THE MASS POLITICS OF SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP

Lynda Erickson
Department of Political Science
Simon Fraser University

J. Scott Matthews
Department of Political Science
University of British Columbia

Paper prepared for the Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meetings, May 30 to June 1, 2003, Halifax, NS.

Introduction[1]

Much has been written over the last decade concerning the retrenchment and restructuring of state social policies in Canada. Although opinion as to the determinants of change is diverse (Matthews 2001), one important theme that has emerged is that the dominant ideas about social provision and the welfare state have substantially altered. The post-war consensus on the desirability of a relatively generous welfare state has been challenged by arguments that the demands of globalization require a reduction in state provision, more room for the free play of market forces and cutbacks in social spending by governments. From claims about ideological shifts (Maioni 1994) to accounts of the embedding of a neo-liberal discourse (McBride and Shields 1997) to descriptions of change in the "understandings" guiding social policy decisions (Jenson 1997), this theme of a shift in dominant ideas has been reiterated in a number of different ways. For some, references to this change is limited to discussion of elite politics. Others, however, do make mention of changes in public opinion/values relevant to welfare state politics. Yet empirical documentation of the nature of this opinion and changes in it is largely lacking (although see Peters 1995 and Mendelsohn 2002). Thus, notwithstanding the considerable attention to changing state politics in this arena, there is surprisingly little evidence about the public's (changing?) orientations to the policy and ideological choices relevant to social provision. It is the purpose of this paper to attempt to address this gap by exploring, at the mass level, the structure of opinion and opinion change concerning welfare state issues since the 1980s.

Informed by a concept of "social citizenship" developed in the literature on the welfare state, this paper looks at opinion concerning two aspects of social rights: "conventional rights" to state provision of social welfare services and benefits, and "new social citizenship rights" that address forms of inter-group inequality that cannot be reduced solely to economic class divisions. The latter include policies and provisions that focus on the material situation and recognition of groups such as women and racial minorities that have traditionally experienced "second class" status in Canadian society.

The paper begins with a discussion of some of the theoretical considerations that animate our study. It then describes the data and methodology used in our analysis. This is followed first by a discussion of the statics and dynamics of opinion on particular issues, and then by an analysis of the structure of public opinion across four different election studies. We conclude with a summary of our empirical findings.

Theoretical Considerations

One of the important organizing concepts that was developed in early work on the welfare state is the notion of social citizenship. Exemplified in the writings of T. H. Marshall (1964), this concept expanded the meaning of citizenship rights beyond formal legal and political equality to encompass social equality rights, including the right to a minimum level of economic security and social welfare assured by the state. Initially

[1] The authors would like to thank David Laycock for his work and contributions at an earlier stage of our study and SSHRC for its support.

focused on class inequality, the concept of social citizenship has been further extended to include equality guarantees to groups that have faced social disadvantage based on other, non-class, grounds. Social citizenship has, thus, come to refer to two overlapping but analytically distinct sets of rights and guarantees. The first set, "conventional" or "old" social citizenship rights, refers to rights and entitlements to state provision of social welfare services and benefits, such as pensions and health care, and state guarantees of economic security. The second set, "new" social citizenship rights, refers to guarantees of equal opportunity for socially disadvantaged groups, such as women, Aboriginal peoples and other visible minorities, to participate fully in public as well as economic life and to expect a reasonable level of respect and recognition from others. "Conventional" social citizenship experienced its greatest growth with the expansion of the welfare state in Canada that began in the post-war period and continued into the 1970s. "New" social citizenship only became an object of government policy beginning in the late 1960s, and a goal of constitutional design and judicial practice after the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

While the literature concerning change in the dominant ideas about the welfare state may imply increased defection from support for (most of) the public goods of the welfare state and increased public questioning of the validity of social citizenship rights in general, at the level of mass opinion the idea that support for most welfare state programs is interrelated and has declined substantially requires careful examination. We need to ask whether some elements of social citizenship have been increasingly rejected while others have not and to what extent attitudes to various aspects of social citizenship "hang together". Of particular interest is whether support for old social citizenship issues is related to support for the guarantees of new social citizenship and vice versa. As social citizenship advocacy has increasingly focused more on the distribution of opportunities and resources between genders and across ethnic groups, and less on their distribution across classes, the question is whether public support for conventional inter-class welfare state redistributive programs and services is linked to these other equality-related issues. Even as the retrenchment literature suggests welfare state provisions have come under considerable political pressure, a "new politics" literature (Brodie and Nevitte 1993; Matthews 2002; Nevitte 1996) suggests that equality claims such as embodied in the notion of "new" social citizenship have found increasing support, especially among younger generations. According to this literature, a fundamental shift in public values is increasingly evident in advanced industrial states, one characterized by a general movement away from the more materialistic pre-occupations of previous generations to a greater emphasis on quality of life values that incorporate, among other concerns, social equality.

The literature on mass belief systems leads us to expect public attitudes on social citizenship issues to be loosely integrated at best (Converse 1964; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1991; Zaller 1992). We would, however, anticipate that opinion on issues which are structured into recognizable topical frames by elite discourse and party competition (Jackman and Sniderman 2002; Sniderman 2000) will demonstrate more integration. In this respect, retrenchment frames have been the stuff of elite discourse for more than a decade, and have had prominence in party campaigns at the national and provincial levels. Themes here include the need to rationalize and reduce social spending for fiscal reasons and to keep the Canadian economy competitive internationally. Mainly focused

on conventional social citizenship programs, such themes do not generally distinguish between program types. Yet we might expect publics to differentiate between 'universal' programs, such as health care and public pensions, that benefit all classes, and 'selective' programs, that are more explicitly redistributive (Esping-Anderson 1995).

Another, related, aspect of the retrenchment frame relevant to old social citizenship has been a critique of state capacity, in particular the ability of governments to effectively organize and manage large scale state programs. While this issue may be part and parcel of the retrenchment theme in market-oriented discourse at the elite level, here too the public may differentiate between this aspect of the retrenchment narrative and their support for other elements of the social citizenship package.

The story with respect to new social citizenship issues is similarly complex. On one hand, public attitudes towards issues designed to ameliorate group inequalities might be contingent on sets of considerations that vary by group. For example, for issues related to women, traditionalism or views of family morality may be important considerations, while for Aboriginal peoples and other visible minorities, group affect (feelings about the group in question) may be the main force in play when people respond to policy questions (Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1991). We might not, then, anticipate that opinion on issues that deal with different groups will be linked in any systematic way. On the other hand, social advocacy groups and Charter talk in elite discourse have increasingly framed the issues of new social citizenship as equality claims. With citizens more and more primed to think about equality in relation to these issues, we may find that the mass public has increasingly come to organize their attitudes on these questions around a common set of beliefs about equality.

