

Messages, Messengers, and Mechanisms of Influence:
Elite Communication Effects and the 1992 Canadian Constitutional Referendum

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Abstract: This paper explores the means through which elites are able to influence public opinion by evaluating competing explanations of how Pierre Trudeau's public denunciation of the Charlottetown Accord resulted in a dramatic decline in support for 'Yes' side during the 1992 referendum campaign. I test the extent to which this sudden shift in public opinion resulted from citizens' responses to Trudeau's message or to the messenger himself. Using data from the 1993 Canadian Election Study, I test both the extent to which the content of Trudeau's speech raised the salience of certain anti-Accord considerations in the minds of voters and the degree to which voters simply combined their feelings toward Trudeau and their knowledge of his position in revising their prior opinions regarding the Accord. After presenting empirical support for both explanations when each is considered separately, I build on existing work by conducting an analysis which accounts for the competing explanations in a single model. This latter approach demonstrates an important relationship between these two explanations whereby Trudeau's impact was greatest among those who both felt positively about Trudeau and agreed with his message.

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Just over a week into the 1992 Canadian constitutional referendum campaign, former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau publicly rejected a proposal to significantly revise the Canadian constitution. In the five days following Trudeau's speech, support for the Accord dropped from around 60% to 40%. This striking shift in public opinion offers a unique opportunity to investigate how political elites are able to influence public opinion. In particular, this paper explores the causal mechanisms behind the dramatic effect Trudeau's speech had on the referendum campaign. Previous research on the origins of public opinion has identified two key mechanisms of elite influence which may explain Trudeau's impact: i) citizens may have attended to the substantive content of Trudeau's comments and reevaluated their overall opinions in light of the information conveyed in coverage of his speech, and ii) citizens may simply have used their impressions of Trudeau as guidance on whether to accept or reject his overall position on the Accord. Using survey data collected throughout the 1992 referendum campaign, I evaluate the explanatory power of these two theories. I then demonstrate that Trudeau's impact was substantial among those who felt positively about Trudeau *and* shared his opposition to one aspect of the Accord, and quite minimal among all other citizens.

This paper therefore has two related goals: First, a detailed and systematic investigation of Trudeau's immediate impact on the referendum campaign in order to respond to lingering questions about the nature and extent of Trudeau's effect. Second, to present a potential advance in our theoretical understanding of elite influence by considering the relationship between the two most widely cited mechanisms of elite influence: cue-taking and message priming.

Theories of Elite Influence

Cue-taking

Existing theories of elite influence offer competing interpretations of the extent to which citizens respond to the substance of elite communications as opposed to reacting simply to their evaluations of the sender. One conception of elite influence suggests that rather than grappling with the various reasons elites offer in support of a particular position, citizens rely on their evaluations of the message source in deciding whether to accept or reject the source's position. By taking cues from trusted elites, citizens can attempt to make reasonable choices while avoiding the costs involved with becoming better informed (Lupia, 1994; Sniderman,

Brody, and Tetlock, 1991; Popkin 1991). From this perspective, elites' influence depends on the characteristics of the messenger rather than the arguments messengers offer in support of their political position.

Trudeau's intervention also presents a unique opportunity to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between cue-taking and political sophistication. Scholars such as Lupia (1994) and Popkin (1991) frame cue-taking as a means by which less politically aware citizens can make up for their informational deficits. Work by others suggests, to the contrary, that relatively more sophisticated citizens are best able and most likely to employ cognitive heuristics (Zaller, 1992; Lau and Redlawsk, 2001). Assessing the relationship between cue-taking and political sophistication provides not only a more detailed understanding of the mechanism behind Trudeau's influence, but also speaks to normative questions about the responsiveness of different types of citizens to political events.

