland language, literature, symbols, and popular culture such that the province seems to fit Smith's attributes of ethnic communities. That Newfoundlanders are islanders while Labradorians reside in Labrador fits the identifying name criterion. A myth of common ancestry is sustained by stories of economic and political struggles. Shared historical memories and traditions reflect a life near the ocean and others profiting from the province's natural resources. Elements of a common culture and links with a historic geographic homeland are found in dictionaries of Newfoundland English, songs romanticizing life at home (including the singing of the *Ode to Newfoundland* anthem), and popular independent flags. A measure of solidarity exists in a common desire for increased political autonomy in order to achieve economic progress. Businesses and entertainers respond to local market demand for a rebellious identity by selling commercial kitsch and folk music, which Chafe (345, 347) calls "Newf-chic."

The shared identity of being "a Newfoundlander" creates a psychological and emotional connection that is sustained during nationalist moments. Native-born Newfoundlanders are part of an in-group and demographics are on their side: 99 percent of Newfoundland residents are not visible minorities; 98 percent are non-immigrants; 96 percent are third-generation or more (generally English and Irish descendents); and 95 percent only speak English (Statistics Canada). This homogeneity masks two identity classes that are mobilized during populist outbursts: "baymen" who form the basis of cultural nationalism by embracing a traditional rural way of life that is suspicious of change, and "townies" who are more modern, suburban, and whose interests are more likely to be reflected in economic nationalism (Hiller). Unlike in Quebec, where cultural defence dominates (Prager), Newfoundland's cultural nationalism is intertwined with meeting economic objectives and is used by the province's elites to activate political frustrations. Folk culture is invoked in acts of "vernacular mobilization" (Smith 30), out-groups are commonly dismissed as "mainlanders," and a politician may exacerbate xenophobic divides by speaking "bay talk" (Hiller 266–67; also Taggart). However, cultural or ethnic nationalism can be divisive, because by calling out patriots Newfoundland society may itself become fragmented into internal in-groups (nationalists, native-born) and out-groups (federalists, "come from aways"). Overton ("Progressive" 94) has even raised the spectre of "cultural racism" as a by-product of Newfoundland nationalism.²

Populism

Populism, on the other hand, refers to a grassroots struggle to wrest more power and resources from controlling elites. It attracts followers who place an exceptional degree of trust in a charismatic leader's abilities (Presthus). The leader bypasses institutionalized political parties by connecting with "a people," which is consistent with an anti-elitist image, and which increases the legitimacy to rule. Unusual acts, such as direct democracy, are therefore justified and risks are mitigated by the faith that is placed in the leader's character (Canovan; Taggart). Populism can erupt during what Billig (191–92) calls "hot nationalism" – brief passionate outbreaks of social disruption, emotional social movements, or an extraordinary presence of patriotic symbols such as flag waving. A charismatic leader may thrive on such nationalist sentiments, on the popular will and on political movements. Nationalists' goals, to borrow from Canovan, can be achieved when a populist appeals to a united people, talks in ethnic terms of "us" and "them," and promotes the interests of ordinary citizens against an elitist power structure. However, a populist's image of being a liberal democrat suffers if executive control duplicates the elitist behaviour of the old order, such as through secretive acts or patronage.

In Newfoundland, as in Canada, first ministers tend to dominate their governments (Bakvis and Wolinetz) and their power is surely heightened when they perform well in public opinion polls, as populists tend to do. Overton ("Progressive" 87) appropriately refers to the sporadic emergence of a "selfless superhero" whom Newfoundlanders judge to be a saviour from "evil forces." A lack of dissent towards this leader unifies society by soothing differences between urban, suburban, and rural values as a national consciousness prevails. Extended one-party rule also reinforces executive control; Jackson, for one, has advocated that interest groups and political parties set aside their concerns because political unanimity is needed for the province to achieve control over its natural resources. Most of the time, then, outsiders are the primary threat to the Newfoundland government's hegemony, and are good fodder in an election year.³ This helps explain why, for instance, its premiers have invariably undertaken cross-country speaking tours to attract attention on issues such as Churchill Falls, equalization, the fishery, or the seal hunt.

Regionalism

Such territorial-based nationalism urged by a populist is a form of regionalism. Regionalism involves a struggle for increased political autonomy for those on the periphery. It is motivated primarily by economics and supported by a shared political/cultural/geographic identity (Joireman). Sub-state political parties become pressure groups, seeking to achieve a goal that stops short of independence, because civic identities prevail over ethnic ones. Overton ("Towards") echoes others by calling the presence of regionalism within

a capitalist state, “neo-nationalism” (also Cadigan, “Regional”; Cadigan, *Newfoundland*; McCrone, *Sociology*).

Regionalism is the one psychological and emotional connection that stands out as a class division in modern Canadian politics. Newfoundland’s economic problems may be a function of capitalism but regional politics encourages citizens to place responsibility on Ottawa, i.e., the political structure (Cadigan, “Regional”). Newfoundlanders’ worldview requires a national spokesperson, someone who is an aggressive lobbyist in a pluralistic system, but who may be so ethnocentric that compromise is seen as capitulation. The premier’s role as saviour is heightened by the province’s tiny presence in Parliament, the non-existence of an Atlantic protest party, and by a perception in the Ottawa bureaucracy that Newfoundland is no different than Maritime provinces (Conrad). The strength of regionalism is related to the prime minister’s style of federalism and to the level of competition between provinces.

Nationalism, Populism, and Regionalism before Premier Williams

Decolonization has contributed to an increase in nationalism worldwide (Hall) and an appreciation of Newfoundland’s political past is essential to understand its nationalism within Canada. Newfoundland was once a British colony that resisted overtures to join Canada. It became a dominion in 1907 but, faced with a dreadful financial situation and political corruption, relinquished self-governing status in 1934 and was run for the next 15 years by a Commission of Government appointed by Britain. A divisive referendum in 1948 was won with 52 percent of the vote and, when Newfoundland joined Canada the next year, the confederates aligned in the Liberal party. The newest province was assigned seven seats in the House of Commons, six in the Senate, and its constitutional ability to generate independent revenue would reside foremost with natural resource development.