Data and Methodology

This paper is essentially an exploratory exercise that makes use of resources readily at hand. The Canadian Election Studies (CES) over the period from 1988 to 2000 constitute just such a resource.[2] In many ways, these national surveys are well suited to our task: each includes a battery of questions relating to policy concerns of relevance to social citizenship.[3] In other ways, however, the CES come up short. Here, the main concern is cross-temporal comparability. Two problems are important. First, not all opinion domains of interest to us are adequately covered in all of the surveys. This is

[2] Data from the 1988 Canadian National Election Study, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Centre (SSHRC), were collected by the Institute for Social Research (ISR), York University for Richard Johnston, André Blais, Henry E. Brady and Jean Crête. Data from the 1993 Canadian Election Study were provided by the ISR. The survey was funded by the SSHRC and was completed for the 1992/93 Canadian Election Team of Richard Johnston, André Blais, Henry Brady, Elisabeth Gidengil and Neil Nevitte. Data for the 1997 Canadian Election Study were provided by the ISR. The survey was funded by the SSHRC and was completed for the 1997 Canadian Election Team of André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte. Data from the 2000 Canadian Election Study were collected by the ISR and the Jolicoeur & Associates for André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte. The survey was funded by the SSHRC, Elections Canada and the Institute for Research on Public Policy. Neither the organizations that collected and distributed the data, the agencies that funded the data collection, nor the election teams that supervised the data collection are responsible for the analyses and interpretations presented here.

[3] Earlier national election studies did not include the same sort of questions on policy concerns relevant to social citizenship.

especially a problem for analysis of opinion relating to Aboriginal rights, as discussed below. Second, questions within the same opinion domains are not always asked in the same ways across the surveys. This is again most problematic in the Aboriginal rights domain, but it also crops up in other domains. These are mainly concerns for our analysis of the 1988 survey, but they also come up in comparisons for the latter years (1993-2000), which are otherwise highly comparable.

Some of these comparability problems are quite tractable. The analysis of multiple questions within a given opinion domain, for instance, permits us to take a more nuanced view of opinion change than treatment of single items would allow. The use of standardized scoring schemes also simplifies the comparative analysis. Our very awareness of comparability issues, finally, ensures that we are guarded and sensitive in our conclusions, thus preventing (we would hope) any serious interpretive mistakes. Even so, inter-question comparability is at times problematic and it is important to emphasize this limitation of our approach at the outset.

This important caveat aside, it remains that useful comparisons can be made across these surveys. Indeed, we are able to observe variation in responses to nine survey items for three contiguous analysis years and to three survey items for four such years. In this way, we are able to come to some reasonable conclusions about aggregate opinion change (and stability) over the period.

The choice of questions was governed by several, sometimes competing, considerations. First, as comparability is at a premium, items that were repeated in multiple years were highly prized. All other things being equal, such items were selected over the alternatives. Second, as always, maximizing the number of respondents was a perennial concern. The CES used a three wave survey for each of the four election studies: one pre- and one post-election telephone survey followed by a post-election mail-back questionnaire. An effort was made to select questions from the earlier pre- and post-election waves of the telephone surveys, rather than from the post-election mail back surveys. These latter surveys uniformly elicit significantly fewer responses and may also engender systematic sample bias. Thus, the preference in our approach has been for items from the earlier waves of the surveys. Even so, a handful of items from the mail back survey do make their way into the analysis.[4]

The final key element in question choice is more substantive in nature: as our interest is in uncovering the latent structure of opinion toward social policy, questions were chosen that explicitly addressed social policy matters. This is no minor point. An alternative approach might be to examine the sort of 'fundamental values' items as have appeared in the analyses of the principal investigators of the 1997 and 2000 election studies (see Nevitte et al. 2000; Blais et al. 2002). These items clearly have their uses. Our position is, however, in a sense agnostic about the causal status of such dispositions. That is, we are, in this paper, attempting to articulate a theoretical perspective on the structure of public opinion toward social policy that may conflict with or even encompass the 'fundamental values' perspective. In any case, it seems reasonable to begin an analysis of attitudes toward social policy with distinctively policy-oriented questions.

---

[4] This is principally an issue for the 1988 survey—five mailback items appear in our tables for this year. One mailback item each enters our data for 1997 and 2000. The 1993 data is entirely from the earlier survey waves.

Questions for analysis were identified within each of the opinion-domains discussed in the preceding section. Within the meta-domain of 'old social citizenship' we found items relevant to the *technical capacity of the welfare state* (specifically concerned with the role of the state with respect to jobs and the economy), *universal social programs* and *selective social programs*. In addition, for this domain for 1988 we identified a generic question about the level of taxes and services provided by government and from all four surveys we included a question that asked whether unions should have more power. While labour rights are not, as such, a social program, union power is clearly a redistributive element in the social welfare package. After all, the logic of unionization is to moderate systemic inequalities in the capitalist system. Union power, furthermore, is a selective entitlement—only a minority of Canadians count themselves among the ranks of organized labour.

Under the 'new social citizenship' rubric, questions relevant to *racial minorities*, *gay rights*, *gender issues*, *immigration* and *Aboriginal rights* were identified. The gender issues include a question on abortion, generally considered a touchstone issue for the feminist movement. The immigration question, which is addressed to levels of immigration, and which may seem less clearly relevant to social citizenship, is included as an indicator of support for pluralism, given the ethnic structure of contemporary immigration in Canada. All told, fifty-five items were culled from the surveys—fourteen each from the 1988, 1993, and 1997 surveys, thirteen from the 2000 survey. The 'pith and substance' of each question is represented in the tables (see below).[5]

To facilitate easy comparison, each of our questions has been standardized to vary across the -1 to 1 interval. Thus, whether the original item has three or five response levels, -1 marks off the 'lowest' category and 1 marks off the 'highest.' The top score—that is, 1—is accorded to that response level that we would generally regard as 'leftmost'—those who are most permissive on social spending or homosexual rights, for instance, are coded 1 under our scheme. Variables are coded such that, for each question, the interval between each response level is equivalent: an item with three response levels thus takes on values of -1, 0, and 1.

