

Former AFMLABC president passes at 83

Gillian's record of public service could fill a book

By Brian Kieran
OOTD editor

After 18 years as Port Alberni's longest serving mayor, Gillian Trumper set her sights on Victoria and was elected as a Liberal in the new seat of Alberni-Qualicum in 2001 with 53 per cent of the vote. Her seat would go to the NDP five years later, however, Gillian made good use of the time allotted to her in the Legislature.

In government, she served as Chair of the Legislative Standing Committee for Aboriginal Affairs. She also served on the following Standing Committees: Parliamentary Reform, Ethical Conduct, Standing Orders, and Private Bills; and Legislative Initiatives; and served on the Special Legislative Committee to Review the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Gillian was Chair of the Women's Caucus Committee and sat with her colleagues on the Vancouver Island Coastal Caucus. She was also a member of the Government Caucus Committee on Communities and Safety as well as the Land Use Planning Committee and the Government Caucus Committee on Government Operations.

With Cabinet Committees, Gillian served on Agenda and Priorities and on the Core Review and Deregulation Task Force.

Previously Gillian was president of the Union of BC Municipalities and its Fisheries Committee Chair, West Coast Treaty Advisory Committee Chair, and Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board Chair. As well, Gillian



Gillian Trumper presided over the AFMLABC Government House dinner in 2015. She is seen here with former Senator Pat Carney (left) and now-retired Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon.

was Community Economic Adjustment Initiative Committee Co-chair for the federal government and was a member of the Advisory Council to the Law Commission of Canada.

Gillian's lengthy record of community service included memberships in the Western Vancouver Island Heritage Society and the Port Alberni Friendship Centre, and honorary memberships in the Port Alberni Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs. Gillian was named Port Alberni Citizen of the Year in 1993, and in 2002 was made a Freeman of the City of Port Alberni.

Even in her late 70s Gillian was still public service minded becoming President of the Association of Former MLAs of BC from early 2013 to November 2016.

(Go to Pages 4, 5 & 6 for an obituary and tributes from former colleagues.)

Her Honour

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

Orders of the Day is published regularly throughout the year, and is circulated to Association members, all MLAs now serving in Legislature, other interested individuals and organizations.

Material for the newsletter is always welcome and should be sent in written form to:

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The Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia is strictly non-partisan, regardless of members' past or present political affiliation. Founded in 1987, the Association was formally established by an Act of the British Columbia Legislature on February 10, 1998.

Orders of the Day was conceived, named and produced in its early stages by Bob McClelland, former MLA and cabinet minister, following his retirement from office. Hugh Curtis ably helmed this publication up through May 2014.

Thank You and Miscellany

Thank you to those of you who, when sending in your Member dues or subscription renewals, add a donation to help cover production costs for the newsletter.

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Graham Bruce, Crofton

From the Editor's Desk

Election 2019: Platforms landed with dull thuds

“Never before have both major parties taken such a small share of the vote. Never before, in my memory, have both declined steadily and together throughout a campaign. Their platforms landed with the same dull thuds, their leaders failed to impress in roughly equal measure.”

– Andrew Coyne, National Post

As voters wandered home from the polls Oct. 21st it was hard to find a single democracy watchdog, political commentator or polling analyst who felt their fellow Canadians had participated in a redeeming or productive electoral exercise.

Oct. 22nd Canadians woke up to a country deeply divided in the East with the Phoenix-like Bloc Quebecois rising to dash the Liberals' hopes for a renewed majority mandate and in the West with Prairie voters further undermining any pretence that the minority government's pared back mandate at least drew support across the national landscape.

Frank Graves, president of polling firm Ekos Research, told the New York Times: “A lot of people (moved) into a category that could be described as disparaging. This has been a pretty dirty campaign on both sides. And we've seen the fault line of the country laid bare. We just don't have a common ground anymore.”

Unable to even choreograph a trio of midnight election speeches for a sleeping nation, the leaders of the main parties talked over one another. It was a metaphor for the entire campaign.

In the October issue of *Orders of the Day* we reported survey research that suggested the pressing issue of climate change could be a policy touchstone in the campaign. No such luck. A national TV debate on climate change was cancelled and on the hustings the anticipated climate change discussion was overwhelmed by mean-spirited bickering. The standard bearer for a greener earth, Elizabeth May, and her Green Party crusaders, found themselves stalled at less than seven per cent support nationally. Sobering results for a party that claimed it was surfing a climate change awareness wave, a result that left young campaign workers weeping.

And, then there was Jagmeet Singh ... an invisible man at the start of the campaign who emerged as the most likeable leader in the field. However, the NDP could not translate Mr. Congeniality's appeal into much more than 20 per cent support and lost seats in double digits.

Toronto Sun columnist Warren Kinsella said: “This election wasn't remotely about issues. It was a referendum on Trudeau.” No one told the PM. To listen to him on election night one might have come away with the impression he'd secured another majority ... ignoring the reality that the Liberals lost the popular vote to the Conservatives.

Lots of post-election analysis and context in this issue on Pages 8, 9 and 10. Enjoy.

President's Report

It is with a great deal of sadness that this issue of Orders of the Day says farewell to one of the Association's treasured leaders, Gillian Trumper. We have tried to do her proud with a look back on her career of public service and with our tributes.

In 2013, Gillian was vice president of the Association when our then-President Bill Reid died. Gillian quickly assumed the position of president and would lead us until November 2016.

Her tenure would not be a cake walk. In 2014, we lost Hugh Curtis. He was much more than simply our Secretary/Treasurer. He organized the Annual Dinner. He was the editor of OOTD. He was on the phone every week, encouraging people to contribute newsletter articles, buy annual dinner tickets, and just catching up with old friends from the Legislature. Hugh was the heart and soul of our Association, doing the work of many people.