The most consequential and longest serving premier, Liberal Joey Smallwood (1949–72), used religion and state-funded propaganda to achieve authoritarian control as he tried to industrialize the hinterland’s traditional subsistence economy. Union with Canada meant access to federal social welfare programs and Smallwood presided over the development of communication, education, health care, rural electrification, roads, and other infrastructure. His throne speeches gushed that Newfoundlanders had been blessed by Confederation (1956, 7; 1960, 1), took “great satisfaction” at the federal government’s involvement with fisheries management (1951, 3), and expressed “faith in their destiny” (1966, 1). The social modernization was so significant that there was inevitable talk of revolution (Overton, “Sparking”). Even so, productive federal–provincial relations were interrupted by a dispute over *Terms of Union* transition grants, which featured the premier ordering

three days of official mourning in 1959. This succeeded in deflecting local anger about a loggers' strike (Cadigan, *Newfoundland*).

The province's "develop or perish" philosophy led to deals and concessions that appeared to benefit outsiders, particularly some American industrialists. Enterprises were set up without proper feasibility studies and many became insolvent without government aid. Smallwood's legacy of lopsided agreements included millions of dollars in provincial investments, subsidies, loan guarantees, consultant fees and royalties, as well as the signing away of some natural resources rights. His most infamous project was the 1969 Upper Churchill Falls (Labrador) hydroelectric power agreement, which stipulates that power must be sold at cheap prices to Hydro-Quebec until at least 2041. The electricity is resold to American markets and so Quebec has received billions of dollars in economic rents. This "giveaway" has come to represent the inequities of federalism for Newfoundland.

Smallwood's successor, PC Premier Frank Moores (1972–79), inherited budget deficits, considerable public debt, and a dependency on federal transfer payments (see Table 1). The government emphasized rural development by funding small business start-ups, which moved many people off provincial welfare and onto federal unemployment insurance. This made financial sense for the province, but to this day creates demands for publicly funded make-work projects, while instilling a culture of dependency and seasonal work. The change in government also coincided with a cultural renaissance in art, literature, music, and theatre as well as the promotion of offshore oil exploration. Federal–provincial disputes emerged over who should be the principal beneficiary of various natural resources, including the fishery, which Moores' throne speeches viewed to be a "birthright" of Newfoundlanders (1972, 6). His administration expressed a desire to control Newfoundland's "destiny" (1972, 14; 1975, 5) and issued a "call to self-reliance" (1977, 2). Though the 1978 budget speech referred to a "happy union" with Canada and mentioned a "very cooperative" federal minister, it warned that Newfoundland would "not give away our resources" as the province marched towards becoming "masters in our own house," and it concluded with "Vive Terre Neuve Libre!" (Newfoundland, *Budget 1978*). Nevertheless, at the end of Moores' tenure the perception of the province remained one of isolation, poverty, and dependence (Newfoundland, *Managing*).

Moores had a team of ministers comparable to Lesage's *équipe de tonnerre*, including his successor, Brian Peckford, who had developed a nationalist view that Newfoundland should control its natural resources. As premier (1979–89), Peckford faced an unemployment rate of nearly 15 percent and a sizeable public debt (Table 1). His reputation for abrasiveness, impatience, and stubbornness would earn him the moniker "Confederation's bad boy." Peckford's combative behaviour included lobbying Prime Minister Pierre

Trudeau for increased revenues from provincial resources and declaring an official day of mourning in 1982 over the question of offshore oil ownership. His legacy includes the 1985 Atlantic Accord, which gave Newfoundland an increased share of offshore oil revenues, although the insolvency of a hydroponic cucumber project became an emblematic example of failed attempts at economic diversity. Economic nationalism is certainly evident in the era's throne speeches, which lamented losing control of Newfoundland's social and economic "destiny" (1979, 1, 2, 9; 1980, 2; 1986, 3), expressed that Newfoundland was a "distinct society" (1979, 1; 1980, 11, 13), and advocated the need to be self-reliant (1979, 9; 1980, 13). Many scholars inevitably invoke Quebec Quiet Revolution language when evaluating the Peckford era (House, "Don Quixote"; Jackson; Pratt). Not coincidentally, Danny Williams is considered Peckford's "ideological heir" (Cadigan, *Newfoundland* 293).

A change in tone occurred with the election of Liberal Premier Clyde Wells (1989–96), whose throne speeches expressed a commitment to a "strong, united Canada" (1992, 14), and referred to Newfoundland becoming a "participating" province (1989, 1; 1990, 10) because dependency on transfer payments were "destroying us as a people" (1992, 6). Wells urged Ottawa to take action against foreign overfishing and was opposed to special constitutional status for Quebec. His administration was similarly saddled with unemployment, transfer payment, and deficit financing challenges (Table 1). Fiscal restraint led to a significant confrontation with organized labour and Wells' plans to privatize Newfoundland Hydro were withdrawn due to public opposition. When the inshore cod fishery was closed in the early 1990s, the federal government funded training programs, and the province emphasized education and entrepreneurship.

His Liberal successor, Premier Brian Tobin (1996–2000), was left with continued deficit financing, a declining population and unemployment of nearly 20 percent (Table 1). The theme of maximizing benefits from natural resources (1996, 2; 1997, 4, 17; 1999, 2; 2000, 4) and self-reliance (1998, 6; 1999, 25) continued in Tobin's throne speeches, which also lauded what a great country Canada was (1996, 16; 1998, 21; 1999, 1), and which emphasized Newfoundland's cultural heritage (1996, 8; 1997, 7; 1999, 23). A referendum, which had failed under Wells, succeeded in ending denominational education in 1997. Tobin helped develop the tourism industry by celebrating historic events, and during his tenure, the Hibernia oilfield began production. One of his many media stunts was to pledge that not one "spoonful" of ore from the Voisey's Bay nickel mine in Labrador would be processed outside of the province; this was a populist principle, but it prevented a deal being reached. Tobin was eventually replaced with Roger Grimes, whose own stands were likewise naked attempts to curry the electorate's favour, including vowing to press Ottawa for an equalization formula that allowed Newfoundland to keep its natural resource revenues (Throne Speeches 2001, 2002).