The analytic strategy we employ is basic to the study of public opinion. To introduce the data, we begin by comparing means across questions within each analysis year—the static picture. Means are a good choice as a summary statistic here for two reasons. First, and most importantly, means are a space and cognition saver—imagine the burden of interpreting fifty-five separate frequency tables! Second, our data in general are normally distributed. Means, thus, are a sound measure of central tendency in this context. One danger with use of the mean: variations in question structure—the number of response levels, for instance—can introduce systematic bias, as respondents attempt to map their distinctive responses on to the survey researcher's generic categories.[6] Thus, an apparent bump (upwards or downwards) in aggregate opinion may, in fact, hinge solely on question wording. In this paper, we defend against such interpretive mistakes through our awareness of this possibility.

We paint the dynamic picture through reflection on simple line plots of those opinion measures that are constant over the bulk of our analysis period. As noted above, we can observe twelve items over at least three analysis years. To be sure, this is hardly a

---

[5] Exact question wording is available from the authors by request.

[6] For a recent treatment of this issue, see Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski (2000), especially pp. 230-54.

surfeit of data points. Even so, several clear, interpretable trends emerge from the analysis and merit our attention.

The final component of the data analysis is aimed at uncovering the latent structure of social citizenship attitudes. The technique here is principal components factor analysis. Use of this statistical technique is standard in Canadian election studies (e.g. Johnston et al. 1992; Nevitte et al. 2000) and in comparative research on attitudes more generally (e.g. Van Deth and Scarborough 1995). Its great utility to public opinion studies is its ability to make salient the underlying structure of responses to a set of survey questions and, in so doing, to suggest the possibility of common determinants across broad classes of items. Here, the results of our factor analyses permit us to assess the nature and extent of linkages across the several opinion domains we consider. The statistic of interest in a factor analysis is the factor loading, reported in the tables, which measures, in effect, the correlation between each item and a series of hypothetical 'factors' or 'components' generated by the statistical technique. This statistic varies from –1 to 1. A set of items loading strongly on a given factor suggests that there is some underlying dimension of opinion that is common to the set. This is the sort of finding we emphasize in the analysis.

Public Opinion and Social Citizenship: Statics and Dynamics

We begin in Table 1 with attitudes toward social citizenship in 1988. Looking at measures pertaining to conventional or old social citizenship (OSC), we find a clear division between two sets of items. In the first set, which encompasses measures pertaining to support for the elderly and the poor, the public health care system, and spending on universities, mean levels of support range from .44 to .77. In the second set, which encompasses measures tapping attitudes toward the proper level of taxes and services, the power of unions, unemployment insurance, and welfare spending, mean levels of support are markedly lower—ranging from -.21 to .12. It is too soon to come to any conclusions about structure; even so, it is striking that, even in terms of support levels, the division that appears is between attitudes to programs and policies that are mainly universal on one hand and more selective on the other. The inclusion of the item about 'doing more for the poor' among the 'universal set' is a bit awkward for this conclusion. Still, the 'motherhood' quality of this question suggests that the item may be inflating support for action to ameliorate the situation of the poor. Indeed, taken at face value, this item would suggest that caring for the poor is more popular than caring for the elderly—an unlikely conclusion given results for succeeding years.

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

As regards new social citizenship (NSC), broad support seems to be the story—save for lukewarm attitudes toward 'doing more for ethnic minorities' and moderately negative attitudes toward increased immigration. Abortion rights, 'doing more for women,' guaranteeing equal rights to homosexuals in jobs and housing, and 'doing more for Aboriginals' all score roughly the same on our standardized measure—the range is .37 to .40. It seems safe to conclude that the average Canadian in 1988 was broadly

supportive of many elements of the NSC package. The exception, of course, is attitudes toward policy concerning ethnic minorities (.20) and immigrants (-37).

The picture of attitudes toward OSC in 1993 (Table 2) is little different from that for 1988. A universal/selective division emerges yet again, with strong support for pensions/Old Age Security, education and health care spending on one side, and weak support for unemployment insurance, welfare, and 'union power' on the other. Spending on pensions/OAS (.79) and education (.79) top the support rankings in this year, with health care spending not far behind (.69). At the bottom is support for increased power to unions: -.26. In 1993 we take our first readings relating to the technical capacity of the welfare state. In this year, the average Canadian felt government could solve economic problems (.35) and that government should not leave it to the private sector to create jobs (.14).

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Attitudes toward NSC in 1993 diverge in several ways from the 1988 results. Support for abortion rights (.49) and 'doing more for women' (.42) remains high, and support for increased immigration remains low, even dipping a little (-.46). Otherwise, the measures fluctuate—mostly in response to question changes. The negative reading on the gay rights question for 1993, which addresses gay marriage, makes clear how different this question is from the 1988 question. In the 1988 item, equality in basic employment and housing rights is at stake—no doubt this measure resonates with deep liberal commitments among Canadians to equal opportunity. The 1993 measure is quite different. Here, feelings about marriage, an institution central to Canadian social and cultural life, are engaged. One might expect, as a consequence, not liberal values but cultural and moral evaluations to be most salient to respondents. This supposition is just speculation at this point, but it does make sense of Canadians' lowly performance on this measure in 1993: -.29. Results for the 'Aboriginal rights' question suggest a similar story. The 1988 measure tapped vague attitudes toward 'doing more for Aboriginals' and received generally supportive responses. The 1993 measure queried Canadians' on the possibility of Aboriginals 'making their own laws' and received a quite dissimilar response: -.61.

One final note on NSC in 1993. Witness the difference in Canadian attitudes on the 'minorities' question when wording changes from 'ethnic minorities' (1988) to 'racial minorities' (1993)—opinion moves from moderate support (.20) to indifference (.06). Race and ethnicity are clearly different things to Canadians.

Results from 1997 (Table 3) strongly reflect those for 1993. The elements of 'universal social citizenship' in Canada—pensions/OAS, education and health care—are all present and accounted for—measures range from .77 to .79. And, once again, unemployment insurance spending (.41), welfare spending (.16) and union power (-.27) bring up the rear. Opinion on the technical capacity of the welfare state is little moved as well, in spite of subtle changes in question wording: the relevant readings are .38 and .14.

[TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

New social citizenship attitudes in 1997 also seem an echo of 1993, if a somewhat amplified one. Support for women's rights continues to top the rankings (.50 and .39 on the relevant measures), and increased immigration continues to languish in terms of support (-.39). The average Canadian is still unfavourably disposed toward gay marriage, though less so than in 1993 (-.25), and offers a middling response on 'doing more for racial minorities' (.14). Another new question on Aboriginal issues offers a middling reading as well (-.07).

2000 was a year of change on several fronts (see Table 4). First, though, let us note stability where it is present. On the OSC side, support for health care and education remains high (.86 and .81), and support for welfare spending and increased power to unions remains low (.09, -.22). 'Do more for women' remains a popular sentiment (.44) and 'do more for racial minorities' edges up slightly in popularity (.20). And another new Aboriginal rights question elicits another middling response (.13).

[TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

Now the changes. Response effects are clear in the new abortion question. The question from 1988 to 1997 was posed as a trichotomy:

> Abortion should be a matter of a woman's personal choice (scored 1 in our scheme); Abortion should be permitted only after need has been established by a doctor (scored 0); and, Abortion should never be permitted (scored -1).

The question in 2000 was quite different:

> Now a question on abortion: do you think it should be: very easy (scored 1); quite easy (scored .33); quite difficult (scored -.33); or very difficult (scored -1) for women to get an abortion?

Responses to the two questions were quite different: the mean in 1997 was .50; in 2000, .11. Why? Two arguments seem plausible. First, the questions are different in substance. The earlier question was addressed rather directly to abortion rights. The later question, by contrast, seems to tap both abortion rights and attitudes about the desirability of abortions as such. One could, for instance, be in favour of a 'woman's personal choice' with regard to abortion, while simultaneously not wanting abortion to be an 'easy' affair. The 2000 question has room for this response; the earlier question does not. Second, the addition of a fourth response level in 2000 opens up the possibility of contraction bias. As Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski (2000) note, respondents tend to "show some reluctance to use… extreme categories or scale endpoints" (244). Before 2000, respondents in favour of a broad conception of abortion rights were not offered an opportunity to express a moderated response; in 2000, such an opportunity became available. For these two reasons, it is reasonable to expect a different pattern of responses across these two versions of the abortion question. Indeed, we should expect precisely the precipitous drop we observe. In any event, it is clear that the measures are not comparable, and so we offer no speculation on dynamics in abortion rights opinion between 1997 and 2000.

Another striking change—and one that is certainly more than measurement artefact—is a steep positive trend in support for gay marriage by 2000. Indeed, opinion moves more than a tenth of the way across the -1 to 1 interval between 1997 and 2000—from -.25 to -.04. A shift of similar magnitude also registers in the immigration measure—the mean moves from -.39 (1997) to -.22 (2000). The average Canadian is still opposed to both of these aspects of NSC, but that opposition is substantially attenuated.

Three changes in attitudes toward OSC also merit comment. Faith in government's ability to create jobs softened in 2000, continuing a downward trend. This variable concludes our analysis period at .05. More dramatically, support for pensions and Old Age Security and unemployment insurance drops precipitously in 2000. The drops are roughly equal in magnitude to the gay rights bump. Whereas in 1997 support for pensions/OAS spending was indistinguishable from that for education and health care, by 2000 the patterns were divergent: the drop between years is from .79 to .57. As regards UI, the relevant numbers are .41 and .20.

A firmer grasp of these changes can be had though inspection of the longitudinal picture—summarized in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 portrays developments in attitudes toward old social citizenship across seven measures covering each of the three domains of OSC—universal and selective social programs, and the technical capacity of the welfare state. We observe six of these items for three contiguous years and one of the measures for the full period.

[FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

First, let us consider what remains relatively constant over the decade or so covered by our analysis. Our most long-term measure in this domain also receives the least favourable response from Canadians—the 'union power' item. The trend in this item is essentially flat, but for a moderate sag in the middle years. Never does the item edge above -.20. Somewhat more popular among Canadians is welfare spending. This item is moderately favourably evaluated in each of the three years during which we observe a response. Here again, however, no discernible trend is apparent—apart from a modest upward pulse in 1997. Finally, support for education spending remains high and relatively constant from 1993 to 2000. The trend here is flat, the line snaking around .80 across the bulk of the nineties.

What of the dynamics? The most subtle trend we observe concerns government's job creation acumen. What modest confidence Canadians had in government in this regard in 1993 had largely evaporated by 2000. The downward slope is slight, but detectable. Also taking a hit in 2000 was support for unemployment insurance spending. The trend across the decade is non-monotonic—there is a bump in support in 1997—but the drop between 1997 and 2000 is precipitous and worth mention. Likewise the drop in support for pensions/OAS spending—a drop roughly equal in magnitude to that for UI.

The drop in support for pensions/OAS is all the more striking when contrasted with the only positive trend we observe in the figure—the perfectly linear increase in support for health care spending from 1993 to 2000. The measure moves from .69 to .86 across the seven years separating Jean Chrétien's first and third majority governments. The item's final reading of .86 is, furthermore, the highest level of support we observe on any of our measures in any opinion domain in any of our analysis years. This comes as

no surprise, of course, but the contrast with the pattern for pensions/OAS—health care's erstwhile 'fellow traveller' in the universal social program domain—is striking. By 2000, it would appear, Canadians began to evaluate these programs differently. Some support for this view is to be found in the changing structure of Canadian opinion toward social citizenship, discussed below.

What of new social citizenship? Figure 2 tells the story. Note that we observe the long-term trend in support in all of our NSC domains but one: Aboriginal rights. As suggested at several points above, results in this regard are not comparable owing to highly variable wordings in policy questions relating to this issue over the analysis period. As regards trends here, then, we invite the reader to make what one will of the four different items reported in the tables.

[FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Our deficit in Aboriginal rights, however, is partially offset by the fact that we can observe two of our other NSC measures across all four of our analysis years. Starting with the 'doing more for women' question, the picture is more or less static. The line mildly oscillates across the dozen years or so covered by our analysis, but the long-term trend is pretty flat—Canadians consistently support the notion of doing more for women. Travel roughly half the distance across the -1 to 1 interval in the negative direction and one arrives at the other measure on which we have four observations: support for increased immigration. Across the period the picture is one of low support, to say the least, but an upward trend announces itself in 1997 and continues to 2000.