Argumentation

A competing explanation of elite influence suggests that the *content* of communications lead to attitude change. While very few citizens appear to grapple with message content in the manner expected of them in democratic theory, message content can still influence the opinions of receivers unwilling to engage in much cognitive heavy lifting. Messages may 'prime' certain considerations by increasing the influence these considerations have on an individual's summary political opinions. Inspired by Iyengar and Kinder's (1987) early work, a considerable body of research provides support for the idea of such priming effects (Johnston et al, 1992; Krosnick and Kinder, 1993; Nelson et al, 1997b). In contrast to cue-taking, this model of elite influence presumes that the reasons elites offer in support of a given political position play an important role in the effectiveness of their communications.

A Third Way

Existing studies of elite influence tend to focus solely on one of the two explanations outlined above. By failing to consider the two explanations simultaneously, however, it becomes impossible to investigate whether one explanation simply mediates the effect of the other. Isolated tests of the competing hypotheses provide little insight into the relative explanatory power of the two models. Moreover, this approach precludes the rather intuitive

possibility that the impact of a given message depends importantly on both the message and the messenger. In this paper, I offer a real-world demonstration of the interactive relationship between the source and content of a message.

In doing so I raise the possibility that citizens may be somewhat more sophisticated in their response to elite communications than either the argumentation or cue-taking accounts imply. Both accounts do require at least some relatively sophisticated thinking about politics. Cue-taking involves a decision about which cue-givers to follow, which presumably depends on retrospective evaluations of the quality of advice these cue-takers have provided in the past. Similarly, while responsiveness to message content via priming can be conceived of as an unthinking automatic response to a message, to the extent that priming depends on the prior cognitive importance of a given consideration, then priming also involves the use of previously acquired information. If citizens respond to both the content and the source of a communication, we can be further reassured that their susceptibility to elite influence is related to their prior political beliefs.

Previous experimental research has demonstrated the utility of considering both message and messenger effects in the study of opinion change. Miller and Krosnick (2000) used two experimental studies to demonstrate that trust in the media moderates both priming and agenda setting. Similarly, Druckman has used sources including the Democratic and Republic parties, Colin Powell, and Jerry Springer to demonstrate that framing effects are contingent on evaluations of a frame's source (Druckman, 2001a 2001b). To my knowledge, however, scholars have yet to conduct real-world studies of the relative importance of, and relationship between, message content and elite cues.

The 1992 Canadian Constitutional Referendum

Pierre Trudeau's contribution to the 1992 Canadian constitutional referendum campaign provides a valuable opportunity to explore unanswered questions about the mechanisms of elite influence. In the days following his scathing critique of the proposed constitutional amendments, support for the Charlottetown Accord fell by nearly 20% in English Canada. With both a high-profile messenger and a well-publicized set of arguments, this episode presents a valuable opportunity to study elite influence. Moreover, we have a means to explore Trudeau's effect in the form of the 1992-93 Canadian Elections Study which includes survey data collected on each day of the campaign. Despite the availability of this data set and widespread

agreement that Trudeau's intervention was critical, important questions remain as to the nature of Trudeau's impact. Before discussing the existing literature on this case, some context is in order.

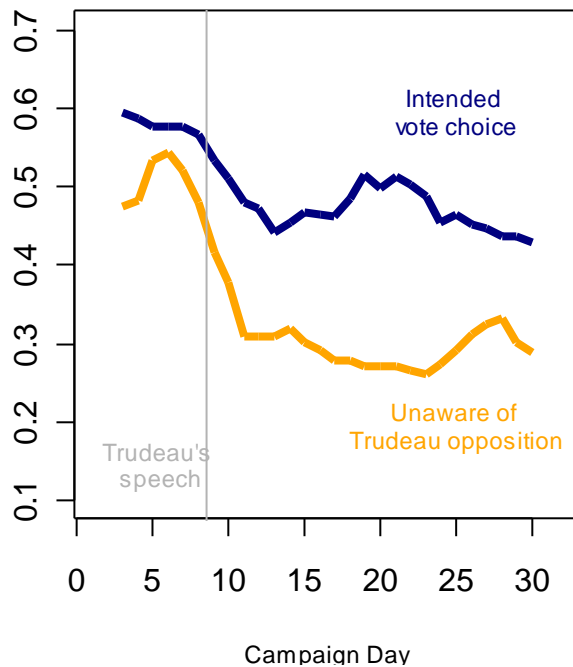
On October 26, 1992, Canadians rejected a package of constitutional amendments, known as the 'Charlottetown Accord', by a margin of 54%-46%. The referendum was just a single episode in an ongoing national debate over the constitution. After numerous failed attempts from the 1920's onward, Canada finally 'patriated' its constitution in 1982.¹ Then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau propelled this process forward and negotiated a deal to which all of the provinces agreed with the exception of Quebec. Angered by the province's exclusion from the final negotiations and the content of the agreement, Quebec's legislature refused to ratify the Constitution Act, 1982. Trudeau's successor, Brian Mulroney, re-opened constitutional negotiations in the mid-1980's with the explicit desire to reach a deal that Quebec would accept. In 1990, the elite-negotiated Meech Lake Accord failed when two provinces withdrew their support for the deal. Mulroney then initiated a much wider consultation process resulting in the Charlottetown Accord.

