

Are three parties better than five?:
A mapping of ideological space in Canadian politics, 1980-2000

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FIRST DRAFT
All comments welcome

Canadian voters hold disparate views about politicians and policy. Economic models of voting help us to understand how parties 'hunt where the ducks are', how they track these disparate views and articulate the policy positions most favoured by voters. We assume, in these circumstances, the voters cluster meaningfully along a number of issue spectra, and provide a useful target for parties. Using data from the Canadian Elections Study and the World Values Survey this paper examines ideological clusters of voters in elections since 1980 to determine whether clusters are stable over time, and how partisans compare to unattached voters. It tracks both the location and consistency of party supporters according to traditional dimensions of political ideology and to other spectra. The paper concerns itself primarily with how efficiently political parties cover the ideological space of Canadian voters, and whether the advent of five party campaigns better represented the diversity of political views. The paper is part of a larger research agenda on regional political cultures in Canada.

Paper presented at the
Canadian Political Science Association annual meeting,
June 2-4, 2005, London, Ontario

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In 1993 Canada witnessed a change in its party system from a three-party (or two plus) competition to one where five parties could reasonably expect representation in the House of Commons. That the two new parties represented regional interests heralded, for some, the end of a system of brokerage politics where national parties could seek to integrate the diverse interests of Canadians within the party machinery. The poor electoral showing for two of the three traditional brokerage parties seemed further evidence of a significant break with the old party system. If brokerage politics was characterised by the relatively mutable ideological positions of parties, in an effort to appeal to as many voters as possible, it is worth determining whether the addition of two new parties has altered the importance of ideology for parties and for voters.

This paper concerns itself with the ideological variance and congruence of voters from 1980 to 2000. First, it seeks to determine whether between 1980 and 2000 the Canadian electorate came to occupy a different position within ideological space, broadly conceived. Here it is primarily concerned with the ideological positions of different partisans, and particularly, whether the increased number of parties has led to greater coverage of ideological space. It is worth determining, for example, whether the addition of two new parties has merely made the ideological map more crowded than before 1993, or whether we can see greater, or even consistent, ideological variation in the choices offered to voters. Does the Bloc Québécois, for example, occupy a coherent position in ideological space that is distinct from its views of sovereignty? Second, the paper tests

for congruence between ideological clusters in the electorate and party views. Here it examines how effective parties have been in replicating the dominant clusters of opinion within the electorate and specifically whether the creation of 2 new parties offers an improved congruence between voters and parties.

If we are asking whether three parties are better than five, it is useful to determine how we would identify an improvement: better at what?; better for whom? The paper suggests that voter choice is better served by parties with relatively consistent ideological positions that occupy a greater range in ideological space than a party system where each of the parties occupy near identical mutable policy preferences. It also argues that ideological congruence between partisans and ideological clusters would serve to minimize perceptions of alienation between parties and voters. Voters who cast a ballot for a party that holds similar values might have reason to feel greater satisfaction with democracy than others, although admittedly this ignores whether the candidate or party wins, something we know is integral to voter satisfaction. For each of these tasks the analysis relies on two sources of public opinion: the results from the Canadian Election Studies for each of the federal elections since 1980 and the three waves of the World Values Survey(1981, 1990 and 2000), for which Canadian data are available.

Literature Review

Before identifying the role of ideology within Canadian partisan competition it is worth determining what we mean by ideology. Here, the short-hand has often been placement on the left-right continuum, a measure used frequently by the media but which research

suggests is of limited use as a single indicator of attitudes. Lambert et al, for example, found that left-wing self-placement appears only loosely related with union support, although university-educated respondents tended to see greater congruence between their left-right position and their attitudes to diverse policy areas (Lambert et al 1986). In most other respects, however, individuals seemed poor judges of their own position in ideological space. Early research on Canadian political culture identified the three ideological groups as socialism, conservatism and liberalism, arguing that migration patterns and influence at the time of institutional creation ensures enduring differences among parties and regions (Horowitz 1966, Hartz 1964). More recent treatments of ideology have relied on dominant dimensions highlighted by factor analysis (Scotto, Stephenson and Kornberg 2004, Cross and Young 2002). In this case ideology can mean attitudes towards the economy, to the State, to neighbours, or to modes of political expression. In these cases ideology seems to have far more in common with the broader concept of political culture, rather than the more limited definition of ideology.

Research on ideological dispositions in Canada focuses on two areas. A first cluster of research addresses the ideological differences among different party supporters. This includes not only those leaning towards particular partisan groups, or casting votes for parties, but also differences among party convention attendees or party members. In their analysis of party convention participants Johnston and Blake each found evidence of ideological difference, which seemed to provide empirical proof of Horowitz's research (Johnson 1988, Blake 1988). Johnston acknowledges, however, the presence of "a great deal of real non-ideological variance" (Johnston 1988, 65). Such research speaks to the

extent to which Canadian politics are dominated by a brokerage system or by ideologically-inspired parties. Advocates of a brokerage system argue voters rely less on party positions or ideology in order to cast their ballot, paying greater attention to transient features of political life such as campaign effects or leadership qualities (Clarke et al 1984, 1991, 1996). Under such conditions the ideological position of the party is less relevant to voter choice than other available sources of information. Research by Johnston and Blake suggests, however, that it is most useful to understand the relationship between brokerage politics and ideology not as a zero sum game, but as two differing influences over the behaviour of parties. The presence of brokerage parties does not mean the automatic absence of ideological variation within the electorate or among parties. At times this could mean that some parties are more assiduous brokers than others who adopt a more ideological stance. In some cases, though, even brokerage parties possess consistent ideological and meaningful boundaries. We have evidence that throughout the 1980s the Liberals and Conservatives opted for brokerage tactics, while partisans of the NDP exhibited more consistent ideological views. Evidence from the 1990s suggests that for the three traditional parties the broad ideological patterns did not change following the 1993 election.