The trends in our three remaining NSC measures are uniformly upward. The mildest trend seems to be in support for abortion rights—support bumps up in 1993, an impulse that remains but is only weakly reflected in 1997. Canadians were generally supportive of abortion rights across the nine years separating the 1988 and 1997 electoral contests. More straightforwardly linear is the trend in support for 'doing more for racial minorities.' We observe this item from 1993 to 2000, and register an increase in support across the period of roughly .14 on our standardized measure. The steepest positive trend in the figure is observed in the gay marriage item. Across the decade, aggregate opinion moves from moderate opposition (-.29) to a point near indifference (-.04). Of all the movement we observe in all of our attitudinal measures—both OSC and NSC items—this is the largest. Variations in question construction across opinion domains strain the utility of this claim a little, but the trend is clear.[7]

We have covered a great deal of ground in the last few pages; let us conclude this section with a recapitulation of key findings. In the meta-domain of old social citizenship, a clear division in terms of support-levels can be observed between universal and selective social programs. This division was sustained over the analysis period and, in fact, sharpened in significant ways in 2000. The key story here is the drop in support for pensions/OAS spending, which is suggestive of structural changes in social citizenship attitudes—a proposition that finds some support below. Faith in the technical capacity of the welfare state also diminished measurably over our analysis years. In the

[7] It bears noting that the gay marriage question was placed in the mail back survey in 1997 only. As this reading is not strikingly higher than that for 1993, and is clearly much lower than that for 2000, fears about a 'social-liberal' sample bias in this portion of the survey may be overstated.

meta-domain of new social citizenship, the long-term story is easily summarized: increased support across (almost) all domains. Abortion rights, doing more for racial minorities, increased immigration and especially gay rights were evaluated more favourably in 2000 than earlier in the decade. Dynamics in Aboriginal rights opinion are something of a question mark, owing to a paucity of temporally-comparable measures.

2.3. Public Opinion and Social Citizenship: Structure

The support-levels story in hand, let us now proceed to the structure of Canadian public opinion on social citizenship. We should emphasize at the outset that in these analyses we are treating the public as a single unit. We are aware that various groups may structure their opinions in different ways, but given our interest in the dominant pattern among the public, this approach is, we contend, appropriate. Tables 5 through 8 report the results of separate factor analyses performed on the data for each of our analysis years.[8] Naturally, the same items appearing in the preceding tables appear in those to come.

The 1988 results (Table 5) are a bit of a puzzle, especially when compared with those for succeeding years. Part of their idiosyncrasy seems to hinge on the nature of the questions—some of which are probably inappropriate for our purposes. The 'doing more for the poor' question is a case in point, for the reasons suggested above. Most interpretable would seem to be component II. Loading strongly on this factor are union power, UI spending and welfare spending items. This is exactly what we should expect of these items—the key elements of the selective social program package.

[TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE]

Component IV also yields a fairly straightforward interpretation. Loading strongly on this factor are items tapping support for the public health care system and 'doing more for the elderly.' If this latter item is regarded as a cipher of sorts for such welfare state entitlements as pensions and Old Age Security, then this pairing would seem to represent a universal social programs factor in social citizenship attitudes. Even so, the loadings are quite asymmetrical—'do more for the elderly' loads at .786, health care at only .512—and support for 'doing more for the poor' also moderately plugs into this component. This is not the kind of clarity we would prefer of this factor, but, again, our efforts are hampered by features of question design.

The remaining factors defy simple interpretation. Component I seems a general 'doing more for' NSC factor: sizeable loadings on this factor appear for the 'do more for' items addressed to women, ethnic minorities, Aboriginals and the poor. Some of this shared variation is doubtless due to response effects—the questions are asked in succession and are similarly structured; perhaps this factor is just hooking into respondents' views on the general topic of 'doing more.' Still, the NSC items are pulled away in the analysis from the question about the elderly, and the question concerning the poor has the smallest factor loading. Our tentative conclusion here is that Canadians do

[8] As reported in the tables, factor loadings below .40 have been suppressed; that is to say, we do not present them. This decision clarifies the factor results. The full results can be obtained from the authors.

think about new social citizenship in distinctive ways—a common dimension seems to unite these concerns empirically.

Component III is a muddle. The two items loading most strongly tap attitudes toward spending on universities and immigration. We are tempted to regard this as a residual category of sorts—one might call it 'residual social liberalism.' The university spending question, for instance, is not just a question on education—such as those appearing in subsequent years. It is a question about elite, liberal education. No doubt those most likely to support such spending are the university attendees and graduates themselves—also the group most likely to take a soft line on immigration. Thus, the fact that these two items load on the same factor does not really undermine the position that new/old social citizenship questions tap different attitudinal dimensions among the Canadian public. Rather, it would seem to be an artefact of the nature of the education question and the statistical technique we employ, which, as it attempts to maximize explained variation in the factor matrix, can be highly sensitive to such intercorrelations. In short, we propose that we would find a different result if we had a different 'education' question—a result consonant with our expectations, and with the findings for the years reported below.

The perspective of the later analysis years also makes more sense out of component V. Two items load here: abortion rights and equal rights for homosexuals in jobs and housing. To prefigure the analysis to come, we propose that there are in fact two dimensions of new social citizenship: a racial/ethnic dimension and a gender dimension. This would be clear enough in 1988 if the 'doing more for women' item did not load on component I, but it is worth noting that it loads less strongly than the ethnic minorities or Aboriginal items—a pattern duplicated to some extent in subsequent years. Thus, we are comfortable labelling this the NSC-gender dimension.

Before departing the 1988 data, one comment on the asymmetry in the factor loadings on component V: it is, perhaps, not all that surprising that the gay rights question in 1988 should be somewhat pulled away from the abortion rights item. As argued above, this gay rights item undoubtedly primes liberal values concerning equal opportunity to a great extent. On the other hand, the abortion item likely also primes (among other things, and to a greater degree) liberal values concerning freedom and privacy. That these two issues prime these (liberal) values differently probably explains why they only travel together intermittently.

By comparison with 1988, the 1993 data (Table 6) yields a very clear analysis. Indeed, we observe five clear factors—one for each OSC domain, and two within the NSC meta-domain. Component III is perhaps most interpretable. Loading strongly are items tapping support for spending on education, health care, and pensions/OAS. This component is, thus, our universal social programs factor. Component I contains another part of the OSC picture—our selective social programs factor, with strong loadings for welfare and UI spending, and union power. These results also offer the first indication of a technical capacity of the welfare state factor: on component V load items relating to government's ability to 'solve economic problems' and 'create jobs.' These results suggest that there are, as we propose, three dimensions to Canadian thinking about old social citizenship.

[TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE]

NSC results are similarly clear. As alluded to above, two factors emerge: a gender factor and a racial/ethnic factor. The latter component is dominated by two items: 'doing more for racial minorities' and increased immigration. Aboriginal rights do not load even moderately on this factor. About this we can only speculate, but it may be that there are in fact three dimensions in NSC attitudes: one each for gender and race/ethnicity, and another for Aboriginal rights. Given a different analytic setup—more variables, different questions—such a factor may emerge. One reason the Aboriginal rights item does not load on this factor may concern the nature of the question, which concerns Aboriginals' right to 'make their own laws.' Given the profoundly negative mean response of Canadians to this item, noted above, it might be that the measure is entirely inappropriate as a proxy for Aboriginal rights opinion more broadly construed.