To Gillian's credit, she took on many of Hugh's responsibilities and delegated the rest. Hugh's shoes would be difficult to fill, and Gillian did a great job in following in his footsteps. After Hugh's death, Rob Lee stepped up and produced a memorial issue of OOTD, but the newsletter was not published for several months after that. Gillian was instrumental resurrecting OOTD. It was also on her watch that the AFMLABC established the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund that supports the BC Youth Parliament.

I was a director through this period and I can attest that Gillian did an admirable job in trying circumstances.

Our heartfelt best wishes go to her family and her Alberni community of friends.



President Jeff Bray



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When help was needed Gillian just couldn't say no

By Roxanne Egan-Elliott
Courtesy of the Times Colonist

Despite a busy life raising four kids and serving more than two decades in public office as Port Alberni Mayor and MLA, Gillian Trumper never said no to a request for help.

“Everybody always talked about how hard she worked. She was always going,” said Maryann Charbonneau, a longtime family friend and Trumper's constituency assistant during the four years she served as MLA for Alberni-Qualicum.

Gillian died Oct. 11 after several years battling health issues. She was 83 years old.

Gillian was born on April 28, 1936, in Croydon, England, where she trained to be a registered nurse. In 1959, a year after her partner, Michael, moved to Canada, she joined him in Beaver Lodge, Alta., where the couple married.

They moved to Port Alberni with their four young children, Owen, Michael, Carolyn and Trish, in 1969. Michael, a doctor, passed away several years ago.

After moving to Port Alberni, Gillian became involved in the community quickly, serving on the school board and as a city councillor before becoming the city's longest-serving mayor. She held the position for 18 years, from 1983 to 2001, when she ran a successful BC Liberal campaign to win a seat in the Provincial Legislature.

She was also the city coroner during a few high-profile cases, including the murder of 11-year-old Jessica States in 1996. Despite the interest, Charbonneau said her friend never talked about the cases she worked, because she respected the privacy of the victims' families.

In all her roles, she took her civic duty, and the protocols surrounding it, seriously, Charbonneau said.

In 1993, the City of Port Alberni recognized Gillian's commitment to public service, naming her Port Alberni Citizen of the Year. A year after she left the mayor's office, she became the first woman to be awarded the honour of Freedom of the City — the highest honour Port Alberni council can bestow on a person.



Fiercely independent, it was difficult for her to ask for help. When she was struggling with health concerns that required trips to Nanaimo, Charbonneau said she was reluctant to ask friends to make the one-hour drive to get her there.

As a woman holding political office in the early '80s, Gillian was seen as a trailblazer in the community.

“As her daughter, it never occurred to me that there was anything I couldn't achieve as a female,” said Carolyn Trumper. “Port Alberni was lucky to have someone of the calibre of mom and she's left a long legacy of kindness, generosity and integrity.”

While running a city for nearly two decades kept Gillian busy, she always made time for her family. They spent days hiking in the mountains, kayaking and sailing on the ocean, and skiing together.

“Sundays were family days,” Carolyn said. “She was a very involved mother, very loving, and lots of fun.”

Gillian is survived by her four children, five grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

The family is holding a service on Nov. 8 at 2 p.m. at the Italian Hall in Port Alberni.

We were friends bonded by politics and journalism

By Jim Hume
The Old Islander

I hadn't talked to Gillian Trumper for several years when I heard that she had died and I was shamed and without excuse.

On countless occasions, I had reminded myself to give her a call "tomorrow." Always tomorrow. Always. Never today, and ultimately, too late.

It wasn't that we were great old friends. Just friends bonded by politics and journalism. We crossed paths via Alberni Valley connections where she served on the school board, and as a city council member, as mayor, and for one term, as MLA. In fact, there were not many locally known committees or commissions Gillian Trump didn't sit on and serve well.

Whether as the local coroner in a relatively small community where local tragedies quickly became family affairs or exchanging ideas with members of the Federal Advisory Council to the Law Commission of Canada, or chairing an Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District meeting, she made her mark.

There were half-a-dozen other local boards to which she took her personal brand of common sense and goodwill. A gracious lady, tough when she needed to be but high in the possession of the qualities writer Rudyard Kipling once said were required by people who would always stand tall among their fellow citizens.

Actually, when Kipling wrote his famous "IF" poem, he had men only in mind. His last line in the epic poem is "and what is more (if you acquire the attributes I recommend), you'll be a man my son." Were he still alive today I'm sure he would have heard from Gillian and others in the growing army of women who could firmly claim membership on his list of people, not just men, who could "keep their head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you ..."

She was always able to walk with crowds and keep her virtue; to talk with kings but not lose the common touch.

She acquired her qualifications from a strong family life in her youth and the added strength of family built with husband Michael and their four children – Owen, Michael, Carolyn and Trish. If the family had an objective rule for



problem-solving, it involved heavy doses of common sense. Just common sense quietly spoken, always recommended, never commanded. And mostly with a genuine, face-filled smile.

Already honoured years ago – named Citizen of the Year and granted the rare distinction of Freedom of the City of Port Alberni – there is talk of a more permanent memorial to this lady of quality. I'm sure the suggestion list will be long. Maybe it could include a quiet corner of a smaller, easy-to-reach park where future generations could sit and remember where on Friday, October 11, 2019, in her 83rd year, a remarkable daughter, wife, mother, counsellor, lady, Gillian Trumper, found what poet Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) simply entitled – REST.

The travelling, the talking of problems and their solutions, is over. The last enemy can no longer pain or threaten. She rests now as Rossetti wrote:

".....with stillness that is almost Paradise.
Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
Silence more musical than any song;
Even her very heart has ceased to stir:
Until the morning of Eternity
Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be;
And when she wakes she will not think it long."