Data from the 1997 CES demonstrates minimal differences between those backing the Conservatives and the Liberals in terms of attitudes towards business, social programs, moral traditionalism, gender roles, crime, immigrants or Quebec (Blais, Gidengil, Nadeau and Nevitte 2002). Indeed the very few occasions where Liberals and Conservatives appear to hold different views relate to policy areas with specific links to administrations,

including free trade and bilingualism. The NDP, BQ and Reform, by contrast, hold distinct ideological positions. For the NDP this manifests itself in far less support for business, more positive attitudes towards unions and those on welfare, greater levels of moral permissiveness, greater support for immigrants and the recognition of Quebec as a distinct society. In this the party remains clearly to the left of the Liberal party, a gap that is occupied in most cases by the Bloc Québécois. The Reform party, by contrast contains partisans obviously to the right of the Conservatives. In the 1990s, then, the Liberals and Conservatives remained centrist, brokerage bedfellows but were surrounded on the left and the right by ideological parties. It is worth asking whether brokerage politics refers to centrist politics or to ideological flexibility. In other words, is the brokerage politics defined by the location of parties on a spectrum with respect to the poles of that spectrum, or with respect to the placement of other parties?

Based on surveys of party members, Cross and Young identify four dimensions along which partisans may differ (Cross and Young 859). These include social tolerance, laissez fair economic strategy, views of provincial powers and populism. Perhaps not surprisingly they found greater variation in views of provincial powers than they did on social tolerance and populism, although the three traditional parties exhibited a considerable range of opinions on laissez-fair economic approaches. Basing their conclusions on the views of party members Cross and Young later pointed to systematic demographic differences among activists that could potentially account for these differences (Cross and Young 2004). While there are, for example, statistically significant differences among the parties in terms of language, the authors note that the

demographic profile of party members, regardless of partisan affiliation, appears unlike that of the electorate in terms of age, income, education and employment status. Almost half of all party members, for example, are drawn from the ranks of retirees. These attributes could explain the lack of variation in some ideological dimensions.

Research on party members and the electorate raises three salient facts about parties and ideology. First, it suggests that even with the addition of new ideological parties two of the traditional parties held to a more brokerage form of ideological competition. Second, the research suggests that all parties, including ‘regional’ parties such as the Reform/Alliance and Bloc Québécois have clear ideological positions. Third, it suggests that voters who left the Conservative party for the Reform party brought with them an ideological disposition that was essentially dormant in the Tory party. Thus, it appears not that the Conservative party was deprived of a rightist element in 1993, and thus became a more ideologically pure, centrist party, but rather that ideology played a minimal role both before and after the emergence of a second party on the right.

A second cluster of research addresses ideology through the lens of electoral competition. Here research seeks to determine which ideological positions are to the advantage of parties, whether parties are, for example, ‘hunting where the ducks are’ in terms of their stated policy preferences, and how efficiently parties court the median voter. Much of the research in this vein deals with spatial theories of voting, laying out the electoral map in terms of voter proximity to certain pre-determined party positions. For this to work, voters must first identify their own positions on a variety of issue spectra, evaluate the

positions of the various parties, and then cast a ballot for the most proximate party on the most important issue. Certainly evidence from Canada suggests that this model best accounts for voting decisions (Blais, Nadeau, Gidengil and Nevitte 2001). If, instead, the act of casting a ballot is an emotive one rather than a rational pursuit, individuals cast their vote not for the closest party but for the one championing the correct 'side' of an argument, a view that has advocates among those exploring American and European data (Listhaug, Macdonald and Rabinowitz 1990, Macdonald, Rabinowitz and Listhaug 1995, 1998).

Related to this is not only the way that parties court certain ideological voters, but also the role of ideology in the act of voting. In their analyses of voting in the 1997 and 2000 elections Scotto, Stephenson and Kornberg and CES team note that ideology is a predictor of voting behaviour, a result they find surprising for a supposedly brokerage system. They note that, for example, support for minority issues is positively associated with support for the Liberal party and negatively related to casting a Reform or Alliance vote. Similarly, a decrease in perceptions of alienation diminishes the odds of voting for the Bloc in Quebec, or for the Reform or Alliance outside Quebec.

This paper distinguishes itself from these previous efforts in two respects. First, it does not concern itself with the role of ideology in the voting process. It is unconcerned with the position of the median voter and does not seek to identify which ideological position is advantageous in terms of winning votes. Instead, it searches for changes in the ideological positions of parties, the identification of ideological differences among

partisan supporters, and the relationship of these party positions to ideologically pure clusters within the electorate.

Methodology

The paper relies first, on data from successive versions of the Canadian Election Study, 1980-2000. This includes two surveys conducted in a post-election-only format, the first rolling cross-section design in 1988, and three additional three-wave surveys. The CES is useful in that it contains a wealth of data that allow us to measure campaign dynamics, including perceptions of leaders, parties, campaign issues, debate performance and attentiveness to the media. At the same time, the CES also provides us with data on general political attitudes and behaviour. These include, for example, perceptions of trust, efficacy, satisfaction, confidence and patterns of civic engagement. As a result, the CES is a valuable resource for research into Canadian political culture.