The Accord contained a series of amendments that would have dramatically altered the Canadian political system. Most notably, Quebec was to receive a guarantee of 25% of the seats in the national lower house regardless of its population, and the constitution was to include a 'distinct society' clause requiring that Quebec's unique language and history to be considered in any interpretation of the Constitution, including the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In addition, the Accord would have entrenched the aboriginal right to self-government, transformed the upper house from an appointed to an elected body, and shifted the balance of powers between the federal and provincial governments in favor of the latter.

In response to claims that previous rounds of constitutional negotiations had been elite dominated, the public was both more broadly consulted on the content of the Charlottetown Accord and left to offer a final decision on the fate of the deal. In order to ratify the Accord, a majority of voters nationwide and a majority in every province had to vote 'Yes' on

¹ Prior to 1982, the British North America Act, 1867 served as Canada's constitution. Thus Canada was in the unique position of having to petition British parliament when seeking to amend its constitution. The Constitution Act, 1982 changed this and created a new amending formula whereby provincial legislatures in 7 of the 10 provinces (totaling more than 50% of the population) along with the federal government had to pass any future amendments in order for them to take effect.

Figure 1: Support for the Accord and Awareness of Trudeau’s Opposition



Note: The darker line represents a five day moving average of daily mean support for the accord measured by the vote intention question that serves as the dependent variable throughout this paper. The lighter line indicates the five day moving average of daily percentage of respondents who were *not* able to correctly identify Trudeau as an opponent of the accord. Note the dramatic downward trend of both lines in the days immediately following Trudeau’s speech.

referendum day. Thus, to understand why this attempt at major constitutional change failed, we must understand how citizens formed their opinions about the Accord.

In this paper, rather than investigating the process behind citizens’ final voting decisions, I focus more narrowly on the dramatic drop in support for the Accord that followed Pierre Trudeau’s speech.² When Trudeau spoke out against the Accord, he did so despite widespread elite consensus which brought the three major federal parties, all provincial premiers, and the business and labor communities together in support of a ‘Yes’ vote. Figure 1 offers a dramatic portrayal of the effect of Trudeau’s intervention³. In the week prior to his speech, support for the Accord appeared quite stable at just under 60%. Five days after

² Johnston et al (1996) offer a thorough of the broader question. In essence, they conclude that rather than attending to general arguments in favor of the Accord or particular elements of the Accord designed to appeal to different segments of population, over the course of the campaign, citizens increasingly focused on elements of the Accord they found distasteful resulting in a narrow victory for the ‘No’ side.

³ In the interest of continuity, the Y axis in figure 2 is the same variable as that which serves as the independent variables in the analysis that follows. This measure is scored 0-1 with decided voters at the extremes, those leaning ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ at 0.75 and 0.25 respectively, and those responding with don’t know coded as 0.5.

Trudeau's speech, support had dropped by close to 20 points. Figure 1 actually understates Trudeau's impact to some extent as it reports a five day moving average. The drop in support was immediate; the mean vote intention score for the evening of Trudeau's speech was 0.64, it was 0.52 by the following night. Moreover, awareness of Trudeau's position followed a similar trend with the percentage of respondents who were aware of Trudeau's position increasing dramatically in the days following his speech. Overall, this figure provides strong prima facie evidence that Trudeau's intervention caused the significant decline in support for the Accord.

