



Raymond B. Blake's 15<sup>th</sup> book addresses important questions about the role of history, society, economics and culture in policy formation and contemporary politics and government in Canada. At its core, the book explores the conundrum facing all political leaders -- how does a political community ensure fairness and equity and empower disadvantaged peoples and regions. The book utilises various methodologies and theoretical frameworks to examine the role of a handful of influential Newfoundland and Labrador premiers and Canadian prime ministers in shaping and reshaping the intergovernmental relationship between Newfoundland and Ottawa while at the same time balancing provincial and national interests and concerns and redefining Canada. This approach brings individuals and an understanding of the political culture and environment in which they governed back into the study of Canada.

*Lions and Jellyfish*, whose title is taken from former Premier Danny Williams ("I would rather live one more day as a lion than 10 years a jellyfish," while reflecting on his battles with Canadian prime ministers Paul Martin and Stephen Harper) captures the essence of intergovernmentalism in Canada. Not a single premier or prime minister could ever allow him or herself to be the jellyfish in any of the federal-provincial battles that have marked the often bitter and protracted history of intergovernmental relations in Canada even though both premiers and prime ministers actively tried to solve national and provincial problems to provide social and economic security to all Canadians. The book amply demonstrates that first ministers are not governed by the simple political desire to gain or retain power but are motivated primarily by how to ensure fairness and equity for the political community they represent. The very success and stability of the Canadian federal arrangement – and Canada itself -- is premised on the ability of both levels of government to provide economic security for all provinces and all citizens regardless of place, but Canada has had long periods of disharmony between provinces and the federal government because its political leaders often have different strategies for reaching their goals. Premiers and prime ministers have also lost sight of the common good and have become fixated on issues of jurisdiction and on their opponents rather than what might be the best policy choices for the citizens who elected them. *Lions and Jellyfish* demonstrate that governing is often a messy and confrontational pursuit in federal states such as Canada where jurisdiction is divided between two orders of government.

The book is available at [Chapters](#) in St. John's and online at on [Amazon.com](#)