The NSC-gender component appears as expected: abortion rights and gay marriage load strongly on this factor. The question on 'doing more for women' loads far less strongly, but its appearance on this factor makes sense. Still, given results in subsequent years, we are reluctant to make too much of this finding. Our best guess is that the item is tapping things other—perhaps broader—than the gender component of new social citizenship. Indeed, note that, in the longitudinal analysis of support-levels, reported above, the item is relatively constant over the period, even as support for abortion and gay rights moves upward.

These 1993 results, thus, provide confirmation of our basic theoretical supposition: old and new social citizenship are discernibly different objects of evaluation for Canadians and, within these general categories, opinion is multi-dimensional. This general finding is duplicated perfectly in 1997 and—almost perfectly—again in 2000. We dispose of the 1997 results (Table 7) quickly. Components I and III give us clear universal and selective social program factors, respectively; the pattern duplicates 1993 in nearly every detail. The technical capacity of the welfare state factor registers in component IV, even more clearly than in 1993—perhaps owing to changes in question wording. The NSC-gender factor—covering gay rights and abortion rights—emerges in component V. The structure of component II, the NSC-race factor, is perhaps the only novelty in 1997. Here, along with doing more for racial minorities and increased immigration, the Aboriginal rights item loads strongly. The question this year is addressed to spending on Aboriginals. It is not immediately apparent why this item—and not the others—loads sensibly with the other racial/ethnic items. The conservative stance, given the variable pattern across the analysis years, is to remain essentially agnostic on the link between Aboriginal rights and the broader new social citizenship agenda for Canadians—and this is the stance we adopt.

[TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE]

The factor analysis for 2000 (Table 8) can, for the most part, also be dealt with quite quickly. The NSC-gender and NSC-race factors emerge, as before, quite clearly—in components IV and II respectively. The selective social programs factor emerges once again—component I contains the loadings of interest. The technical capacity of the welfare state factor is less clear in 2000, largely owing to the fact that only a single item taps this concern in this survey. Still, component V is clearly one not like the others and,

so, we take this as evidence for the existence of this dimension yet again. One puzzle here concerns the appearance of the Aboriginal rights question—which this year addresses the issue of whether Aboriginals are 'worse off' than other Canadians—on the technical capacity factor. With no clear answer to this, we remain, once again, quite guarded in our conclusions about opinion on Aboriginal rights.

[TABLE 8 ABOUT HERE]

The story in 2000 concerns the universal social programs factor. As always, health care and education load strongly—component III contains the statistics of interest. However, the pensions/OAS item *fails to load even above the .30 level*. Furthermore, this item *does* load, if only moderately, on the selective social programs factor: .472. Consonant with our speculation above, that support for pensions/OAS has dropped as Canadians have come to evaluate this social program differently, it would seem that attitudes on this measure are now being structured by a different set of commitments. Putting it bluntly—perhaps too bluntly—in the minds of many Canadians, pensions/OAS are no longer a universal entitlement; they are, instead, a selective entitlement conferred on a minority. Certainly since 1989, OAS has been subject to a clawback provision and, although public pensions in general (OAS/GIS and C/QPP) provided almost half of seniors' income in 2000, they have, in the last decade, been shrinking as a portion of seniors' income (Statistics Canada 2003). Our results may signal a striking reordering of social citizenship attitudes, one consistent with the theoretical portrait of retrenchment portrayed above. Whether or not this 'new attitudinal order' persists remains to be seen.

2.4. Summary

It is time to restate basic findings. First, the major conclusion: Canadian attitudes toward social policy appear to be structured around a handful of key dimensions that can usefully be ordered by the social citizenship framework. Two meta-dimensions are important: old social citizenship and new social citizenship. Within these meta-dimensions, a suite of lesser dimensions consistently emerge. Within the OSC domain, the dimensions are: universal social programs; selective social programs; and the technical capacity of the welfare state. Within the NSC domain, the dimensions are: racial/ethnic-oriented and gender-oriented. All these factors emerge with striking clarity and regularity over the years we examine.

Second, it is apparent that opinion toward old social citizenship in Canada is in great flux. Support for selective social programs is declining, while support for universal social programs is increasing. Furthermore, precisely what constitutes a universal social program may be undergoing a process of redefinition. By 2000, it would appear that Canadians no longer thought of pensions and Old Age Security in universalistic terms. Instead, they seemed to think of them more as they do selective social programs, such as welfare.

Third, support for new social citizenship is also in flux. Across almost every domain of NSC, we observe significant increases in public support. The most striking increase would appear to concern attitudes toward gay rights, measured in our analysis by a question pertaining to gay marriage. By 2000, Canadians had travelled a great deal on

this issue—from moderate opposition to near indifference. Canadian attitudes on increased immigration had also softened substantially by 2000, though the average CES respondent remained generally opposed. One other note on NSC: we are unable to come to many conclusions about the link between Aboriginal rights and the other aspects of new social citizenship, owing to a paucity of comparable questions. This is an important area for future work.

This paper has been motivated by the question as to whether the apparent collapse of the post-war consensus among elites on the welfare state has been accompanied by a wholesale collapse of support within the public for social citizenship issues. In fact, as we have described, it would appear a more complex picture is the appropriate story. Even so, it would seem clear that shifts in elite discourse are linked to at least some of the changes we have seen. Of special note here is the factor we have characterized as the technical capacity of government, including its separation from other social citizenship issues and its apparent decline across the period.

Table 1: Social Citizenship Attitudes (1988)

Variables	Mean	N
Old Social Citizenship		
The level of taxes and services should be higher	-0.18	3345
Unions should have more power	-0.21	3039
Do more for the elderly	0.75	2910
Do *not* reduce spending on universities	0.40	1933
Do *not* allow hospitals to bill patients directly for part of the cost of services	0.57	2058
Do more for the poor	0.77	2908
Do *not* make it harder to get unemployment insurance	-0.09	2054
Do *not* reduce welfare payments	0.12	1983
New Social Citizenship		
Abortion is a woman's personal choice	0.37	3475
Do more for women	0.37	2862
Equal rights to homosexuals in jobs and housing	0.40	2108
Do more for ethnic minorities	0.20	2791
Admit more immigrants	-0.37	3446
Do more for aboriginals	0.38	2852

Source: CES 1988.