While previous studies of the 1992 campaign highlight the impact of Trudeau's speech, this literature has failed to specify the means by which Trudeau's intervention influenced public opinion. To be sure, the different mechanisms of elite influence discussed here have all been raised as possible explanations for Trudeau's impact. Since these studies are primarily concerned with explaining the referendum outcome, however, the specific question of how Trudeau moved public opinion remains unanswered.

I build on the existing literature by dealing with the temporal element of the campaign in a manner that allows a more focused consideration of Trudeau's short-term impact. The most thorough investigation of the campaign, Johnston et al's *The Challenge of Direct Democracy* (1996) employs a research design aimed at explaining Trudeau's longer term impact. After first collecting the survey data used here, Johnston and his colleagues offer a broad explanation of the Charlottetown referendum campaign and outcome. With respect to Trudeau, Johnston et al (1996) concludes that Trudeau's impact was critical, going so far as to suggest that the Accord may well have passed had Trudeau remained silent. This book points to a strong relationship between respondents' evaluations of Trudeau and their intended vote choice in the later half of the campaign as evidence that many voters took Trudeau's cue and changed their minds about the Accord. By dividing the referendum campaign into two phases, with the first ending a few days after Trudeau's speech, however, the capacity of Johnston et al (1996) to specifically explore the mechanisms of Trudeau's influence are limited. Because this intervention is a key feature of my analysis, I instead divide the campaign into four phases designed to isolate Trudeau's impact.

Johnston et al (1996) also identified the arguments Trudeau presented as a possible explanation for his impact. In particular Johnston et al (1996) demonstrates that the negative relationship between support for the distinct society clause and support for the Accord

increased over the course of the campaign and suggests this shift was motivated by Trudeau's intervention. Again, however, because of how this analysis divides the campaign into two phases, it becomes difficult to attribute a change in the relationship between support for the distinct society clause and support for the Accord to Trudeau's intervention.⁴

Overall, Johnston et al (1996) presents a compelling exploration of the referendum campaign and outcome. Due to the focus on explaining the referendum outcome, however, this work avoids detailed consideration of the process through which Trudeau's impact was felt. The conclusion to the chapter on the role of elite intervenors in Johnston et al (1996) includes speculation about Trudeau's impact which taps all three of the mechanisms explored here (Trudeau's credibility and expertise, the specific arguments he made, and the interaction between his reputation and his script); the empirical work fails, however, to adjudicate carefully between these competing hypotheses.

My exploration of Trudeau's impact on the campaign proceeds as follows. I first consider the cue-taking hypothesis in isolation and as well as the extent to which political sophistication mediates cue-taking. I then test to see if media coverage of Trudeau's speech primed a handful of different Accord-relevant considerations. Finally, after isolating one of Trudeau's arguments that may explain the decline in support for the Accord, I include variables representing both the messenger and message explanations in a single model in order to evaluate the relationship between these two explanations.

Data and Methods:

To understand the impact of Trudeau's speech on support for the Charlottetown Accord, I use data from the 1993 Canadian Election Study. This study includes the results of telephone surveys conducted during and after both the 1992 Charlottetown Referendum and the 1993 Federal Election. My analysis involves only the data collected during the 32 day referendum campaign. Nationwide, 2530 Canadians were surveyed but I excluded all Quebec residents

⁴ Johnston et al (1996) does, however provide an improvement over other efforts to explain the effect of Trudeau's arguments. Robert Vipond (1993), for instance, clearly identifies the specific arguments Trudeau put forth that may have resonated with the Canadian public, but offers only vague references to other's empirical work in support of his assertions. Similarly, Leduc and Pammet (1995) raise the possibility that Trudeau set the agenda for public discourse as an untested post-hoc explanation for the absence of a cue-taking relationship in their empirical work.

from my analysis leaving me with 1529 cases⁵. The survey employed a rolling cross section design with an average of 50 interviews completed each evening over the course of the campaign.