There are, however, inconsistencies in question wording and in the topics covered from one CES survey to another. From 1980, questions probing the most important issue in the campaign, voting intention and past vote are common. The only continuous attitudinal questions, however, include left-right self-placement, questions on capital punishment and abortion. The section on trust and efficacy, for example, is absent from the 1988 survey, and indeed most of the continued items can be found only in the last three years of the survey. While this makes possible a robust analysis of post-1993 attitudes and behaviour in Canada it greatly complicates the task of measuring trends that extend across a wider range of elections.

The methodological challenges of employing successive CES years is illustrated by the use of left-right self-placement indicators. Between 1980 and 2000 both the question wording and the metric of measurement has changed over time. In 1980, for example, the left-right placement question was a four-point scale running from left to right. In 1984 this was replaced by a seven-point scale. The direction of the scale is consistent but in 1988 this changed further to a 5 point scale. In 1993 two questions probed left-right placement, one on whether the respondent felt on the left, right or centre, and a second question on intensity of placement for those on either side of the midpoint. The 1997 CES questionnaire included a 10 point left-right scale while three years later the question was reduced to a 3 point scale similar to the first question used in 1993. Identifying trends in ideological movement across the years by relying on such a scale is, as a result, a matter to be treated cautiously.

In an effort to mitigate some of these measurement issues the paper also draws on the three waves of the World Values Survey for which Canadian data are available.

Conducted in 1981, 1990 and 2000 the WVS contains a broader range of social attitudes but provides a more restricted range of political variables. More important for our purposes, the WVS contains greater continuity among measures than does the Canadian Election Study. As a result it is far easier to compare the scores of partisans over time.

We are slightly hampered in the timing of data collection. Because data collection for the CES takes place during and after election campaigns it is possible to determine how individuals are thinking and behaving at times of heightened party salience and party

competition. If we want to examine the relationship between party support during a campaign on ideology, then, the most appropriate time to examine such a relationship is during that particular campaign. Unfortunately the lack of continuous measures in the CES, particularly in the period prior to 1993, makes any such comparison impossible. As a result, it is necessary to turn to data from the World Values Survey which contains a higher proportion of continuous variables. Greater continuity arrives, however, at the expense of salience.

In its examination of ideological variation and congruence the paper relies first on left-right ideological scores for both the CES and WVS. It then turns to 35 of the common indicators across the three waves of the WVS in an effort to identify discrete ideological dimensions. Using these dimensions it is possible to identify the positions of partisans over time. These can be analysed for breadth but can also be compared to the positions of ideologically pure clusters within the electorate. By conducting a cluster analysis using the eight ideological dimensions it is possible to identify pockets of voters who hold coherent views in any election. The number of clusters was set to the number of political parties so that in 1981 it identifies 3 clusters, and in the latter two waves identifies five clusters. We can then compare the location of parties to these ideological clusters, allowing us to determine whether the introduction of additional ideological parties has led to greater ideological coherence between party supporters and ideologically-defined groups.

It is worth noting that in each case the analysis relies on individuals who responded to public opinion surveys. These are not surveys of party activists, party members, party convention participants or party elites. The sole method for locating the position of a party in ideological space has been to identify the ideological position occupied by its supporters. This is, of course, only one method to identify the position of parties in an ideological map. An equally valid method would be to construct an ideological scale that could be used to explore the policies espoused by parties in their electoral campaign material or in speeches delivered in the House of Commons.

Results

Left-right self placement

We can identify basic ideological trends by exploring left-right self placement scores over a twenty year period. In order to provide a useful comparison the diverse CES metrics discussed earlier have been converted to scales that run from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates clear support for the left and 1 is clear support for the right. The mean scores and standard deviations for these scales appear in table 1.

Table 1 about here

The results of table 1 point to two salient features of ideological debate. First, when looking at the aggregate data for Canada as a whole, there has not been considerable movement on the left-right scale from 1984 to 2000. The average score was .56 in 1980 and in 2000 is only .01 away from this position. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s the Canadian electorate could be described as a resolutely centrist one, albeit on the right side of the centre line. This confirms rather than refutes existing research on ideological

preferences in Canada. Although the mean scores appear relatively stable, there are interesting variations in the standard deviations. While these might be attributable to the measurement metric, it is worth noting that the standard deviation for ideological self-placement decreased in 1993. This suggests that, in the aggregate, Canadians occupied a smaller range of ideological space following the introduction of two new parties than when there were only three partisan contestants. While variation remained low in 1993 and 1997, the standard deviation increased to .33 in 2000, suggesting that there is not an automatic link between number of parties and ideological breadth. More parties do not imply greater ideological diversity. Indeed while holding the number of parties constant we can see variations in ideological diversity from one election to another. This becomes clear when examining the individual scores for parties.