Table 2: Social Citizenship Attitudes (1993)

Variables	Mean	N
Old Social Citizenship		
Government can solve economic problems	0.35	3690
Government should *not* leave it to the private sector to create jobs	0.14	3242
Unions should have more power	-0.26	2983
Do *not* cut pensions and old age security spending	0.79	3740
Do *not* cut education spending	0.79	3741
Do *not* cut health care spending	0.69	3739
Do *not* cut unemployment insurance spending	0.33	3701
Do *not* cut welfare spending	0.05	3689
New Social Citizenship		
Abortion is a woman's personal choice	0.49	3703
Do more for women	0.42	3357
Homosexual couples should be allowed to marry	-0.29	3502
Do more for racial minorities	0.06	3071
Admit more immigrants	-0.46	3575
Aboriginals should have the right to make their own laws	-0.61	3623

Source: CES 1993.

Table 3: Social Citizenship Attitudes (1997)

Variables	Mean	N
Old Social Citizenship		
Government can solve unemployment problem	0.38	3833
Government should *not* leave it to the private sector to create jobs	0.14	3778
Unions should have more power	-0.27	3069
Do *not* cut pensions and old age security spending	0.79	3124
Do *not* cut education spending	0.77	3124
Do *not* cut health care spending	0.79	3138
Do *not* cut unemployment insurance spending	0.41	3068
Do *not* cut welfare spending	0.16	3077
New Social Citizenship		
Abortion is a woman's personal choice	0.50	3078
Do more for women	0.39	3048
Homosexual couples should be allowed to marry	-0.25	1679
Do more for racial minorities	0.15	3677
Admit more immigrants	-0.39	3773
Government should spend more for aborginals	-0.07	3597

Source: CES 1997.

Table 4: Social Citizenship Attitudes (2000)

Variables	Mean	N
Old Social Citizenship		
Government should *not* leave it to the private sector to create jobs	0.05	3488
Unions should have more power	-0.22	2822
Do *not* cut pensions and old age security spending	0.57	2840
Do *not* cut education spending	0.81	2855
Do *not* cut health care spending	0.86	2871
Do *not* cut unemployment insurance spending	0.20	2775
Do *not* cut welfare spending	0.09	2799
New Social Citizenship		
Abortion should be easy	0.11	2620
Do more for women	0.44	3432
Homosexual couples should be allowed to marry	-0.04	3340
Do more for racial minorities	0.20	3396
Admit more immigrants	-0.22	3522
Aboriginals are worse off than other Canadians	0.13	3426

Source: CES 2000.

Table 5: Factor Analysis of Social Citizenship Attitudes (1988)

	Component				
Variables	I	II	III	IV	V
The level of taxes and services should be higher					
Unions should have more power		.639			
Do more for the elderly				.786	
Do not reduce spending on universities			.696		
Do not allow hospitals to bill patients directly for part of the cost of services		.459		.512	
Do more for the poor	.453			.427	
Do not make it harder to get unemployment insurance		.715			
Do not reduce welfare payments		.567			
Abortion is a woman's personal choice					.825
Do more for women	.583				
Equal rights to homosexuals in jobs and housing					.456
Do more for ethnic minorities	.735				
Admit more immigrants			.584		
Do more for Aboriginals	.673				

Principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Factor loadings less than .40 suppressed.

Table 6: Factor Analysis of Social Citizenship Attitudes (1993)

	Component				
Variables	I	II	III	IV	V
Government can solve economic problems					0.868
Government should *not* leave it to the private sector to create jobs	0.321				0.504
Unions should have more power	0.551				
Do *not* cut pensions and old age security spending			0.613		
Do *not* cut education spending			0.702		
Do *not* cut health care spending	0.304		0.642		
Do *not* cut unemployment insurance spending	0.701		0.303		
Do *not* cut welfare spending	0.688				
Abortion is a woman's personal choice				0.782	
Do more for women		0.367		0.423	
Homosexual couples should be allowed to marry				0.676	
Do more for racial minorities		0.726			
Admit more immigrants		0.777			
Aboriginals should have the right to make their own laws	0.316	0.332			

Principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Factor loadings less than .30 suppressed.

Table 7: Factor Analysis of Social Citizenship Attitudes (1997)

	Component				
Variables	I	II	III	IV	V
Government can solve unemployment problem				0.79	
Government should *not* leave it to the private sector to create jobs				0.719	
Unions should have more power			0.693		
Do *not* cut pensions and old age security spending	0.622				
Do *not* cut education spending	0.693				
Do *not* cut health care spending	0.774				
Do *not* cut unemployment insurance spending	0.436		0.599		
Do *not* cut welfare spending			0.611		
Abortion is a woman's personal choice					0.81
Do more for women		0.456			
Homosexual couples should be allowed to marry					0.722
Do more for racial minorities		0.784			
Admit more immigrants		0.616			
Government should spend more for aborginals		0.651			

Principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Factor loadings less than .30 suppressed.

Table 8: Factor Analysis of Social Citizenship Attitudes (2000)

	Component				
Variables	I	II	III	IV	V
Government should *not* leave it to the private sector to create jobs					0.768
Unions should have more power	0.618				
Do *not* cut pensions and old age security spending	0.472				
Do *not* cut education spending			0.768		
Do *not* cut health care spending			0.754		
Do *not* cut unemployment insurance spending	0.725				
Do *not* cut welfare spending	0.59	0.322			
Abortion should be easy				0.807	
Do more for women	0.381	0.443	0.308		-0.324
Homosexual couples should be allowed to marry				0.77	
Do more for racial minorities		0.736			
Admit more immigrants		0.716			
Aboriginals are worse off than other Canadians		0.471			0.586

Principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Factor loadings less than .30 suppressed.