Enter Danny Williams. Raised by a family that supported the Tories during Smallwood's Liberal hegemony, he became the uncontested leader of the Progressive Conservatives in 2001, and immediately pledged to "stop the giveaways." He brought a reputation of success, chiefly as a high-profile personal injury lawyer and as a cable TV magnate who had sold his share for over \$200 million. As leader of the opposition, he was critical of Premier Grimes' Voisey's Bay agreement and of a proposal to develop the Lower Churchill Falls. In 2002, the opposition Tories coordinated a 900-person protest in St. John's against that plan with protesters waving "No More Giveaways" signs (Canadian Press).

By 2003 government-funded industrialization, entrepreneurship, training, and education had not prevented the rationalization of an economic structure that had been based on a now depleted resource. The inshore cod fishery was dormant and although a more lucrative shellfish industry was blooming, it too involved seasonal work. There was some promise in offshore oil: Hibernia was operating, Terra Nova had begun in 2002, and production from White Rose would come in 2005. Nevertheless, Newfoundland's population was at its lowest in decades and unemployment was at 16.5 percent. In the 2003–04 fiscal year, equalization would account for 22 percent of government revenues, a similar proportion of 14 percent of revenues would be borrowed to add to a public debt that had ballooned to over \$11 billion (Table 1), and debt interest payments would absorb a quarter of government spending. Political pressures to "save" rural Newfoundland had led to expensive government policies that had only delayed an economic trend towards urbanization, outmigration, and efficiency.

Confederation with Canada therefore remained controversial. Residents' standard of living and quality of life had improved, but imperialism had been replaced by federalism, government overspending persisted, and society's dependency on the state had become institutionalized. Compared to the rest of Canada, unemployment rates were still high, income levels remained low, and infrastructure needs continued to be significant. In 2003 the Grimes-initiated *Royal Commission on Renewing and Strengthening our Place in Canada*, as Quebec's *Royal Commission of Inquiry on Constitutional Problems* had done in 1956, concluded that the political structure needed changing. The report declared that Newfoundlanders' support for separation from Canada was low (12 percent) and that there was strong agreement (74 percent) that Confederation had been positive. Yet, 84 percent felt that Newfoundland was ignored by the federal government, 71 percent believed that the province received less than what it deserved of federal monies, and only four percent felt the province was not dependent on Ottawa. Nearly three-quarters agreed that Newfoundland should pursue a fairer deal in the Upper Churchill project and nearly two-thirds said that natural resources were the most significant contribution the province had made to Canada. Tones of ethnic nationalism

were also evident, given that 72 percent considered themselves to be foremost a Newfoundlander or Labradorian, and that 88 percent felt that other Canadians held negative stereotypes about them (Ryan Research).

Nationalism, Populism, and Regionalism under Premier Williams

Danny Williams' anti-giveaways message therefore captured the mood of an electorate that felt cheated in natural resource deals. The PC party's 2003 election platform conveyed that his business success and superior negotiating skills would translate into job creation, natural resource development, and ultimately getting Newfoundland's fiscal house in order and achieving self-reliance (*Real* 57, 64). The PCs would go on to win 34 of 48 seats in October 2003 with nearly 59 percent of the vote.

The PC government's first acts conveyed the crisis needed to spur populism and a defence of the homeland (Taggart). Austerity was the rule: Premier Williams donated his salary to charity, reduced the number of ministries, and commissioned an audit of the government's finances. In an ominous televised address in January 2004, he urged spending cuts, and declared that difficult choices would lead to Newfoundland "finally becoming masters of our own destiny" (Newfoundland, "Premier Danny"). He linked an economic turnaround with securing revenue from natural resources and pledged co-operation with Ottawa to accomplish this. A full program review was launched; health and school boards would be amalgamated; the public service would be reduced through attrition and retirements; hiring and wage freezes would be implemented; and fee increases were introduced. Reducing the deficit and paying down government debt, including underfunded pension liabilities, was a priority. Government reforms were underway.

But this philosophy incensed organized labour and led directly to the only two mass protests the Williams administration has faced. The first, a civil service strike in April 2004, ended with public servants being legislated back to work without a pay raise. Daily media coverage and quarterly opinion polls suggested public discontent; unions distributed "One Term, Danny" bumper stickers. The second, in spring 2005, was a response by the fish harvesters' union to a market rationalization policy. Fishing boat flotillas blocked harbours and protesters shut down the legislature until Williams relented. To this point, comparisons could be drawn with Wells, or perhaps Ontario Premier Mike Harris. However, the civil discontent left Williams with a diminished appetite for confrontation with his people. A populist thirst had begun to take over.

Danny Williams' self-proclaimed "new approach" has included acts of entrepreneurship and the promise of transparency that is a trait of populism (Canovan). He created a department of business that coordinated red-tape reduction reforms. A new *Accountability and Transparency Act (2006)*

requires that public bodies table performance plans and annual performance reports. A number of executive appointments were opened to public competition. The *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act (2007)*, introduced after a major all-party scandal that Williams rose above, placed strict controls on politicians' compensation and spending. Election dates were fixed for every four years; whistleblower protection legislation was pledged; and a major public inquiry was held to investigate faulty breast cancer tests. More than a dozen of the Williams government's "strategy" plans have had an economic focus, including innovation and marine technology, but also a socio-economic emphasis, such as poverty reduction and youth retention. Collectively this has contributed to the premier's image as an economic leader who is willing to bypass elite power structures.

The premier's entrepreneurial spirit has been most evident with energy projects. A Crown corporation was created in 2007, later named Nalcor, to manage the province's energy interests. He repeated the "masters of our own destiny" phrase when he tapped Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro to plan the development of a multi-billion dollar Lower Churchill hydro-electric project (Newfoundland, "Newfoundland and Labrador will lead"). A land claims agreement was reached with the Labrador Innu and, in 2009, an environmental impact statement was filed. However, the estimated \$10 billion development cost, as well as the likely need for transmission co-operation with Quebec and Parks Canada, indicates that the megaproject would require federal-provincial collaboration.