And if this small tribute to a friend has prompted you to remember a phone call you should be making or quick note you should be writing – you'd better get on with it. Tomorrow could be too late.

Gillian tributes:

Former Premier Gordon Campbell

Gillian Trumper was an exemplary leader and a truly generous person. She showed us all by her example what commitment to family and community meant. She spoke for those who quietly went about their daily lives caring for their families and building their communities.

I first met her when she was Mayor of Port Alberni. I was President of the UBCM when she really introduced me to her city. The Trumper tour was about people and plans and possibilities for her town and there was never a doubt that she would help them reach their goals.

She was a star in every way. She stood against the odds for what she thought was right. Compassion and generosity defined her and the example she set quietly inspired everyone who worked with her.

Gillian was selfless and personified integrity. It was a privilege to work with her and to be a friend.

Gillian was a public servant, a great British Columbian and Canadian, but first and foremost she was a wife and a mother.

I am grateful for the memories she gave us, the smile I remember and the quiet confidence she showed us all. She was special and she will be missed by us all even while her example of citizenship lives on and is reflected in the thousands of lives she touched.

Former MLA and Coquitlam Mayor Richard Stewart

I had the honour of knowing – and working with – longtime Port Alberni Mayor and MLA Gillian Trumper. A tremendously-dedicated public servant, and Port Alberni's longest-serving mayor (18 years), Gillian always focused on what was the best public policy. She was truly “in it for the right reasons.” Condolences to her family and community on the passing of a truly loving person.

Former Alberni MLA Gerard Janssen

Having known Gillian as a fellow resident of Port Alberni for most of my adult life it is hard to pick out a few of her many accomplishments. She was a customer at Janssen's Jewellers, a school board trustee, council member, and mayor and, of course, MLA.



I can recall a trip to our sister city of Abasheri, Japan. Gillian as mayor and I as chamber president. That trip highlighted her dedication and “British” resolve. Even though her son was recovering from a serious illness, Gillian fulfilled her duty and obligation to that trip and her city and came along.

She was a fierce opponent politically, having faced her in three elections. But, she always put politics aside and put her community first.

Gillian will be missed. Port Alberni is a much better community because of her.

Former MLA Ken Jones

Gillian Trumper will be greatly missed by so many throughout BC.

She calmly carried the Association of Former MLAs through two difficult times. As vice president, she had to suddenly step into the president's role on the passing of Bill Reid in 2013; then in 2014, she had to reorganize our

Executive to fill the huge hole created with the passing of our secretary-treasurer, Hugh Curtis, as well as take up the organizing of our Annual Dinner at Government House on short notice. She did all of these so well. We certainly miss her presence on our executive.

I would like to express our sincere condolences to Gillian's family and many friends.

Former Press Secretary Mike Morton

I was so sorry to hear of the passing of my friend, Gillian Trumper. I knew Gillian for many years, both as Mayor of Port Alberni and as a member of the Legislature from 2001 to 2005. And no matter what role she had, what best defined Gillian was her dedication to those that she served. Her passing is a great loss to both her family and all the residents of the Alberni-Clayoquot region.

Former MLA and AFMLABC Director Anne Edwards

I knew Gillian Trumper by reputation long before I met her in person, and what I had learned was that she was Mayor of Port Alberni, active in the UBCM, liked by those who knew her and, clearly, a dynamo within the organizations to which she belonged. Sure enough, she was always doing something for her community, always sharp, always kind, and always thinking of what needed to be done better.

I mourn her loss and bear witness to her wisdom and generosity. May she live in our memories.

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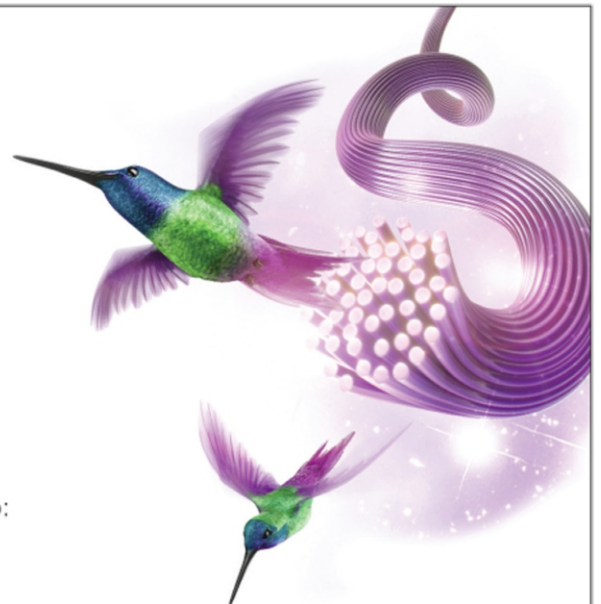
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Election 2019:

Can there be a triumph of politics over geography?

By Daphne Braham

Courtesy of the Vancouver Sun

If the Canadian project is to continue to work – if this triumph of politics over geography is to succeed – it's going to depend on people like Jonathan Wilkinson and many others who you may never have heard of before.

It has been like this before when the Canadian electoral map showed a great Conservative blue sea washed over the Prairies.

But the last time, it was even worse. In the 1980s, there wasn't a speck of Liberal red anywhere west of Winnipeg. It's really no coincidence that the last time it happened, the prime minister was Pierre Trudeau.

Mention Pierre Trudeau's name on the Prairies and the National Energy Program will inevitably be spat back at you. Or, if you're talking to older farmers, they will tell you about the day in Regina when he sneeringly asked them, "Why should I sell your wheat?"

