Acknowledgements

In the spring of 2012, we had the opportunity to teach an intensive six-week course on oil and democracy. Offered through the University of Alberta’s Community Service-Learning program, Class lectures were supplemented by a series of lectures sponsored by the university’s Parkland Institute, which conducts research into contemporary social and political issues from the standpoint of political economy. We had recently co-authored an article on the topic of oil’s potential to undermine democracy, which appeared in the May 2012 issue of *New Global Studies*, and we were aware of a number of our colleagues at Athabasca University whose research looked at various aspects of democracy in Alberta, in Canada, and internationally. Given that the following year would mark the sixtieth anniversary of the publication of C. B. Macpherson’s seminal work *Democracy in Alberta*, the time seemed ripe for a collaborative, in-depth, interdisciplinary exploration of liberal democracy in Canada, focusing on Alberta as the epicentre of an expanding oil-based economy. By the time this book was completed, in the spring of 2015, the world market for oil was markedly different, with the production of oil in the United States at all-time highs and the volatility of oil prices threatening the economies of oil-exporting countries. In addition, concerns about the state of democracy had become widespread. This volume represents an attempt to examine some of issues arising in this complex milieu.

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