Figure 1: Public Opinion and Old Social Citizenship - 1988 to 2000

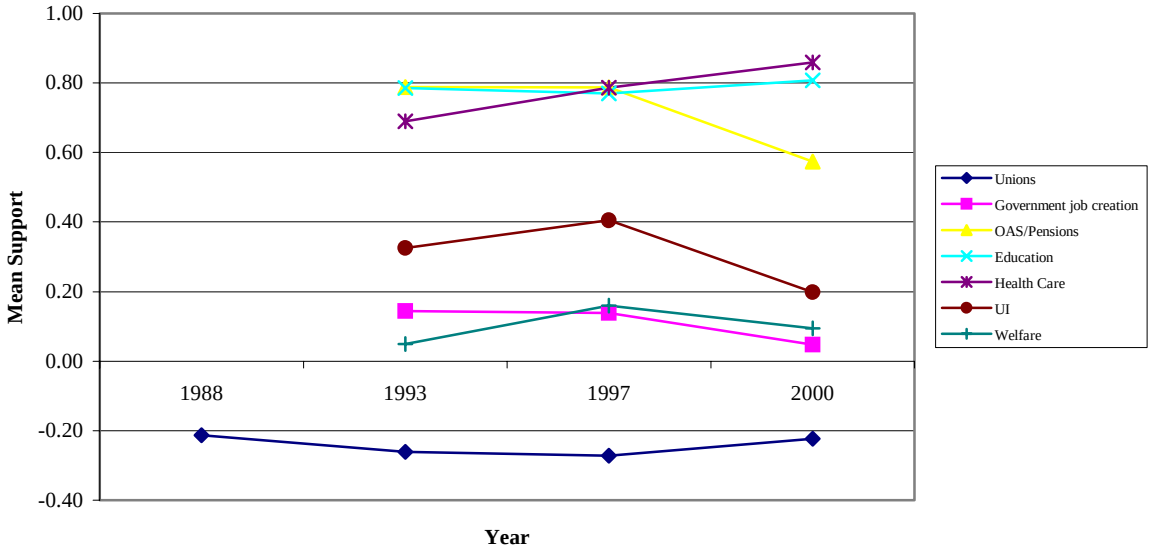
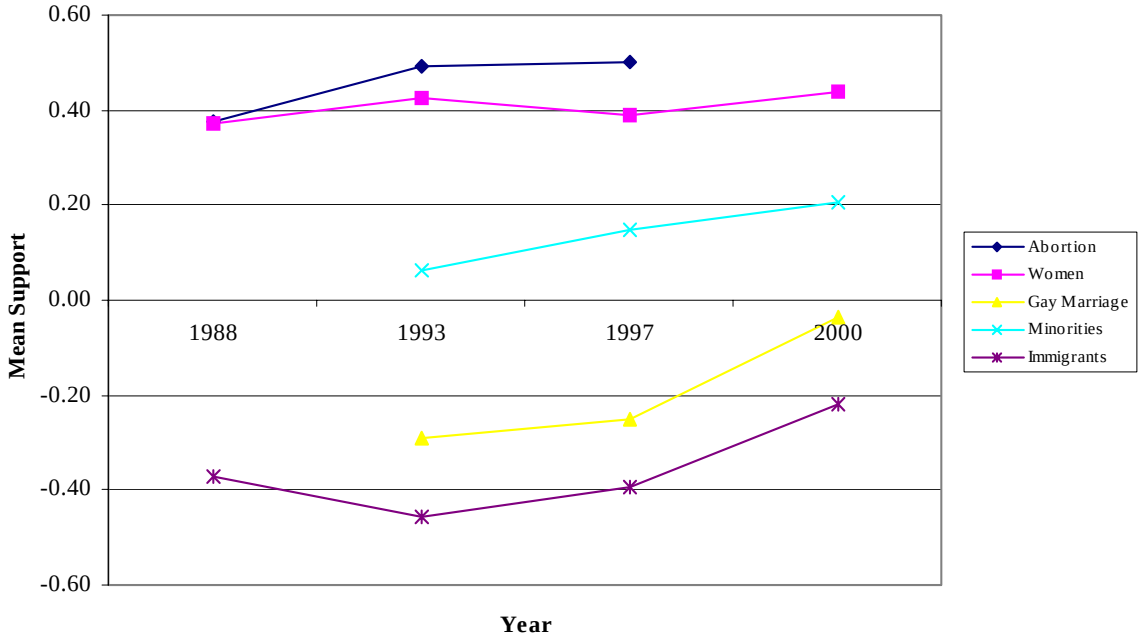


Figure 2: Public Opinion and New Social Citizenship - 1988 to 2000



REFERENCES

Blais, André, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte. 2002. *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory: Making Sense of the Vote in the 2000 Canadian Election.* Peterborough: Broadview Press.

Brodie, Ian and Neil Nevitte. 1993. “Evaluation the Citizen's Constitutional Theory.” Canadian Journal of Political Science XXVI: 235-59.

Converse, Phillip. 1964. “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics.” In *Ideology and Discontent,* ed. David Apter. New York: Free Press.

Esping-Anderson, Gosta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism.* Oxford: Polity Press.

Jackman, Simon and Paul M. Sniderman. 2002. “Institutional Organization of Choice Spaces: A Political Conception of Political Psychology.” In *Political psychology,* ed. Kristen R. Monroe. Mahwah, N.J. : L. Erlbaum.

Jenson, Jane. 1997. “Fated to Live in Interesting Times.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* XXX: 627-44.

Johnston, Richard, André Blais, Henry Brady and Jean Crête. 1992. *Letting the People Decide: Dynamics of a Canadian Election.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Maioni, Antonia. 1994. “Ideology and Process in the Politics of Social Reform.” In *A New Social Vision for Canada: Perspectives on the Federal Discussion Paper on Social Security,* eds. Keith Banting and Ken Battle. Kingston, ON: Calidon Institute of Public Policy.

Marshall, Thomas Humphrey. 1964. *Class, citizenship, and social development.* Garden City, N.Y. : Doubleday.

Matthews, J. Scott. 2001. “The Politics of Canadian Social Policy in the Nineties: Literature Review.” Unpublished ms. Department of Political Science, Simon Fraser University.

Matthews, J. Scott. 2002**. “**Class politics and the post-industrial transition : insights from the Canadian case.” M.A. Project. Simon Fraser University. Burnaby, B.C.

McBride, Stephen and John Shields. 1997. *Dismantling a nation : the transition to a corporate rule in Canada.* Halifax, N.S. : Fernwood.

Mendelsohn, Matthew. 2002. "Canada's Social Contract: Evidence from Public Opinion." *Canadian Policy Research Networks*. November, 2002.

Nevitte, Neil. 1996. *Decline of Deference: Canadian Value Change in Cross-national Perspective.* Peterborough, Ont. : Broadview Press.

Nevitte, Neil and André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil and Richard Nadeau. 2000. *Unsteady State: the 1997 Canadian Federal Election.* Don Mills ON.: Oxford University Press.

Peters, Suzanne. *Exploring Canadian Values: Foundations for Well-Being.* Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc.

Sniderman, Paul M. 2000. "Taking Sides: A Fixed Choice Theory of Political Reasoning." In *Elements of Reason : Cognition, Choice, and the Bounds of Rationality*, eds. Paul M. Lupia, Arthur, Mathew D. McCubbins, Samuel L. Popkin. Cambridge and New York : Cambridge University Press.

Sniderman, Paul M., Richard A. Brody and Phillip E. Tetlock. *Reasoning and Choice: Explorations in Political Psychology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Tourangeau, Roger, Lance J. Rips and Kenneth Rasinski. 2000. *The Psychology of Survey Response.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

van Deth, Jan W. and Elinor Scarbrough, eds. 1995. *Impact of Values.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.