The fact that Justin Trudeau overcame that legacy in 2015 was more of a miracle than was perhaps recognized at the time. And, it is different this time. There are four Liberals from Manitoba and 11 from BC. There is the lone New Democrat in Alberta, as well as 11 in BC and three in Manitoba. There are also two Greens and an Independent from BC.

It's not good. But it's not as bad as the premiers of Alberta and Saskatchewan want people to believe.

That's not to minimize the task ahead. If anything, it's to amplify the message that if the Canadian project is to continue to work — if this triumph of politics over geography is to succeed — Trudeau must pay special attention to the very real concerns of the people who live in the oil-and-gas producing regions of Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC.

At the heart of this rift are the existential questions: Can Canada transition from oil and gas extraction to net-zero carbon emissions in 2050 without destroying the lives and livelihoods of close to 5.6 million Canadians, and other Canadians who benefit from their prosperity? Can Canadians survive if they don't?

Trudeau needs westerners to drive the process. He might want to start in the far west with North Vancouver MP Jonathan Wilkinson. As the Minister for Fisheries, Oceans and the Coast Guard, he was involved in changing shipping regulations, and responding to the declines of resident killer whales and salmon.

Wilkinson has already been talking to people in the Prairies. He has been thinking about all that blue in Alberta and Saskatchewan, about how people there are afraid what the future might look like in a lower-carbon universe, and about how they feel that no one is taking their present economic problems seriously.

He grew up in Saskatchewan. His parents still live there. He has friends there, and he has had experience working in the provincial government both as a civil servant and as an adviser to NDP premier Roy Romanow during the constitutional negotiations.

"We need to be listening and working toward economic prosperity in a lower-carbon universe," he said after the election. "We need to look at different pathways."

But first, he said, everyone including the two Prairie premiers needs to dial back the rhetoric because finding areas of agreement isn't impossible.

The prime minister and the rest of Canada need to hear from the people of Saskatchewan and Alberta, many of whom have already lost their jobs, struggled to find others, and are now working for much lower wages. He needs to understand that as much as they want their kids to be able to breath clean air, they also want them to be able to eat and have a roof over their heads.

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There really was an 11th hour of strategic voting

In the hours of ballot counting, as political commentators filled airtime and candidates nervously chewed their nails, a narrative of how one of the closest elections in Canadian history came to be emerged: strategic voting.

Though the struggling Liberals may not have captured the most votes, nor secured enough seats in the House of Commons for a majority, new data confirms they were able to successfully persuade enough voters to help their cause, even begrudgingly, rather than support another party which may have helped to elect the Conservatives.

A post-election survey from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute re-canvassed voters who were still considering their options, even into the late innings of the campaign. Their responses reveal that among those who voted strategically, most chose the party of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The study also offers a glimpse of just how volatile the campaign was. Nearly one-quarter of late deciding voters (23 per cent) say although they were leaning towards one party, they changed their minds and cast a ballot for another in the end.

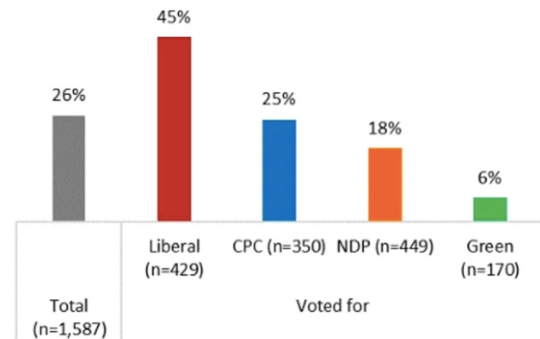
Throughout the election campaign, the Angus Reid Institute asked potential voters to reflect on the certainty of their vote. There were four options that a respondent could choose to describe their current vote intention from “absolutely certain” to “not certain at all.”

As we noted, even late in the campaign, half of voters had not yet made up their minds. In order to generate a window into these voters' motivations and decisions, ARI researchers went back to these late-deciding voters with a follow-up survey.

Once the polls had closed, respondents who had answered that they were less than absolutely certain during the final three weeks of the campaign received a survey asking them a number of questions about which party they supported, why and when they made their decision.

Among the nearly 1,600 voters canvassed in this survey, only two-in-five (38 per cent) say they had made their mind up by the middle of the campaign. The rest were still weighing their options in the waning days. In fact, one-quarter of late deciding voters say they made their mind up on voting day:

Percentage of “soft voters” who said one of their primary motivations was “voting strategically for a party you thought had a better chance to win or to stop another party from winning”



Just over half (56 per cent) of late deciding voters say that they stayed with their first choice for the entire campaign with little wavering, even though they were unable to say during that time that they were “locked in.” For two-in-five (44 per cent) their decision was far less settled.

Overall, one-quarter of late deciding voters say they ultimately changed their mind from their first choice at some point in the campaign.

NDP supporters were the least likely to have decided early on that they would vote for that party. Indeed, only half (48 per cent) say they were leaning that way all along. Three-in-10 who supported the party say they were initially intending on supporting another.

Conservative and Liberal voters are almost identical to each other in terms of their decision making, with two-thirds leaning toward that party the whole time, and one-third either undecided or having switched from their first choice:

One of the political undercurrents of the campaign was the potential for strategic voting. When asked for their primary motivation for their vote, one-quarter said that the strategic element of blocking a party they disliked was a part of their decision. This was, however, a consideration for far more Liberals (45 per cent) than any other group of party supporters.

(The Angus Reid Institute (ARI) was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation.)

Now that was an election debate worth watching

After deciding to leave office in February 1984, Pierre Trudeau retired as PM in June of that year. Polls showed that he would almost certainly be defeated by Brian Mulroney and the Progressive Conservatives in the next election. The Liberals chose John Turner – a former cabinet minister under Trudeau and Lester B. Pearson – as their new leader in a bitterly contested leadership convention in which Turner defeated six rivals, most notably Trudeau's preferred successor Jean Chrétien.