Williams' tone has been increasingly collectivist when it is directed at big business. In 2005, he demanded an equity share in the planned \$5 billion Hebron-Ben Nevis offshore oil project, during which his attitude towards "big oil" was audacious: "Go somewhere else. We'll still have our oil," was a typical remark (Köhler). He raised the spectre of federal fallow-field legislation that would relinquish the leases of undeveloped oil fields. With an October election looming, in August 2007 the multinational consortium—led by ExxonMobil—agreed to a \$110 million sale of a 4.9 percent equity stake and improved benefits, which were projected to generate \$16 billion in provincial revenues over the next 25 years. Furthermore, unlike in Smallwood's Upper Churchill deal, the government will benefit from escalating energy prices because a super royalty clause will pay an extra 6.5 percent of net revenues when the price of a barrel of oil exceeds \$50 USD. In the past, a premier's emphasis would have been that construction of the oil platform would employ over 3,000 people; however, Williams emphasized that provincial revenues had been secured for a generation. Newfoundland, he said, would henceforth claim ownership of its resources on the road to "becoming masters of our own house" (Newfoundland, "Equity, improved royalty").

The use of this nationalist phrase and its association with natural resource ownership would be a continued theme. It emerged a month later when Husky Oil and Petro-Canada similarly agreed to sell a 5 percent equity stake in an expansion of the White Rose oilfield (Newfoundland, “Premier Danny”) and again when a provincial energy plan stated that henceforth Newfoundland would demand a 10 percent equity stake in oil projects. The ensuing PC election platform repeated populist and nationalist messages about becoming “masters of our own house” (*Proud* 3) and about how the “days of resource giveaways are gone” (*Proud* 10). When the PCs were re-elected with nearly 70 percent of the vote in October 2007, winning 44 of 48 seats, the election was essentially a referendum on which leader would best represent the province’s interests in natural resource deals (Marland).

Nationalism was on display again in December 2008 when, with the global economy shrinking, AbitibiBowater announced the closure of its paper mill in Grand Falls-Windsor. Members of the House of Assembly (MHAs) unanimously passed legislation expropriating the multinational forestry company’s water, hydroelectricity, and timber rights. These, as well as associated hydro assets, are to be managed by Nalcor for an undetermined compensation sum. Buoyed by local acclaim, the next month Williams announced an amended Voisey’s Bay nickel processing deal; in February 2009 an \$800 million package in infrastructure “stimulus” spending for 2009–10; in May a pledge to finance severance pay for displaced AbitibiBowater workers; and then, in June 2009, that Nalcor would spend \$30 million to purchase a 10 percent equity stake in the Hibernia South oilfield, which would reportedly generate \$10 billion in provincial government revenues. Once again, an economic crisis had spurred decisive action. By now, however, the premier’s policies had shifted away from austerity.

Premier Williams had enhanced his businessman reputation for delivering the economic goods. As of the 2008–09 fiscal year, Newfoundland’s unemployment rate had declined to 13.2 percent, government revenues had more than doubled from 2003–04, and the province’s debt was considerably lower (Table 1). Important psychological benchmarks had been reached: deficits became surpluses, the government’s credit rating had improved, and organized labour began receiving generous wage increases. Moreover, Newfoundland did not qualify for equalization payments and, for the first time, shed its unwanted “have not” status. Employment improved, housing activity was up, and skilled labour shortages emerged. Though much of this was economic circumstance—for example existing oil projects’ revenues soared when oil prices more than quintupled from \$26/barrel in 2003 to \$137/barrel in mid-2008—it was consistent with Williams’ superhero status.

Population figures also improved. Concerns about outmigration had intensified in 2006 when there were more deaths than live births in the province. In

response to this sensitive identity issue, and seemingly inspired by Quebec's allowance for newborn children, the PCs announced a "family growth" policy to pay parents \$1,000 for each child born or adopted to help ensure that Newfoundlanders would not, in Williams' words, become "a dying race" (CBC, "Tories offer"). The number of residents grew by 1,436 between July 2007 and 2008, marking the first increase in 16 years, and the first net in-migration in 25 years. The number of births, which had been declining since the early 1990s, also increased in 2008.

Economic nationalism has enveloped the Williams government but cultural nationalism has been slower to develop. In 1999, the PCs' election platform (*Policy*) said nothing about culture and its 2003 platform (*Proud*) made only token commitments about supporting cultural industries. As the government, the party drew the ire of the arts community in early 2004 when it delayed the opening of a cultural gallery to save money; faced with this criticism, the PCs henceforth expressed support for the arts and culture sector. They have integrated more Newfoundland content into the public school curriculum, arguing that education, as with poverty reduction, would help residents become personally self-reliant (Newfoundland 2006 *Speech from the Throne*). They continued the Liberals' post-secondary tuition freeze policy and, later, would provide interest-free student loans. By the time the party sought re-election its platform was crooning about how the province's "distinctive culture" was its most valuable natural resource and that the cultural sector would generate economic opportunity while fostering "a strong sense of identity, pride and self-confidence" (2007 *Speech from the Throne*, 26). It pledged to build on a cultural strategy by initiating an intangible cultural heritage plan for languages, music, traditional skills, and customs. Plans for the Labrador region and for Aboriginal cultural heritage were also coordinated. Williams defended the seal hunt, and thus the Newfoundland identity to the world, against *The Beatles'* Paul McCartney in a debate on CNN, even though the hunt was otherwise not a policy priority given that no meaningful statements about it appeared in the PCs' 1999, 2003, or 2007 election platforms. Culture had therefore become a means of differentiation within the Canadian federation and a tool for claiming special status.