Second, if we explore the results for different partisan supporters we find some consistent results. In each election the NDP was the furthest to the left, and until the introduction of the Reform/Alliance the Conservative party anchored the right end of the spectrum. Even though the average for the electorate as a whole remained quite consistent we see considerable movement among the parties. First, some parties have shifted ideological ground more than others. Both the Liberals and the Conservatives moved minimally to the left, by .06 and .03 respectively. Indeed the greatest shift has been from the traditional ideological party. From 1984 to 2000 the NDP moved .18 to the left. The Bloc Québécois has moved slightly to the left while the Reform/Alliance party moved by 2000 significantly to the right. Variation among the parties, then, can be explained by fairly extensive movement by the two parties at the ideological poles, while the parties in

the centre shifted much less. If we explore the ideological spectrum from the average score of the party furthest to the left and the average score of the party furthest to the right we see that certain elections were more prone to ideological discord than others. In 1980, our base election, the gap between the average scores of the NDP and the Conservative party was .13. Indeed in this election the ideological placement of Liberal and Conservative supporters was near identical and any sense of ideological breadth was introduced by NDP voters. By 1988 the gap between parties at each pole had increased to .30. This confirms what we know of the 1988 election, that free trade polarized the electorate. Conservative supporters placed themselves further to the right than they had in 1980 and 1984 and supporters of both the Liberals and NDP moved to the left. With the introduction of two new parties in 1993 we might expect two findings. First, we might expect the ideological distance between the party furthest to the left and the party furthest to the right to increase. Second, we might expect to find greater ideological consistency within the political parties and see, as a result, a drop in the standard deviation of these scores. Certainly we can observe the latter. The standard deviation scores for the Liberal and Conservative parties each dropped with the creation of the Reform party. We see at the same time that the average left-right score for the Conservative party dropped from .67 in the 1988 election to .57 in the 1993 election, suggesting that the right wing of the party had defected to the Reform. If we consider the first expectation that the ideological distance between the 'extreme' parties would increase in 1993 we find however that this is not the case. In 1993 the distance between the party furthest to the left and the party furthest to the left was half of what it had been in the previous election and in 1997 remained smaller than the spread of ideological

distance in 1988. These data support results produced by the CES team, which show that only on particular policy areas, such as free trade, are there significant differences between the Liberals and the Conservatives. Lower salience for such issues appears to correlate with decreased ideological breadth.

The elections in 1993 and 1997 show that an increase in the number of parties does not result in a wider range in left-right positions. In both elections Reform/Alliance party supporters were closer to the Liberal party than had been Conservative party supporters in 1988. Indeed the Alliance party was no further away from the Liberal party than had been the Tories in the 1984 election, one we do not characterize as a polarized election in terms of ideology. It is not until the 2000 election that we see a gap between the NDP and the Alliance party comparable to that in the 1988 election. Here it is worth noting that the Liberal and Conservative parties remained relatively close to their previous average scores. Both the NDP and BQ moved further to the left for this election, and the Alliance moved considerably to the right, with an average left-right score of .72 out of 1.0. It would appear that the Liberal and Conservative parties are holding remarkably similar ground both in terms of the positions they have staked out in the ideological spectrum but also with respect to their proximity to each other. In addition, the 2000 election witnessed not only the largest ideological spread among the parties but produced the highest standard deviations within the parties. We should be cautious though and note that the metric used might have inflated these standard deviations. This might cause us to wonder, however, whether the high standard deviations are not symptoms of lower levels of ideological coherence among the political parties.

While interesting, there are a number of drawbacks with these data. First, we are relying on self-placement scores as a measure of ideology. We know from earlier research that there is only a minimal relationship between self-identified left-right location and attitudes or behaviours (Lambert et al 1986). An individual believing himself on the left might possess attitudes that are further to the right of someone placing herself in the centre. Second, we are relying on a single indicator. In order to get a better sense of the distribution of party supporters in ideological space it is fruitful to consider a wider breadth of indicators.

The following analysis relies on the three waves (1981, 1990 and 2000) of World Values Survey for which Canadian data are available. In order to determine whether the populations of the two surveys are comparable it is useful to examine the left-right self-placement scores for this second dataset. Here we find the same spread of answers across the parties. In each case the NDP is the furthest left, although the mean scores reported here are slightly higher than they are for the CES data. Liberals and the Conservatives occupy the centre and right respectively. The appearance of the Bloc Québécois occupies the middle ground between the NDP and Liberals, while the Reform/Alliance is located to the right of Liberal supporters. The range from furthest left to furthest right is comparable to the CES dataset, with a spread of .13 in 1981 and 1990 and a slightly increased range in 1990. Over the course of the dataset we also see partisans of the three traditional parties gradually moving towards the left. The NDP mean score in 1981 was .54 while by 2000 it was .48. We see similar trends in the Liberals (from .60 to .54) and

the Conservatives (from .67 to .59). By contrast, the Reform/Alliance party and the Bloc Québécois show greater ideological consistency, occupying mean scores around .62 and .52 respectively. This suggests a stability in the Reform/Alliance position that is not evidence in the CES data. Although using a different metric than many of the years for the CES data we can be relatively confident that we are witnessing similar trends in left-right placement in the World Values Survey data in terms of the position of parties on the scale but also their relationship to each other.

In order to engage more than left-right placement the following analysis identifies ideological dimensions present in the World Values Survey by drawing on 35 of the indicators that appear in all three waves of the Canadian data. These include measures of religiosity, including the importance of God, belief in heaven and hell, life after death and the extent to which the respondent feels religious. Additional measures include confidence in a variety of public institutions, including political institutions such as Parliament and the civil service, but also social organizations such as the churches, unions, press and police. Attitudes towards neighbours, including those of different racial and religious backgrounds co-exist with measures probing attitudes to neighbours with what might be considered troublesome characteristics, such as drug addictions, crime and drinking problems. The survey also contains measures of moral permissiveness in terms of attitudes towards euthanasia, homosexuality, prostitution and suicide, in addition to measures of social conservatism as it relates to family dynamics. Last, the data include a measure of post-materialism, using only the four-point scale contained in all three waves, and an index of political protest activity, which probes

exposure to such non-traditional expressions of political voice such as petitions, boycotts, demonstrations, strikes and the occupation of buildings.