Just four days after being sworn in as prime minister, Turner called a general election for September, persuaded by internal polls that showed the Liberals far ahead. He was not obligated to dissolve Parliament until 1985.

However, Turner inherited a big headache. Shortly before Trudeau retired, he'd appointed several loyal party members to the Senate and other high-profile positions, in an act many criticized as blatantly partisan. Trudeau left office before the appointments received his official sign-off, and that duty was left to Turner. Turner had been required to sign off on the appointments upon taking office, as a condition of Trudeau's early retirement.

The Liberal patronage appointments became a hot issue during the election debate, and a sore point that Mulroney exploited.

The English language debate was held July 25, 1984; Mulroney eviscerated Turner: "You, sir, owe the Canadian people a deep apology for having indulged in that kind of practice with those kinds of appointments."

Turner defended himself saying he had "no option" in approving the patronage appointments. However, he failed to mount a convincing argument against Mulroney's fiery attack.

"You had an option, sir," Mulroney said. "You could have said: 'I am not going to do it. This is wrong for Canada, and I am not going to ask Canadians to pay the price.' You had an option, sir, to say no, and you chose to say yes to the old attitudes and the old stories of the Liberal Party."

Turner stuck with his lame defence, saying: "I had no option."

But Mulroney kept pressing: "That is an avowal of failure. That is a confession of non-leadership, and this country needs leadership. You had an option, sir. You could have done better."



The exchange led most of the papers the next day, with most of them paraphrasing Mulroney's counterattack as: "You had an option, sir — you could have said 'no.'"

After the televised debate, little else altered the course of the campaign. In the September election, the Tories won 211 seats, the most that a Canadian party has ever won, while the Liberals lost 95 seats, the worst defeat at the time for a governing party at the federal level in Canada.

The 1988 federal debate offered a chance at payback for Turner. This time, Turner came out swinging at Mulroney over the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, which became the dominant issue of the campaign. Turner accused Mulroney's cross-border deal of undoing 120 years of Canadian economic independence from the U.S.

"With one signature of the pen you've reversed that, thrown us into the north-south influence of the United States, and will reduce us, I'm sure, to a colony of the United States," Turner said in a passionate rant at Mulroney. "Because when the economic levers go, the political independence is sure to follow," he added.

Turner's attack helped resuscitate a struggling Liberal campaign that had some in the party mulling a leadership change mid-election. The Liberals still lost the election, but they more than doubled their previous seat total, rising up to 83 seats from the 40 they secured in 1984.

(Source: Media files.)

Member News

Please send news about your activities to ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com for the next newsletter.

Where are they now?

Each issue we ask a former Member of the Legislative Assembly a series of questions. What drew them to public service; what lessons have they taken away; and, most important, what are they doing now.

This month we welcome the newest member of the AFMLABC Board of Directors Harry Bloy who served as the Liberal member for Burnaby-Lougheed from 2001 to 2013. He served as the Minister of Social Development and Minister of State for Multiculturalism



What prompted you to seek public office?

I think it is important to be involved in our communities and to give back in some way. We all play a part and are responsible for the kind of community we create. I began volunteering in my 20s as a hockey coach for a local peewee team and working for my community has been important to me ever since. In seeking public office, I wanted to continue to 'make a difference' in the community in which I live.

Which political figure most influenced you?

I was inspired by John Diefenbaker, and the values of the federal Conservative Party. He demonstrated that it is possible to focus both on the economy and on the social needs of people.

Was it hard making the transition from private life to public life?

The transition into public life was easy for me, as I had been actively involved as a volunteer, both in activities with my children (Scouts, Burnaby lacrosse, Burnaby Mountain Mantas swim club, Montecito PAC and fundraising) and with the community at large (Optimists, Fundraising for March of Dimes and Cancer Research). I thoroughly enjoyed the interactions with constituents, regardless of their individual political leaning and found satisfaction in helping them achieve their goals. I believe I am hard working and a naturally friendly and extroverted individual and that these qualities served me well as a public figure.

What was your biggest challenge returning to private life?

My 'ego' took a few months to adjust to life as a private citizen. Even though I chose to step down and only ran for election for three terms (the public willing), the transition was hard. Being an elected public figure is exciting, fulfilling and energizing and was a 'highlight' of my professional life. It didn't take me long though to go from organizing meetings to planning holidays.

What is the biggest lesson that has stuck with you since being an MLA?

I learned humility. It was an honour and a privilege to serve both the constituents of my riding and the Province of BC. I am very thankful for the opportunity that I was given – of travelling the province and of meeting many amazing people who also cared deeply about our province. I discovered that regardless of peoples' politics, we all want similar things – to be healthy, to live a meaningful life and to be able to love and care for our families

Tell us a bit about your active or part-time professional interests.

Now that I have retired, I have more time to spend with my family, including six grandchildren, to travel and to putter in my garden. I also regularly have coffee with many former colleagues and of course we have many lively debates about the state of politics at home and around the world. I continue to take an interest in the present government and where it is taking us. I also continue to volunteer, as I said, it is a lifelong meaningful activity for me.

Finally ... pet projects? Hobbies? And, the value of remaining involved in the Association and OOTD.

I am a member of The Order of St. John, serve on the board of Queens Park Hospital foundation and recently returned to scouts with my great nephew. I have been a member of the Association of Former MLAs of BC since I retired, and have enjoyed the publication and keeping in touch with other members.

A guide to civilized online political conversations

Social media is used by approximately nine out of 10 online Canadians and may be the most influential public space in our society. It's a place where politicians come to speak to citizens, from the furious early morning dispatches of an American president, to the more mundane photo ops of Canadian politicians.