Table 1. Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
 Economic Indicators for Elected Premiers' First Term in Office
 (Millions of dollars, rounded)

Fiscal Year & Premier	Population	Unemployment	Equalization Received	Total Revenues	Total Expenditures	Surplus (Deficit)	Debt	Credit Rating
1949–50 Smallwood	345,000	12.4%	\$4.9 (tax rental)	\$37.8	\$29.7	\$8.1	\$9.7	Suspended since 1933 (became Ba in 1953)
1972–73 Moores	539,124	9.3%	\$114.4	\$435.7	\$586.2	(\$150.5)	\$1,178.5	Baa
1979–80 Peckford	570,075	14.8%	\$340.8	\$1,311.5	\$1,433.4	(\$121.9)	\$2,985.1	Baa1
1989–90 Wells	576,551	15.5%	\$958.7	\$2,931.3	\$3,106.2	(\$174.9)	\$5,129.1	Baa1
1996–97 Tobin	559,698	19.1%	\$989.3	\$3,804.2	\$3,911.4	(\$107.2)	\$7,254.0	Baa1
2003–04 Williams	518,520	16.5%	\$939.0 (incl. Atlantic Accord)	\$4,219.3	\$5,132.9	(\$913.6)	\$11,486.7	A3
2008–09 Williams*	506,193	13.2%	\$1,709.5 (Atlantic Accord only)	\$8,632.0	\$6,281.6	2,350.4	\$7,968.5	Aa2

Sources: 1996–97 to 2008–09 financial data derived from Public Accounts Volume 1 Consolidated Financial Statements, Department of Finance; 1989–90 and prior financial data derived from Public Accounts Volume 3, Department of Finance; Statistics Canada; Newfoundland Statistics Agency; Moody's Investor Services. Sources may not be strictly comparable.

*2008–09 data provided for comparative purposes.

Note: Due to changes in accounting practices, financial data for Smallwood to Wells are on a cash balance basis, whereas financial data for Tobin to Williams are on a consolidated (accrual) basis that includes incurred future payment obligations such as pension liabilities.

Danny Williams' nationalist, populist, and regionalist tendencies have been most obvious, however, in federal–provincial relations. In his first provincial election campaign, the PC platform (Real 15) preached the need for a new relationship with the federal government to control “our own destiny” and claimed a desire to work with Canada's governing party (Real 63). It also included a pledge to press Ottawa for non-renewable resource revenues to be removed from the equalization formula. The political temperature would soon begin to rise and, once the federal PC party merged with the Canadian Alliance to form a new Conservative party dominated by westerners and

conservative thinkers in 2004, Newfoundland's red Tories felt increasingly marginalized in federal politics.

Initially, the premier's quest for an increased share of offshore oil revenues—without 70 percent of these monies being offset by reduced federal equalization payments—set off a series of angry tactics against Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin. During the June 2004 federal election campaign, Williams secured a pledge from the Conservatives to adjust the Atlantic Accord to exclude offshore oil royalties, and he leveraged this to pressure the Liberal minority government to do the same. In July 2004, Williams created an "Office of Federal-Provincial Relations in Ottawa" whereby an "ambassador" would attempt to focus federal officials' attention on Newfoundland's priorities. Later that year, he walked out of a first ministers' meeting, and soon afterwards, in his first prolific populist act, ordered the removal of the Canadian flag from provincial government buildings. Newfoundland's federal cabinet minister, John Efford—himself a venerable populist—defended Ottawa's position and was promptly branded a turncoat. The premier declared that he (Williams) would henceforth be the province's *de facto* federal representative. Efford eventually fled to Florida for medical reasons and would not seek re-election.

The "flag flap" tactic worked. In February 2005, Martin authorized a revision of the Atlantic Accord and advanced a \$2 billion payment to Newfoundland and an important psychological boost. Williams arrived at the St. John's airport—deal in hand—and was greeted by hundreds of supporters. He had seemingly singlehandedly undone Newfoundland's legacy of bad economic deals and perceptions that others benefited from its resources. Public satisfaction with his administration soared from 45 percent in August 2004 to 86 percent in February 2005 (CRA 2004, 2005). Conversely, the federal Liberals were repaid by losing Efford's seat in the ensuing election.

Premier Williams' noise intensified once Conservative Stephen Harper became prime minister. During the January 2006 federal election, some PC MHAs campaigned for the Conservatives, and Williams himself endorsed a St. John's Conservative candidate. The premier subsequently pressed Harper to uphold a written pledge to exclude oil revenues from equalization, which would net the province roughly \$1 billion annually. Relations with the Conservative minority government, as they had with the Liberal government, began to break down and a tit-for-tat political game would ensue.

The premier stressed that the province's three Conservative Members of Parliament would be traitors if even a fiscal capacity cap were implemented. In October 2006, Williams publicly told his Progressive Conservatives that if his demands were not met, Harper's Conservative party would deserve "a big goose egg" in Newfoundland, meaning not winning any seats in the next federal election. Williams henceforth dismissively referred to the

PM as “Steve” and initiated a vitriolic “anything but Conservative” (ABC) pre-election campaign. The provincial government spent \$250,000 on advertisements in Canadian newspapers to denounce Harper as untrustworthy; the federal government responded by purchasing newspaper and radio ads in Newfoundland (CBC, “Williams can’t wait”). There was an unexpected pause during the 2007 provincial election, but Williams’ anti-Harper messages re-emerged on election night; the next day Harper announced a more favourable equalization formula for Nova Scotia. Williams’ ensuing throne speech—which repeated anti-giveaway, self-reliance, and “masters of our own destiny” themes—complained about a lack of influence in the federal cabinet where Newfoundland was treated with “contempt and condescension” (2008, 2). It soon became clear that the province’s federal cabinet representative, Loyola Hearn, another veteran politician, would not seek re-election either.

When Harper called a federal election for October 2008, the Newfoundland PC party registered its anti-Conservative advocacy with Elections Canada. It prepared a website, purchased newspaper advertising in Newfoundland, and placed a billboard ad on Toronto’s Gardiner expressway advising Ontarians not to vote Conservative. Though the federal Conservatives were re-elected with seat gains nationally, albeit still with a minority, in Newfoundland they had difficulty recruiting candidates, their share of the vote plunged from 42.7 percent in 2006 to 16.5 percent, and they did not win any seats. By fulfilling Williams’ “goose egg” wish, electors denied themselves executive representation in the Canadian government; that thankless duty was assigned to the regional minister for Nova Scotia, and former federal PC leader, Peter MacKay.

Premier Williams declared that his feud with the prime minister was over, but the uneasy peace was shattered when the 2009 federal budget adjusted equalization to reduce accumulated annual transfers to Newfoundland by over \$1 billion by 2011. Williams resumed his anti-Harper message and one-by-one the four Liberal MPs from Newfoundland who did not have critic positions—lacking in party incentives and recognizing that their future electoral prospects were at risk—announced they would vote against the minority government’s budget. Opposition leader Michael Ignatieff eventually allowed all six Newfoundland Liberal MPs to symbolically vote together whereas others were whipped to prop the budget up. Newfoundland’s 2009 throne speech would lob more nationalist bravado by accusing the Harper administration of betraying and oppressing the province. The premier would also threaten not to support any potential Canada–EU free trade deal.