Table 2 about here.

The results from table 2 show the factor loadings for these measures. The factor analysis reveals eight factors that account for 52% of the variance in the dataset. The first factor, accounting for almost 20% of the variance, can be described as a religiosity factor, with high loadings for belief in heaven, life after death, the importance of God, self-description as religious, the importance of prayer and other religious variables. The second factor, which might be considered a measure of moral permissiveness includes loadings for variables probing support for the social practices listed earlier. The third factor highlights confidence in institutions but here it selects out those associated with the State, such as civil service, Parliament and respect for authority. This is distinct from a sixth factor identified later that includes variables probing confidence to more public organizations such as unions, the press and police. The fourth factor distinguishes attitudes towards neighbours of a different race or religion, while the fifth contains loadings for neighbours with socially undesirable or troublesome traits. A seventh factor identifies measures of social conservatism, including whether a woman needs a child to be fulfilled and whether a child needs both parents, and the last contains measures associated with post-materialism, including not only measures of quality of life, but also non-traditional methods of expressing political voice and how often the respondent thinks about the meaning of life. These eight factors have been used throughout the rest of the analysis as a means of testing variations in ideology over time.

Table 3 about here

We know already that there has been relatively little movement in terms of aggregate left-right placement. It is equally useful to determine whether public attitudes to a broader range of dimensions have changed significantly since 1981. Here, the answer is a qualified yes. The results in table 3 show there has been a steady and significant increase in moral permissiveness from 1981 to 2000. We see a similar increase in support for the State between 1990 and 2000 and an increase in post-materialism, particularly between 1981 and 1990. At the same time we see contradictory trends. The data show an increase in social intolerance, measured here as attitudes towards neighbours with a host of socially undesirable troubles, and a slight decrease in confidence in public organizations.

Table 4 about here.

It is one thing to determine whether Canadians have become more religious, or less socially conservative. It is another matter to determine whether there has been a meaningful shift among certain pockets of the population. The results for table 4 show the mean scores on each of the measures for the various parties to which respondents felt an affinity. Here, the changes across time are instructive. Analysis of variance scores show that in 1981 the three parties differed significantly only on one measure, social conservatism. By 1990, however, the five parties differed significantly on five of the eight items, including on religiosity, confidence in State institutions, openness to others, confidence in public organizations and post-materialism. By 2000, party affinity produces statistically significant deviations on all eight items. In other words, party supporters are becoming more diverse in their attitudes, rather than less diverse. This points to what has been suggested earlier, that the increase in political parties has

heralded the end of brokerage politics – something that should not surprise us – and has ensured greater ideological differences among partisans than was previously the case.

While we should be cautious assuming that the end of brokerage politics automatically heralded the emergence of ideological politics, we appear to have evidence of a marked increase in ideological variation among partisan over a twenty year time period.

Testing whether we have seen an increase in the ideological nature of political parties is a tricky task. One method would be to determine whether measures of ideology serve as useful predictors of party affinity or party vote. In this respect, ideology is relevant if it serves as a predictor of voting intention. The ideological nature of political parties can also be examined by congruence. It is useful for us to determine whether there are ideologically coherent pockets within the population, and if there are, how these pockets related to partisan groups. If we are witnessing an increase in ideological parties and a decrease in the extent to which parties serve as brokers of diverse interests we might expect parties to tack increasingly towards the views of ideologically pure clusters. In other words, if ideologically pure clusters exist within the electorate, and if parties are becoming ideologically distinct from one another, we might expect to see an increased convergence between the ideological positions of parties and these ideological clusters. The following analysis relies on a cluster analysis conducted according to the eight factors identified earlier.

The cluster analysis has been set to identify the same number of clusters as parties. As a result it identifies three ideological clusters in 1981 and five in 1990 and 2000. The cluster analysis produces three pockets of roughly equal size in 1981, and four relatively

equal clusters in 1990 and 2000, where a final cluster represents a far smaller proportion of the electorate. In order to determine how these clusters relate to the eight ideological dimensions table 5 tracks the mean scores for each cluster.

Table 5 about here.

Faced with the mean scores for each cluster for each of the ideological dimensions we have two questions that we might consider. First, do the clusters represent greater ideological diversity than the major parties in Canada? The answer here is clearly yes. In 1981 parties offered greater ideological diversity on two issues, moral permissiveness and confidence in the State. On all other dimensions the clusters offered a greater range of views. In 1990, party divisions accounted for only a fraction of the diversity presented by parties and in 2000 parties provided greater diversity only on the issue of social conservatism. The average range in views here are instructive. The average range for parties was .25 in 1981, .51 in 1990 and 2000. The average range for clusters was .70 in 1981, 1.63 in 1990 and 1.58 in 2000. Clearly the parties represent only a fraction of ideological space in Canada, about one third of it, to be precise.

Second, we might ask ourselves how to describe the ideological clusters. Do their scores on the ideological dimensions suggest that we might be able to label some ‘conservatives’, others ‘liberals’ and a third group ‘socialists’? The mean scores for 1981 show us that we can identify three relatively helpful labels for the clusters.