It's where citizens speak directly to their leaders, in a free, direct, and unmediated way. Critically, it's also where we as citizens talk to each other about the major issues we face. In a country as geographically vast as Canada, social media facilitates direct personal exchanges that otherwise would not be possible.

Theoretically, that is an amazing thing for our democracy. While we're told to keep religion and politics away from the dinner table, the reality is that political conversations are democracy's lifeblood. But in practice, something has gone wrong. We behave differently on social media. Political conversations on social media are often angrier than what we witness offline. Harassment and extremism thrive on social media. Earlier this year, the prime minister described it as "the wild west."

There's been a lot of talk about what governments and social media platforms should do. This report by the Samara Institute brings together insights from the study of difficult conversations and the study of social media to examine what's going wrong, why it matters, what government action we should expect, and how citizens can change the nature of online political conversations.

Social media is one of our most important public spaces, a place where Canadians come to talk politics. It offers the potential to have bigger, freer, more open conversations. With its ability to allow people to engage and connect, to express ideas and inform each other, social media can be a powerful tool to improve our democracy.

We need space to disagree with passion. But online incivility has negative consequences for our democracy. It causes people to disengage. It hurts equity in politics. It exacerbates polarization. It makes us more vulnerable to malicious actors trying to sow division and confusion.

What is civility? Civility in political discourse is a contested idea. While many see the importance of civility in a democracy, some argue that complaints about

incivility can be used to censor or drown out critical voices. It's also easy to see civility as a quaint and secondary concern, given the high stakes of the political issues being discussed.

Getting to an absolute definition of civility is impossible. It's always situation-specific, and it will always be contested. And there are limits to civility in a democracy. In this report, civility refers simply to demonstrating to fellow citizens the level of respect and courtesy that make substantive and constructive democratic conversations possible. Civility does not exclude passion, anger, or deep disagreement.

But incivility in online politics has real costs for our democracy:

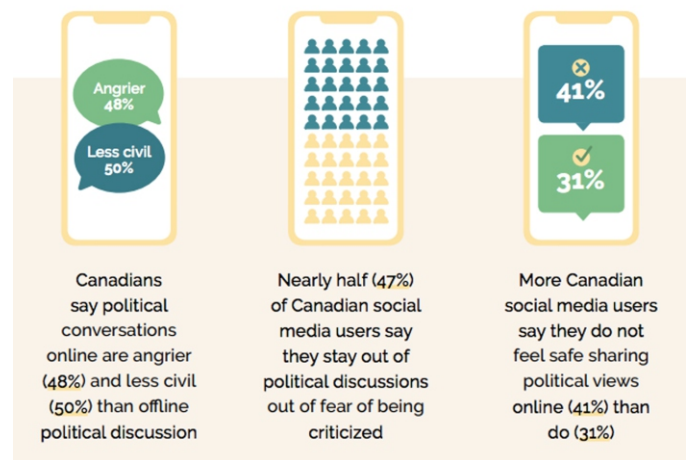
1. It causes some people to give up on politics – chasing them out of the digital public square, and potentially out of political participation altogether. Incivility itself can actually produce engagement, because the fired-up people keep engaging, but people with lower tolerance for rudeness and anger will simply log off. Worse, some people become less likely to participate in offline political conversations because of what they see on social media;
2. It hurts equity in politics, as not everyone is equally targeted with incivility. In fact, some groups who are already under-represented in politics experience worse incivility. A study of over two million tweets at politicians found that high-profile female politicians attract more incivility than high-profile male politicians;
3. It's making polarization worse. Polarization refers to when people cluster around extreme positions on opposite ends of the spectrum, or when people develop increasingly more negative attitudes toward people supporting other parties. It's essential that political differences are explored and represented in a democracy, but polarization erodes the basis for collective decision-making, and can be a major force in the breakdown of democracy. In a 2019 survey of people in 54 countries, Canadians were tied for most likely to say social media has a negative impact on democracy in their country: 43 per cent

of Canadians think it has a negative impact, while 38 per cent think it has a positive impact. For the sake of our democracy, we need to start having better online political conversations. Incivility also erodes trust – in each other, our leaders, our institutions, and media. It makes us less likely to believe in the value of public debate and deliberation;

4. It makes us more vulnerable to malicious actors online, including foreign actors who are trying to undermine our democracy. Online incivility is closely related to the growing problem of foreign interference by authoritarian states. They employ bot armies to manufacture anger and hatred and take advantage of polarization to generate more outrage and further poison the information environment. For example, foreign actors have used thousands of troll accounts to try to inflame already emotional social media debates around pipelines and immigration policies in Canada.

Canadians can help make online conversations more constructive and more civil. Drawing from research on social psychology and social media behaviour, this report contains seven techniques for better political conversations online:

1. Lead by example: Being civil can cause others in a conversation to follow your lead;
2. Police your own side: Calling out incivility is most effective when you're addressing someone on the same political team;
3. Practice slow politics: Small changes in the way you use technology can reduce the likelihood of using social media on the go, cutting down on thoughtless and aggressive exchanges;
4. Get into the weeds: Inviting people to provide detailed explanations of what political choices they support, and doing so yourself, can reduce polarization;
5. Reframe your language: Thinking about the moral foundations of an argument, and reflecting those foundations in your own language, can reduce the psychological distance between you and the person you're having a discussion with;



6. Remind us what we share: Priming someone to consider the identities that unite us (like civic identity) rather than the identities that divide us (like party affiliations) can reduce polarization;
7. Spot a bot: Recognize fake accounts, and don't give them what they want – attention.