Aside from nationalism, populism, and regionalism, these events illustrate that party discipline is an inherent feature of parliamentary politics (Malloy; Kam) and that, while its practice in provincial politics tends to be tolerated, its presence among federal MPs who vote “against” Newfoundland causes

public outrage. Williams' populism has been used to mobilize public opinion against a waffling or recalcitrant MP, while himself demanding such unwavering loyalty from PC MHAs that critics have called him a "one man show" and "Danny the dictator." In part because it was spared a divisive leadership contest, the PC caucus has been fairly cohesive and has internalized norms of unity, and to date no party switching has occurred. Nevertheless, within the caucus, those members identifying with the federal Conservative party have been the least enthusiastic about Williams' tactics and, for various reasons, many of his highest-profile ministers have exited. The rest have conceded to his alpha-male leadership style due to shared policy preferences, the hope of being promoted, and/or in recognition that Williams' broadly distributed popularity will greatly enhance their re-election prospects.

The ABC campaign was a particularly bold display of populist authority and party discipline. For instance, one of Williams' ministers appeared on the evening news saying that he would vote how he liked in the federal election; the next morning the minister "clarified" that he would not be voting Conservative. The premier's office proceeded to reinforce cohesion by securing written pledges of anti-Conservative loyalty from all but one of the PC MHAs.⁴ Many of them campaigned for, and with, federal Liberal and NDP candidates during the 2008 contest. This political muscle has extended outside the caucus. A preoccupation with image control has led to an aggressive and coordinated public counterattack against critics, including muckraking journalists and even Deputy Premier Tom Rideout following a private dispute with Williams. Ministerial authority over senior bureaucrats is usurped by the premier's office; Memorial University presidential candidates and members of its Board of Regents have been supplanted. These actions indirectly exert public pressure on elites to conform whilst their peers directly exert social pressure. Such control—whereby institutions are viewed as malignant, rules are replaced by the leader's will, and feelings of paranoia result—are traits of charismatic leadership (Taggart) but raise questions about Williams' commitment to a liberal democracy.

This executive dominance and fear of sanctions has been sustained by the PCs' popularity, by the collapse of the Liberal opposition, and by the fringe status of the NDP. Public opinion data collected every three months by Corporate Research Associates (CRA) show that Williams has enjoyed broad public support, except at the start of his first term when his administration faced civil unrest. We can identify the political disincentive of tackling internal problems that result in organized activism if we isolate polling data during the periods of fiscal restraint (nine-months in 2004) and fishery reorganization (three-months in 2005). This suggests, *ceteris paribus*, a popularity bump of approximately 30 percentage points when political reforms are demanded of outsiders instead of Newfoundlanders (Table 2). The data also indicate that Williams' status has benefited from his ideological feud with Harper. The

first time the premier's numbers exceeded his party's coincided with Harper becoming prime minister (CRA, February 2006)⁵ and in the dozen subsequent quarterly polls the percentage preferring Williams as premier hovered at, or exceeded, the percentage preferring the PC party (CRA, May 2006 to 2009). Economic nationalism, therefore, seems to have shifted internal competition between communities and interest groups for finite provincial funds towards a spirit of collectivism, whereby all classes support the premier's efforts for infinite increased revenues. When the premier is not combative with outsiders, then his constituents are more likely to be combative with him, and so there is an electoral benefit of battling out-groups particularly if a party machine can be rallied.

Table 2. The Political Benefits of Out-Groups Being an Opponent Instead of In-Groups

Q1: "How satisfied are you with the overall performance of the provincial government led by Premier Danny Williams?"

Q2: "If an election were held today in Newfoundland and Labrador, for which party would you vote?"

Q3: "Which one of the following individuals would you most prefer as premier of Newfoundland and Labrador?"

	% satisfied with government (Q1)	% preferring PC party (Q2)	% preferring Williams (Q3)
2004–2008 (mean)	77.4	67.4	67.3
In-groups targeted*	52.5	48.8	43.5
Out-groups targeted	83.6	72.0	73.2

Source: Calculated from Corporate Research Associates data. See also Marland.

Note: Decided vote only from 20 opinion polls. Minimum 400 cases per survey.

*Feb 2004, May 2004, Aug 2004, May 2005 polls
(excluded from "Out-groups targeted")

Discussion

"There's a revolution that's going on in Newfoundland," said Danny Williams in 2008, "that happened in Ireland years ago" (CBC, "Williams pledges"). Is some sort of political revolution really going on in Newfoundland and Labrador? Is this comparable to sub-state nationalism in Quebec or perhaps in other remnants of the British Empire? Or has Williams' noise just been a fiscal federalism volley? Observations that can be made include: that, in response to public pressure, the PCs' philosophies evolved away from being internally reformist; that Williams' economic lobbying has mobilized identity nationalism; that the premier's charismatic leadership has fortified his executive control but at a cost of eliminating federal allies and at a risk of

surrounding himself with sycophants; and that Newfoundland nationalism is foremost an expression of unifying regionalism.

Under Danny Williams' leadership, the Newfoundland PC party has changed from being a mass party foremost concerned about fiscal restraint to a catchall party that appeals to the median voter. Williams may be considered an authoritarian populist (see Sinclair) given his personal supremacy, his championing of the common Newfoundlander, his conflicts with outsiders and his manoeuvring within a capitalist economic system. He is also the latest Newfoundland premier to, as Cadigan (*Newfoundland* 293) puts it, redirect citizens' anger over "anti-labour and fiscally conservative policies at a federal bogeyman." However, unlike his predecessors, Williams has dealt with the political conundrum of simultaneously attracting commercial investment, defending workers' interests, and guarding the public purse with a dogmatic effort to secure new revenue streams. He is a classic case of a patriotic businessman motivated by a desire to create a wealthier society.