1981 Cluster 1: Red Tories
Cluster 2: Conventional Social Democrats
Cluster 3: Traditional Conservatives

Cluster 1 might be considered a red Tory cluster, composed as it is of respondents who have high levels of confidence in public institutions, are religious, relatively socially progressive but not necessarily morally permissive. Cluster two might be considered a social democrat cluster. This includes members who are very socially progressive in terms of family definition, have levels of moral permissiveness that are comparable to the NDP and average confidence in public organizations. Members in cluster two score low on levels of post-materialism and thus we might consider these not 'new politics' social democrats but of a more conventional ilk. Members of cluster three score low on social permissiveness and confidence in public institutions. This suggests that we might consider these traditional conservatives. These labels are confirmed, somewhat, by the average left-right scores for these three clusters: .61, .56 and .60 respectively.

- 1990 Cluster 1: Red Tories (.61)
- Cluster 2: Religious conservatives (.57)
- Cluster 3: Post-material social democrats (.56)
- Cluster 4: Alienated conservatives (.59)
- Cluster 5: Secular conservatives (.52)

Cluster one contains the least intolerant respondents, those with the lowest levels of confidence in public organizations and low scores on post-materialism. As a result their attitudes towards fellow citizens they might be considered red Tories as they bear no hostility to those with socially undesirable characteristics but are not post-materialists.

Cluster 2 contains respondents who are among the most religious, conservative and materialist in their outlooks. As a result they may be labelled religious conservatives.

Cluster three contains respondents who are the least conservative, have the least support for the state, are the most morally permissive and most likely to be post-materialists. The higher degree of moral permissiveness suggests that these might be considered post-

material social democrats. Cluster 4 contains those who are the most intolerant of others, whether those with socially undesirable characteristics or those of non majority religious or races. These respondents exhibit low levels of confidence in the state and negative scores on moral permissiveness. These might be considered alienated conservatives. Last, cluster five contains respondents who present something of a paradox. They are conservative and not morally permissiveness. At the same time they are the least religious and least hostile to foreigners. An apt label, then, might be secular conservatives.

- 2000 Cluster 1: Religious liberals (.52)
- Cluster 2: Alienated conservatives (.57)
- Cluster 3: Secular conservatives (.55)
- Cluster 4: Post-material social democrats (.56)
- Cluster 5: Religious conservatives (.58)

The cluster analysis for 2000 shows several of the groups highlighted in the 1990 results. There appears to be a cluster for alienated conservatives as is there is before, containing respondents who are the least confident in the state, least morally permissive and most conservative. Secular conservatives, defined here by their tolerance for others and their confidence in the state also appear in the 2000 results. Religious conservatives are present here too, representing those most hostile to those of non-majority races and religions, most religious and most conservative, as are post-material social democrats. In addition the results identify one new cluster. Religious liberals are tolerant of others and religious but have low levels of confidence in the State and public institutions.

These results suggest that there are dominant and enduring clusters within the Canadian electorate. Red Tories appear present in 1980 and 1990 but have disappeared by 2000.

Traditional conservatives have by 1990 been replaced by either religious conservatives or alienated conservatives. Conventional democrats, absent in 1990, have in 2000 become transformed as post-materialists. It is worth determining, though, whether these ideological groups reflect in any way the partisan divisions within Canada. To do this we can turn our attention to a third task. We can examine the relationship between the clusters and the parties by focusing both on the voting habits of members within each cluster but also on the degree of overlap between clusters and party supporters.

Table 6 about here.

Table 6 reports the results for party support by cluster. These results show which party is preferred by the majority of each ideological cluster. In 1981, for example, we see that over half of red Tories backed the Liberals while over half of conventional social democrats backed the Conservative party. In 1990 and 2000, however, no one party drew majority support from any ideological cluster. Instead we see that the Liberals did particularly well among both red Tories, religious conservatives and post-material social democrats. Alienated conservatives preferred, however, the Conservative party and a disproportionate large group selected the Bloc Québécois. The results in 2000 show that the religious liberals and religious conservatives were drawn disproportionately to the BQ while alienated conservatives opted for either the Liberals or the Reform party, and Secular conservatives backed the Liberals or the NDP. If anything, the results show that there is no automatic relationship between partisanship and ideological cluster. The respondents in the traditional conservative cluster, for example, did not all back the Conservatives. Indeed in each ideologically pure cluster we see results that are not

wildly different from the aggregate voting levels for Canadians as a whole. The relationship between clusters and parties is even clearer, though, when we examine the ideological composition of party support. This allows us to see trends over our time period but also to see clearer patterns of ideological congruence.

Table 7 about here.

Perhaps most interesting among the results in table 7 is the dominance of conservative ideological clusters among the ranks of partisan supporters. In each year a majority of support comes from ideological clusters we might associate with the right of the spectrum, although they are distinguished from each other in terms of their religiosity and support for the State. Even the NDP, the party for which there is the clearest evidence of a link between left-right placement and leftist ideology, draws predominantly from conservative clusters, although this is mediated slightly in 2000. Admittedly the predominance of conservative support is a function of the labels assigned to the clusters themselves and we should exercise caution when assuming that the label is a useful shorthand for the various ideological dimensions at play.

The results from table 7 also show that parties draw disproportionately from different ideological clusters. This is evident across all three waves of the data. In 1981 the PCs and NDP gained majority support from traditional conservatives, while the Liberals drew mainly from red Tories. This difference is even more striking in 1990, where the Liberals drew two thirds of their support from red Tories, the Tories drew about one third of their support from religious conservatives and each of the more ideological parties drew more from still other clusters. Indeed the results from 1990 suggest the greatest

ideological congruence between parties and clusters. We can employ two crude measures of ideological congruence. First we can identify the average for the largest row percentage in table 7. This tells us merely how big the largest ideological block is within the parties. According to this measure, then, the average largest block in 1981 was 50.1, meaning that on average a party drew half of its support from one cluster only. By 1990 this drops to 39.4 and by 2000 still further to 33.0. This suggests that parties are decreasingly garnering majority support from distinct ideological blocks. What this ignores, however, is the impact of ideological block variety on parties. If all parties are drawing equally from the same ideological block this is not necessarily a better indication of ideological congruence between party supporters and ideologically-defined clusters. Lambda scores for the three years show an insignificant relationship between party and ideological cluster but significant relationships in 1990 and 2000. This suggests that parties are doing a better job of garnering plurality support from distinct ideological blocks.