In just over a decade, our society has gone from optimistic to deeply anxious about what social media means for democracy. That anxiety is felt as strongly here in Canada as anywhere in the world. The time has come for the first major renovation of the digital public square. Better that than a moral panic which would cause us to turn away from the potential social media still offers to have bigger, freer, more open democratic conversations.

This report tries to sketch out ways for users of social media to navigate political conversations online – and hopefully, to make those conversations more comfortable, inclusive, and constructive. In this way, the Samara Centre hopes to stimulate a renovation from the ground up. But in doing so, we don't ever want to lose sight of the critical importance of fierce, even emotional, disagreement. It's an indispensable resource in democracy.

(The complete Samara Institute report can be found at: https://www.samaracanada.com/docs/default-source/reports/the-samara-centre-s-field-guide-to-online-political-conversations-by-the.pdf?sfvrsn=a68a1a2f_6.)

Question Period

offbeat news, humour, and things that make you go "hmm..."

In Paris. Brexit is a normal noun

PARIS (Reuters) - French literary types aghast at the political turmoil engulfing Britain as it seeks to leave the European Union have launched a tongue-in-cheek Twitter campaign to add 'Brexit' to the national lexicon.

French commentator Bernard Pivot's proposed dictionary entry for "brexit" – as a common noun with a small "b" describing an insoluble mess – was re-tweeted 2,700 times within six hours.

"It would signify a cacophonous and insoluble debate or a shambolic meeting," wrote Pivot, chairman of the panel that awards France's prestigious Goncourt Prize for fiction.

The term might even replace "bordel", as several of his followers suggested – a word of similar metaphorical meaning but which literally designates a brothel. Exasperated compatriots would then exclaim "Quel brexit!" instead of "Quel bordel!"

"Excellent," another replied approvingly. "More violent and less vulgar."



China's "national flag baby"

XIAN, China (Reuters) - Feng Jianhan, 9, puts on his olive-colored army uniform, cap and white satin gloves each morning, and goosesteps across his living room.

As the national anthem plays in the background, he stands by a home-made pulley system, solemnly hoists the Chinese national flag and raises hand to cap in a salute.

Dubbed the "national flag baby" by Chinese media, the boy has captivated the country, appearing on videos and TV shows, especially in the run up to Communist China's 70th anniversary.



"I've made raising the flag my daily habit," said Feng. "Just like brushing my teeth or washing my face."

The boy's father, Feng Xie, said Jianhan's habit started when he was a toddler. Upset one day, he stopped crying when he heard China's national anthem playing on TV during a flag-raising ceremony.

Chirpy gecko bugs Duterte

MANILA (Reuters) - Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte just keeps getting bugged during his public speeches.

A noisy gecko was the latest wildlife contributor to an address by Duterte, interrupting the leader just as he launched another tirade at human rights groups critical of his bloody war on drugs.