Premier Williams' guerrilla attacks on outsiders emotionally charges an electorate that rallies behind his competitive desire to defend principles and to deliver money to his citizens. Thus far no federal minister has mitigated the premier's unrelenting insistence for special treatment and nor has a Williams representative broached the divide with Ottawa. Though Peckford often publicly quarrelled over federal policies, he nevertheless supported major national agreements such as the *Constitution Act* (1982), the Meech Lake Accord and free trade; conversely, federal-provincial relations have bottomed out with Williams. This is because Newfoundland nationalism can only be pacified by a member of the federal executive who is trusted by both heads of government.

When the federal and provincial governing parties share the same label, there is an increased likelihood of diplomacy and integration. The inclusion of a strong personality from the province in the federal executive can calm the provincial governing party's sense of alienation. A senior presence within the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) or the Privy Council Office (PCO) can exert considerable policy influence, whilst regional ministers have an augmented status within the federal government, may negotiate directly with the premier, and may exercise political power by seeking a veto on issues in lockstep with the province (Bakvis; also Bakvis and Wolinetz). When such an insider does not exist, which is more likely when party labels differ, a failure to reflect Newfoundland's interests may give reason for its citizens to unify behind the premier, who incites a crisis in an attempt to fragment the political system to achieve his demands. This is consistent with elite accommodation theory (Presthus) and with theories that nationalist movements crave respect and recognition (Eller).

Regional ministers are especially influential. They draw upon their familiarity with the executive offices, knowledge of government operations and their political connections to secure federal funding, dispense patronage, negotiate agreements, initiate regional development programs, and/or advance international concerns. According to Dunn ("Federal"), Newfoundland has had four such representatives: Liberal Jack Pickersgill (1953–57, 1963–67), Liberal Don Jamieson (1968–79), PC John Crosbie (1979–80, 1984–93), and Liberal Brian Tobin (1993–96, 2000–02). These men used their personal clout and heft as political organizers to address files, as Pickersgill did with social programs, and as Tobin did with a populist attack on foreign overfishing. At times their influence has crossed party lines, such as Jamieson and Peckford discussing road funding on a weekend while drinking beer (Bakvis), or Crosbie securing federal funding when the fishery closed during Wells' tenure. By regularly consulting with the provincial government, and by sharing credit for leveraging federal funds, these ministers held office during some of the more productive periods of intergovernmental relations for Newfoundland. But any affection is conditional on achieving favourable federal policy decisions. A premier, after all, commands more loyalty as the uncompromising defender of Newfoundlanders' interests. The intense local pressure that Crosbie faced when Peckford pledged to wage "intellectual terrorism" after the federal government "sold the shop" in a cod-fishery jurisdiction agreement with France ("Premier" 1987) is a good example of the fluidity of federal loyalties.

The other dozen Newfoundland federal ministers have had comparatively little influence, have held trivial portfolios, and/or have been weak representatives of Newfoundland in Ottawa and of Ottawa in Newfoundland. Such ministers are more susceptible to the positions presented by federal mandarins and play a lesser role in advancing their province's interests. Conversely, a premier who makes them hesitant to champion federal cabinet decisions seriously undermines their authority. These local pressures inhibit the status of most Newfoundland politicians within a federal party and limit their opportunity for promotion.

Powerful regional ministers, therefore, suppress Newfoundland nationalism better than anyone else can. In its latent form, Newfoundland nationalism is either politicized regionalism or aggressive province-building (Hiller). Its permanent "benign" economic nationalism (Cohen) accepts that Newfoundland's progress is linked to a strong Canada and that policy compromises must be brokered in the interest of national stability. Benign nationalism exists amid party cohesion and/or with a minister who encourages productive relationships during periods of co-operative federalism, or who emphasizes collaboration when executive federalism prevails. However, "malign" economic nationalism (again, Cohen) emerges during periods of competitive federalism, and involves a relentless pursuit of policies that favour Newfoundland, even if these result in jurisdictional clashes between

bureaucracies and harm others' interests. Malign nationalism erupts when there are federal–provincial party dissimilarities, an absence of a regional minister, a populist style of leadership, and/or if a provincial election is pending. The more recent trend towards collaborative federalism (Cameron and Simeon) has seen benign Newfoundland nationalism when the premiers work collectively (e.g. Council of the Federation, Council of Atlantic Premiers) but a malign form when the prime minister is present (e.g. First Ministers Conferences, official visits).

So, partisan jockeying may have the most influence on the form of nationalism. Newfoundland's noisiest federal–provincial disputes have all involved populist positions against dissimilar governing parties (Table 3). Under Smallwood, co-operative federalism prevailed with St-Laurent's and Pearson's Liberal governments, but the *Terms of Union* financial dispute erupted during Diefenbaker's PC interlude. Peckford's nationalist rhetoric peaked against Trudeau's Liberals, but subsided with the executive federalism encouraged by Mulroney's PC government. Unlike Peckford, Wells disagreed with the federal PCs' push for constitutional renewal, but would go on to co-operate with Chrétien's Liberal administration. Williams has no federal party ally. His battles with the Martin Liberals and the Harper Conservatives occurred when there was no longer a federal PC party and the 2008 election exposed the confederal status of the Tory parties in Newfoundland. Party labels, and possibly federal minority governance, therefore tend to be indicative if Newfoundland's nationalism will be benign or malign.

Table 3. Party Governments and Nationalism in Newfoundland

Years	Government: Canada	Government: Newfoundland	Premier	Regional Minister	Prevalent Nationalism
1949–57	Liberal	Liberal	Smallwood	Pickersgill	Benign
1957–63	PC	Liberal	Smallwood	—	Malign
1963–67	Liberal	Liberal	Smallwood	Pickersgill	Benign
1968–71	Liberal	Liberal	Smallwood	Jamieson	Benign
1972–79	Liberal	PC	Moore	Jamieson	Benign/Malign
1980–84	Liberal	PC	Peckford	—	Malign
1985–88	PC	PC	Peckford	Crosbie	Benign
1989–92	PC	Liberal	Wells	Crosbie	Benign/Malign
1993–2002	Liberal	Liberal	Wells/Tobin/ Grimes	Tobin*	Benign
2003–05	Liberal	PC	Williams	—	Malign
2006–	Conservative	PC	Williams	—	Malign

*From 1996 to 2000, Tobin, as premier, was the *de facto* regional minister

The federal–provincial fisticuffs, as in the past, will eventually be replaced by partisan camaraderie. Populism is a temporary phenomenon

(Taggart) and provincial ministers gradually encroach upon the power of a Newfoundland premier (Dunn, "Persistence"). The PCs may fracture into federalists and nationalists, may move away from emphasizing ethnic and economic grievances, and may shift towards addressing civic and political issues (as occurred in Quebec; see Meadwell). The predicament that awaits the PC party is the same as for any organization with a dominant leader who has eschewed institutional structures: benefitting from the populist's rise but unable to cope with a leadership vacuum during the transition afterwards. Indeed, after Peckford's resignation, the PCs experimented with a number of leaders but did not win another election until Williams arrived.