Conclusion

What then, can we make of these results? Perhaps most important, the addition of parties and the end of brokerage politics has had a clear effect on the ideological map of Canadian politics. There are, of course, only minimal differences in terms of left-right self placement scores for most partisans and the post-brokerage elections of 1993, 1997 and 2000 were not characterized by greater ideological diversity than when three parties contested seats. This suggests that the ideological spectrum was merely more crowded than before, rather than more diverse. If we look at ideological dimensions other than left-right self-placement, however, we see clear evidence of difference. There are

statistically significant differences over time across seven of the eight ideological dimensions that emerge from factor analysis. This is clear evidence of value *change*, but not necessarily of a changed relationship with parties.

Our conclusions about the ideological clusters within the electorate confirm that the parties do a relatively poor job of capturing existing ideological variation within Canada. This suggests that even though ideology may well serve as a predictor of support for the Liberals or the Alliance that voters are casting ballots for parties a considerable distance from their own ideological preferences. The ideological groups captured by the cluster analysis provide a greater diversity of opinion than do the parties. Interestingly, within clusters, voting habits tend to mirror aggregate trends. If we look to the ideological composition of partisan support from 1980 to 2000, however, we find the clearest evidence of a lack of congruence and trends over time. In 1981 all three parties drew approximately half of their support from a single cluster. In 1990 only the Liberals did so, and in 2000 parties drew primarily from four separate ideological clusters: alienated conservatives, secular conservatives, post-material social democrats and religious liberals. The results from this exercise highlights the varying trends in dominant clusters over time, so that we see an increasing importance of post-material clusters as of 1990 a decrease in conventional or traditional socialists and conservatives, and a fracturing of conservative clusters on the basis of religiosity and support for the state. The results do not speak to the proximity of clusters to parties, a topic that clearly deserves greater attention.

Further research on this area would do well to pursue several avenues. First, future research could examine the impact of perceived issue importance on the proximity of partisan supports to each other. Certainly the evidence from our data suggests that the dominant issues in a campaign can affect ideological self-placement. The cluster labels also warrant attention. At present these labels are positional rather than absolute. In other words, members of a religious cluster are clearly more religious than other voters but they do not occupy fixed point as far as religiosity is concerned. Last, it would be worth testing whether the identification of five clusters in 1981 could have helped to predict the emergence of two new parties a decade later. Each of these avenues would help to further clarify the changing ideological map of Canada.

Table 1: Left-right placement among parties, 1980-2000

	Canada	NDP	BQ	Liberal	PCs	Ref/All	Range (left-right)
1980	.56 (.22)	.47 (.21)		.59 (.21)	.60 (.21)		.13
1984	.57 (.22)	.43 (.23)		.56 (.21)	.63 (.21)		.20
1988	.56 (.24)	.37 (.21)		.49 (.21)	.67 (.21)		.30
1993	.52 (.18)	.42 (.17)	.46 (.16)	.51 (.15)	.57 (.16)	.58 (.20)	.16
1997	.54 (.19)	.36 (.18)	.47 (.20)	.55 (.18)	.58 (.16)	.60 (.20)	.24
2000	.55 (.33)	.29 (.32)	.40 (.33)	.52 (.30)	.57 (.28)	.72 (.31)	.43

Source: CES 1980-2000. Results are mean scores with standard errors in parentheses.

Table 2: Factor loadings for ideological dimensions, 1981-2000

	Relig	Moral permis	Support for State	Hostility to outsiders	Social intolerance	Conf public orgs	Social conserv	Post- mat'm
Importance of God	.813							
Is R religious	.730							
Comfort in religion	.729							
Belief in God	.717							
Importance of prayer	.689							
Belief in heaven	.684							
Belief in soul	.654							
Belief in life after death	.614							
Attend services	.608							
Confidence in church	.603							
Abortion		.765						
Divorce		.727						
Prostitution		.700						
Homosexuality		.688						
Euthanasia		.655						
Suicide		.625						
Confidence civil serv			.882					
Confidence Parliament			.868					
Respect for authority			.456					
Neighbours other race				.820				
Neighbours foreigners				.804				
Neighbours Muslims				.699				
Neighbours addicts					.704			
Neighbours drinkers					.669			
Neighbours criminals					.626			
Neighbours unstable					.572			
Confidence union						.748		
Confidence press						.739		
Confidence police						.469		
Woman needs child							.711	
Child needs both parents							.690	
Think mean of life								.644
Political protest								.600
Post-materialism								.398
% variance	18.28	7.77	6.20	5.43	4.21	3.97	3.52	3.15
Alpha								

Table 3: Ideological dimensions, 1981-2000

	Relig	Moral permiss	Support for State	Hostility to outsiders	Social intolerance	Conf public orgs	Social conserv	Post-mat'm
1981	.01 (.98)	-.40 (.91)	-.63 (.51)	-.02 (.80)	-.46 (.73)	.00 (1.00)	-.09 (1.04)	-.32 (1.00)
1990	-.06 (1.08)	.04 (.94)	-.73 (.45)	.03 (1.11)	.18 (1.00)	.09 (.98)	.13 (.96)	.09 (1.06)
2000	.04(.94)	.18 (1.04)	.94 (.73)	-.01 (1.00)	.09 (1.05)	-.07 (1.01)	-.06 (1.00)	.10 (.91)
F	3.07**	81.29***	2734.82***	.750	100.03***	8.04***	13.17***	45.73***

Source: WVS 1981, 1990, 2000. Results are mean scores with standard deviations in parentheses.