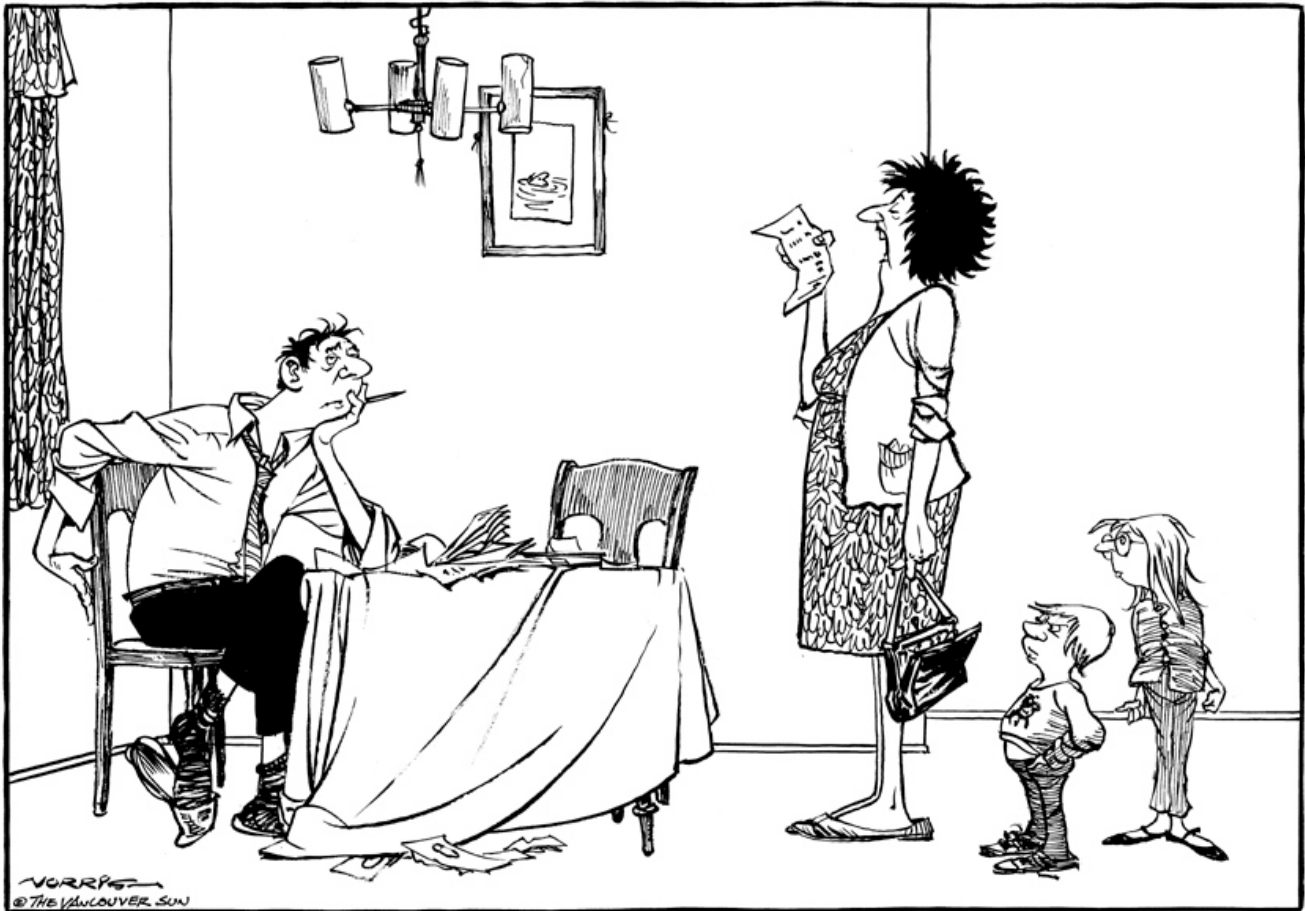


The reptile's persistence caused laughter in the crowd of mostly soldiers, causing Duterte stop mid-sentence, turn to his left and pause for a while to see what the off-camera commotion was.

Geckos are common across Southeast Asia. The small lizard-like reptiles are known for their ability to produce various loud sounds, from barks to chirps, to communicate or when threatened.

While activists accuse Duterte of cowing his opponents into silence, reptiles and insects have no qualms about pestering him. A big cockroach crawled up his shoulder and down his shirt during a speech in May.

Len Norris



"I find your household budget this month to be poppycock, unfair to the producing segment, a cockamamy grab for my purse, a ..."

An invitation to donate to the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund

The Victoria Foundation looks forward to receiving donations to the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund from all of Hugh's well wishers and friends.

By phone: Call 250-381-5532 to make a donation by credit card directly via the Victoria Foundation.

By cheque: Send cheques to the Victoria Foundation at #109 645 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1G2. Please ensure they are made out to The Victoria Foundation. Note the name of the fund in the memo line or in a cover letter.

Online: The Victoria Foundation's mechanism for online donations is [CanadaHelps](#) and the steps are:

- Go to www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca
- Click on the [Make a Donation](#) button and then on the "Online" link and then the [CanadaHelps](#) link which will take you to the Foundation's page on the CanadaHelps web site.
- Click to indicate whether you want to donate now or monthly and you will be taken through the steps to make your donation.
- In the section for designation of your gift, click on the drop down menu to select the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund.
- You may pay with VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Interac or through a PayPal account.
- After you pay for your gift, CanadaHelps.org will send you an online receipt.
- There are several privacy permissions available. If you choose to include your name and address in the information which is sent to the Victoria Foundation, the Association will be pleased to acknowledge your gift.

If you have any questions about how to make a donation to the Victoria Foundation, please contact Sara Neely, Director of Philanthropic Services, at 250-381-5532 or sneely@victoriafoundation.bc.ca

30 years ago

Masses of East Berliners stream through The Wall

Thirty years ago, on the night of November 9th, 1989, East German border police opened the gates at crossing points in the Berlin Wall, allowing masses of East Berliners to stream through unhindered.

This started a night of unbridled celebrations as people crossed freely back and forth through the Cold War barrier, climbed on it, and even danced and partied on it.

The signal for the mass breach of the previously heavily guarded wall was a fumbled announcement in a press conference by the Socialist Unity Party (SED) Party Chief of Berlin, Günter Schabowski.

His announcement that travel restrictions for East German citizens would be lifted led to the Wall's transit points being mobbed by thousands of East Germans as they interpreted the announcement to mean immediate freedom of movement to the West.

The opening of the Berlin Wall triggered a series of events that led to an unexpectedly rapid unification of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) in October 1990.

But to really understand this moment, we need to look at when and why the Berlin Wall was erected in the first place. Following Germany's defeat in the Second World War, the country was split between the victors – the Western Allies' occupation zones became the Federal Republic in 1949, while the Soviet zone was reconstituted as the German Democratic Republic shortly thereafter.

Germany's capital, Berlin, was also split down the middle. The wall was erected by the East German leadership in August 1961 to stop the flow of citizens from East to West, completing a sealed border that elsewhere ran along the frontier between the two German states.

The Wall's opening was the product of two processes that had gathered momentum throughout the second half of 1989: the peaceful demonstrations and protest marches of a number of newly constituted East German civil rights organisations, and the growing number of East German citizens leaving from the GDR's side doors.



The latter mostly happened through Hungary, which opened its border with Austria in May. Large numbers of East Germans on holidays in Hungary took advantage of the opportunity to migrate to West Germany. By November 1989, the trickle of East Germans leaving had become a flood, with thousands a day going to the West.

The lasting consequences of the fall of the Berlin Wall were momentous.

Providing real unity between West and East Germans required massive financial transfers from West to East. The transformation of the Eastern states in practise caused significant economic and social dislocation. As East Germans made enormous adjustments in their lives, their Western cousins were also paying slightly higher taxes to cover the costs of unification.

More globally, the fall of the Berlin Wall marked the symbolic end of the Cold War. Berlin had long been a cockpit of Cold War confrontation – now it was the victors' trophy. One U.S. policy analyst prematurely proclaimed the “end of history” in so far as history was a clash between major political orders, and Western democracy and capitalism had won.

But since 1989, many disappointments have followed the initial euphoria. The “peace dividend” hoped for by millions, and Mikhail Gorbachev's sunny but characteristically vague formula of peaceful coexistence in a “common European home” have not materialized. Instead, a triumphant NATO has pitched its tents inside the borders of the old USSR, and a surly and resentful Russia has responded with brinkmanship and confrontation.

(Source: Andrew Bonnell, University of Queensland, for “The Conversation.”)