Acknowledgments

_Governing with the Charter_ is the result of a Standard Research Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. I am very grateful to this organization for providing me with financial support at the beginning of my academic career. This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, through the Aid to Scholarly Publications Programme, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. It was completed with the help of several research assistants at Concordia University and Brock University, including Tamara Levy, Christopher Dueck, Daniel Lafferty, and Bohdana Diduch.

In the course of researching and writing this book, I incurred a number of personal debts that I want to acknowledge. Randy Schmidt was an outstanding editor and was the first to approach me to write a book on the _Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms_. I want to thank him very much for his patience, as he knows the circumstances under which this book was written. Several scholars read parts of this book and provided important feedback, particularly Richard Schultz and Christopher Manfredi. Richard Schultz suggested that I focus on the Charter’s effect on parliament as an institution after interviewing senators and members of the House of Commons in late 2002. This conversation changed the direction of the book and improved it significantly. Though Manfredi disagrees with my assessment of the Charter and judicial power, he was very supportive and provided critical guidance. I want to thank him for his good humour when listening to my latest critique of conservative judicial critics. I discussed this book with F.L. Morton during a meeting at the London School of Economics in January 2004 and benefited from his suggestions. Cor Vandermeer, a retired detective and staff sergeant from the Niagara Regional Police, read Chapter 4 and provided useful comments. Patrick James read the manuscript in its entirety and provided critical suggestions for its improvement. Janet Hiebert read parts of the manuscript in an early form, and I benefited
from her suggestions for improvement and wish to thank her. Finally, I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers of this book who provided critical and instructive comments that significantly improved this work.

In addition, I interviewed a number of senators, members of parliament, and public servants, and it was during these sessions that the theme “Governing with the Charter” entered my thinking. I’d like to thank senators Serge Joyal, Raynell Andreychuk, and Gérald Beaudoin for their time. After interviewing the senators and reviewing the important Charter scrutiny performed by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, the criticism of an unelected Senate seems trite. Also, I had the privilege to interview Irwin Cotler before his appointment to cabinet as minister of justice, as well as the following members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights during the second session of the 37th Parliament: John Maloney, John McKay, and Chuck Cadman. Former prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau granted me an interview in 1997, and I incorporated the research findings in this book. Finally, I conducted 100 interviews with public servants in every province and the federal government, including former Department of Justice deputy ministers Roger Tassé and John Tait and Justice Barry Strayer of the Federal Court.

My research on the Charter of Rights and its effect on Canadian constitutionalism and governance began at McGill University, where my dissertation was supervised by Richard J. Schultz, Christopher P. Manfredi, and Hudson Meadwell and was defended in April 1999. Few truly know the burden of supervising an Irishman (or hide the scars so well). Most of the writing of this book occurred when I moved back to Montreal in June 2003 to join the Faculty of Political Science at Concordia University after spending three years at Brock University. The writing was finalized in Wellington, New Zealand, in May 2004 during a research trip on the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990. The conclusion to this book is based on the research findings from New Zealand, and I would like to thank former attorney general Margaret Wilson and former prime minister Sir Geoffrey Palmer for granting interviews. Further, I interviewed the following members of the Justice and Electoral Select Committee: Tim Barnett, Russell Fairbrother, and Judith Collins. As always, I conducted interviews at the Ministry of Justice, Crown Law Office, Parliamentary Counsel Office, and the Human Rights Commission, as well as with members of the Faculty of Law, Victoria University of Wellington.

I want to thank my wife, Michèle, who is probably the most grateful that this book is finally completed. Michèle compiled the bibliography and case list, and I want to thank her for all her love and support during the writing. I’m very lucky to have found her.

This book is important to me because it is the one I told my dad I would write shortly before he died from cancer in June 2002. I began the writing
about a week before he was diagnosed in May 2002, and during the times I drove my dad to his treatments and sat with him, he asked me about my research and I sketched out the chapters for him. I didn’t realize this would be the last time I was alone with my dad, and I cherish these memories. The talks would end too soon, and I had to write this book without him. I miss you, Dad, and wish you were still working in your garden with Mom.

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