*=p<.1, **=p<.05, ***=p<.01

Table 4: Ideological dimensions among parties, 1981-2000

	1981			1990			2000			All			
	NDP	Libs	PCs	NDP	BQ	Libs	PCs	Ref	NDP		BQ	Libs	PCs
Relig	.13	.07	.09	-.33	.00	.05	-.01	-.56	-.14	-.12	.10	.17	-.06
Moral	-.18	-.67	-.37	.11	.41	-.02	.07	.28	.34	.52	.18	.01	.02
State	-.72	-.72	-.53	-.81	-.77	-.69	-.81	-.71	.90	.72	1.10	1.14	.76
Hostile	.07	.02	-.11	-.00	.38	-.03	.19	.14	.03	.22	.017	-.21	-.10
Intol	-.18	-.33	-.38	.08	.00	.19	.29	.89	.19	-.28	.22	.21	.18
Conf	.06	.14	-.03	.33	-.10	.09	.12	-.40	.13	-.15	.00	.10	-.28
Cons	-.29	.21	-.18	-.03	.00	.15	.10	.14	-.44	.49	-.06	-.25	-.17
pmat	-.03	-.15	-.20	.38	.69	-.01	.06	.14	.30	.22	.07	-.03	.15

Source: WVS 1981, 1990, 2000. Results are mean scores.

Table 5: Ideological dimensions among clusters, 1981-2000

	1981			1990			2000			1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	1					
Relig	.39	-1.09	.50	.22	.36	.50	-.15	-1.97	.24	.12	.06	-.23	.21	
Moral	-.46	-.41	-.36	-.31	-.07	.32	.16	.33	1.50	-.40	.19	-.25	.02	
State	-.68	-.56	-.63	-.50	-.75	-.97	-.76	-.68	.60	.72	1.12	1.18	1.01	
Hostile	-.04	.11	-.09	-.07	-.19	-.18	4.79	-.23	-.11	-.21	-.25	-.13	4.80	
Intol	-.41	-.51	-.45	-.54	.72	.15	.65	.31	-.55	.81	.84	-.93	.27	
Conf	.58	.00	-.44	-.55	.68	.07	.10	.10	-.47	-.89	.65	.22	-.01	
Cons	.87	-.59	-.45	.06	.55	-.35	.04	.22	.09	.29	-.51	-.05	.12	
pmat	-.57	-.89	.27	-.43	-.43	.96	.09	.50	-.03	.01	-.07	.45	.07	
n	208	194	275	265	299	255	41	178	245	310	346	322	42	

Source: WVS 1981, 1990, 2000. Results are mean scores.

Table 6: Partisan characteristics of ideological clusters, 1981-2000

	NDP	BQ	Liberal	PCs	Reform
1981					
Red Tories	16.36		52.72	27.27	
Conventional social democrats	7.41		40.74	51.85	
Traditional conservatives	17.39		34.78	46.38	
1990					
Red Tories	15.97	2.28	36.88	12.54	2.66
Religious conservatives	15.77	1.01	41.28	15.44	3.36
Progressive liberals	20.78	3.92	35.69	15.29	4.70
Alienated conservatives	17.07	4.88	24.39	29.27	2.44
Secular conservatives	26.97	2.25	26.97	12.98	8.43
2000					
Religious liberals	8.98	15.92	33.06	6.53	9.80
Alienated conservatives	4.52	7.74	33.87	9.67	16.77
Secular conservatives	11.27	4.34	40.17	10.69	10.98
Post-material social democrats	7.76	11.19	32.30	10.87	12.42
Religious conservatives	9.52	19.05	47.62	0	7.14

Source: WVS 1981, 1990, 2000. Results are row percentages (% of cluster membership voting for each party) 1981 chi square 20.20***; 1990 chi square 49.48***; 2000 chi square 58.74***

Table 7: Ideological composition of partisan support, 1981-2000

1981	Conv'l socdems	Trad Cons	Red Tories	Religious Cons	Alienated Cons	Secular Cons	Pmat Socdems	Relig Libs
Liberals	17.2	37.5	45.3					
PCs	23.0	52.5	24.6					
NDP	8.7	52.2	39.1					
1990								
Liberals			66.7	33.3	2.7	13.0	24.7	
PCs			21.6	30.1	7.8	15.0	25.5	
NDP			21.3	23.9	3.6	24.4	26.9	
Reform			15.6	22.2	2.2	33.3	26.7	
BQ			24.0	12.0	8.0	16.0	40.0	
2000								
Liberals				4.5	23.4	31.0	23.2	18.0
PCs				0	25.4	31.4	29.7	13.6
NDP				3.8	13.5	37.4	24.0	21.2
Alliance				1.9	33.1	24.2	25.5	15.3
BQ				6.6	19.7	12.3	29.5	32.0

Source: WVS 1981, 1990, 2000. Results are row percentages (% of party support from each ideological cluster). 1981 chi square 20.20***; 1990 chi square 49.48***; 2000 chi square 58.74***.

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