Throughout the paper I discuss a number of parametric models of vote intention in order to explore competing explanations for Trudeau's effect. These models are specified in an effort to capture the dynamics surrounding Trudeau's speech. At one extreme, I might employ a linear regression model with an interaction between date of interview and a variable that captures one of the potential mechanisms behind Trudeau's impact, such as feelings toward Trudeau. This approach would yield an estimate of a linear relationship between this interaction term and intended vote choice over the *entire* course of the campaign. For example, this specification would produce results in which the relative effect of feelings toward Trudeau would increase or decrease by the same amount for each day. By construction, this specification excludes the possibility that the strength of the relationship between feelings toward Trudeau and vote intention varies differently during different phases of the campaign.

The first approach I adopt to gain insight into the immediate post-speech period within the parametric framework is to divide the campaign into four eight-day phases by creating four indicator variables reflecting the phase of the campaign during which each respondent was interviewed. I then use interactions between these date indicators and other variables of interest to explore how the relationship between these variables and vote intention changes over time. Fortunately, as Trudeau's speech occurred on the evening of the eighth day of the 32 day campaign, I can divide the campaign into phases of equal length, the first of which concludes on the day of Trudeau's speech. My analysis of the mechanisms behind Trudeau's short-term impact on the campaign will therefore be based on a comparison between the effect of certain variables in the phases before and after Trudeau's speech. Throughout this paper I pay particular attention to this comparison and remain silent on results relating to the final two phases of the campaign as the goal of this paper is to explain the short-term impact of Trudeau's speech⁶.

⁵ The referendum campaign was quite different in Quebec and has been treated separately in previous research into the campaign (Johnston et al, 1996).

⁶ Any claims about the longer term impact of Trudeau's intervention are difficult to support given the fact that his actions may have resulted in subsequent campaign events and thus may have influenced voters indirectly.

Since the dependent variable for the parametric models, discussed below, includes five ordered categories of intended vote choice, I use the ordinal logit model. As independent variables I use three of the four campaign phase indicator variables, a variable representing a potential mechanism behind Trudeau's impact, interactions between this variable and the campaign phase, and a series of controls. Details on the variables central to my analysis are included below:

Vote Intention: The dependent variable in my analyses is a respondent's vote intention on the day she participated in the survey. Respondents are included in one of the five following categories: Yes, Lean Yes, Don't Know, Lean No, No⁷.

Date of Interview: As discussed, I grouped respondents into four campaign phases: Days 1-8, 9-16, 17-24, 25-32. The first phase, Days 1-8, serves as the reference case.

Feelings toward Trudeau: Respondents were asked to rate their feelings toward Pierre Trudeau on a 100 point thermometer scale.⁸ Those who refused to respond or did so with 'don't know' are coded as missing and responses among the remainder of the sample are rescaled 0-1. It is worth noting that my analysis relies heavily on the assumption that individuals' responses to the feeling thermometer question measure the criteria upon which people base their decisions to take cues from a given elite.

Trudeau feelings X date period: In order to evaluate whether the relationship between feelings toward Trudeau and vote intentions changed between the pre and post speech period, I include interaction terms produced by multiplying feelings toward Trudeau by the three campaign phase variables included in the model.

Trudeau's arguments: Respondents were asked for their opinion on a number of arguments which Trudeau raised in his speech. My measures of agreement with Trudeau on these points are all dichotomous as respondents were asked to choose between one of three responses such as agree, disagree, or don't know. Don't know responses are coded as missing.

Trudeau's arguments X date period: In order to gauge change over time in the relationship between individuals' positions on these considerations and support for the Accord, I include interactions between these responses and campaign phase.

⁷ I also estimated all of the models discussed below using a four point dependent variables that excludes respondents who replied 'don't know' to the vote intention question. The results are essentially similar to those reported below.

⁸ Specific question wording is included in the appendix.