The prevalence of natural resource disputes in Alberta and the hegemony of its governing parties, including the styles of federalism embodied by Premiers Lougheed, Klein, and Stelmach, would also make for a useful comparison, as would western Canadian populist parties (e.g. Sinclair). Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia have recently battled over equalization; even Ontario is comparable in light of Premier McGuinty's "Fairness Campaign" during the 2008 federal election. Neo-nationalism in other provinces, such as in New Brunswick under Premier Robichaud, might also bear consideration in future analytic work using the nationalist, populist, and regionalist framework.

At this stage, it is useful to understand that when Jean Lesage urged Quebecers to become *maîtres chez nous* in the 1962 election he was seeking a mandate to nationalize private electrical power companies. He was also urging change from the Smallwood-like rule of former Premier Maurice Duplessis. Lesage positioned himself as a defender of Quebec's interests, whereby the Québécois could only trust the provincial government—as the only proponents of an ethnic state—to be on their side (Johnson). His actions tapped into a mindset typical of economic nationalism whereby francophones were threatened by outsiders and his team promoted insecurities that fed into his role as a saviour. The Quiet Revolution marked the decline of the Catholic Church's influence, the rise of a new political class, and the development of the Quebec state, which gave Quebecers an improved ability to govern. It, like Williams' nationalist evolution, refers to a period of rejuvenated collective public spirit that emerged from socio-economic pessimism and an economic romanticism regarding rural life. It is also indelibly associated with province-building and competitive federalism (Young, Faucher, and Blais). A Quebec–Newfoundland comparison has been initiated (see Gebel) but a systemic analysis would integrate the role of capitalism, federalism, language, outsiders, paternalism, political machines, religion, representation, the bureaucracy, and urbanization.

Conclusion

This essay has established that nationalism, populism, and regionalism can all be found in Newfoundland. Neo-nationalism seems destined to be a facet of Newfoundland's politics whenever its federal presence does not correspond with its heightened nationalist consciousness. Given the conceptually perplexing nature of these topics (McCrone, *Sociology*; Taggart), some questions remain for further research. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to conclude that Newfoundland regionalism is more tangible than a fleeting Atlantic breed of Albertan populism and Quebec nationalism.

Danny Williams' populist bluster and deal brokering has solidified his superhero role among in-groups. Focused on enriching Newfoundland society, he has been fulfilling his anti-giveaways mantra and sees the Lower Churchill megaproject as a legacy issue. The province's financial situation has improved significantly, for which Williams deserves some credit, particularly for negotiating future revenue streams.

However, the Williams effect should not be overstated given that much is due to global economic forces. In a staples economy the foreign demand for commodities greatly affects the rate of growth and the extent of processing. The high price of oil has enriched the provincial government's coffers. When demand for staples began to recede upon the collapse in the American banking and housing sectors, the price of oil declined; mining operations in Labrador City were scaled back; and paper mills were closed. The shrimp fishery, tellingly, received public subsidies after the fisheries union coordinated a sit-in protest in a provincial government building. Provincial expenditures are now well above 2003 levels and a return to deficit financing is occurring. The debt per capita has been reduced and the employment rate has improved, yet both remain the worst in Canada. Furthermore, the old order has been creeping back as patronage glue has been used to inflate the number of ministries, to increase the salaries of the premier's office staff, and to fill government positions with partisans. Newfoundland still has a long way to go to become master of its own destiny.

The ongoing issue for Newfoundlanders, as House ("Premier") put it during the Peckford regime, is whether they should support their premier's gamble of fighting on principle or risk reconciling with the federal government. Politically, Danny Williams' "noisy revolution," as the copying of nationalist rhetoric infers, has been mostly a replay. He is frustrated at his political impotence within the federation and behaves as though he is leading a province with political clout like Quebec. He has become a poison in federal politics and he might as well be leading the Parti Terreneuviennne—which, for the time being, appears to suit Newfoundlanders just fine. Though populists do tend to favour direct democracy, though the PC party's roots are in the anti-confederation movement, and though public discussion about separatism

emerges during fits of hot nationalism, it seems unlikely that an organized separatist movement will develop. Rather, Newfoundland is passing through a partisan cycle whereby co-operative federalism, benign nationalism, and influential regional ministers are exchanged for competitive federalism, malign nationalism, and noisy premiers. Real political change would involve Newfoundlanders supporting internal reforms with the same vigour they demand from outsiders. In this light, Danny Williams has led a nationalist evolution, not a political revolution.

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Notes

1. For readability purposes, the abbreviated version of "Newfoundland and Labrador" is used. Though not specifically explored here, Labrador nationalism also exists and is based on frustration that the island of Newfoundland profits from Labrador's natural resources
2. The Williams administration's interest in immigration is one example that Newfoundland's ethnocentrism must not be confused with racism and that, in fact, socially there is a growing openness towards internationalism.
3. Re-elected governing parties have controlled a mean of 80 percent of seats in the House of Assembly (523 of 657 in 15 elections since 1948) whereas incoming party governments have controlled a mean of 54 percent (76 of 142 in 1971, 1989, and 2003).
4. The only holdout was Elizabeth Marshall who remained neutral. In 2004, she had ceded her position as health minister after becoming frustrated with Williams' departmental interference. Prime Minister Harper would go on to appoint Marshall to the Senate, as he had with Fabian Manning, another PC MHA who had fallen out of Williams' favour.
5. This trend had already begun when the leaders of the provincial Liberals and NDP resigned in May 2006 and before Parliament passed a motion symbolically recognizing the Québécois as a nation in November 2006.

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