Political sophistication: Following Johnston et al (1996), I measure sophistication by summing the number of elite intervenors, other than Trudeau, whose position on the Accord each respondent was correctly able to identify. While this five point scale is obviously captures campaign-specific knowledge, no other factual questions were included in the survey. In addition, it seems plausible that general political knowledge and Accord-relevant knowledge are highly correlated.

In all of the models discussed below, I also included a number of control variables widely acknowledged to influence vote intentions. These variables are: interest in politics, age, income, and dichotomous variables that indicate: identification with one of English Canada's four political parties, highest completed level of education, gender, and residence in Canada's eastern or western provinces. Details on the measurement of these variables can be found in the appendix.

In addition to the results from these ordinal logit models, I include figures displaying the results of a semiparametric approach to explaining Trudeau's impact on the campaign. The parametric approach discussed above has two key disadvantages. First, the campaign is divided into four somewhat arbitrary phases. Recalling that the first phase concludes on Day 8, this approach essentially assumes that there is no difference between Days 1-8, and no similarity between Days 8 and 9. Second, the ordered logit model specification I adopt provides no insight into the shape of the over-time functional relationship between the variables of interest and the dependent variable. Rather, it provides four snap shots of this relationship and is silent on the slope and shape of the line connecting these two time periods. A semiparametric approach employing a Generalized Additive Model (GAM) overcomes these limitations by assuming that the relationship between certain independent variables (X) and the dependent variable (Y) changes over the range of the independent variables (Hastie and Tibshirani, 1990). Consider two extremes: at one extreme, the usual linear model assumes that the relationship between X and Y is constant across the entire range of X . At the other extreme, we could estimate a unique relationship between X and Y for each value of X which would ensure that the coefficient for each value of X would enable perfect prediction of $E(Y)$ at that value of X while at the same time inhibiting our capacity to draw generalizations about the relationship between X and Y . A nonparametric approach allows us to explore the relationship between X and Y by without imposing a relationship between the two variables which is the same for all values of X

A semiparametric approach can be used to estimate the functional form of some of the predictor variables while still employing assumptions about the form of the functional relationship between Y and the other independent variables. Since the software I used cannot estimate a GAM with an ordinal dependent variable, I use a dichotomous measure of vote intention by including only those respondents who answered ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to the vote intention question. Accordingly one parametric approach involves use of the logit link function ‘ G ’: where

$$G(z) = \exp(z) / [1 + \exp(z)] \quad [1]$$

The semiparametric approach here amends the parametric regression model [2] by modeling $P(y_i = 1 | X_i)$ as an additive combination of a set of parametric functions of some independent variables, a set of arbitrary univariate functions of the other independent variables, and an error term [3]

$$\Pr(y_i = 1 | X_i) = G\left(\alpha + \sum_{j=1}^k \beta_j X_{i,j}\right) \quad [2]$$

$$\Pr(y_i = 1 | X_i) = G\left(\alpha + \sum_{j=1}^k \beta_j X_{i,j} + \sum_{l=1}^m f_l(X_{i,l})\right) \quad [3]$$

In addition to estimating the coefficients for the predictors assumed to have a linear relationship with the dependent variable, this procedure involves the use of a scatterplot smoother approach to estimating the function $f_l()$ ⁹.

Specifically, my semiparametric model is of the form:

$$\Pr(y_i = 1) = G\left(\alpha + \beta_1 Z_i + f(D_i) + f(D_i)Z_i + \sum_{j=1}^k \beta_j X_{i,j}\right) \quad [4]$$

where y_i is a dichotomous variable that takes 1 for respondents who intend to vote Yes and 0 for those who intend to vote No, Z_i is a variable that measures one potential mechanism of Trudeau’s influence (e.g. feelings toward Trudeau), D_i is the date on which the respondent was interviewed and f_l is the functional relationship between date of interview and y_i , and

⁹ To conduct this semiparametric analysis I use the “gam” function contained in the MCGV package authored by Simon Wood for use in the statistical software ‘R’ where smooth terms are represented using penalized regression splines (or similar smoothers) with smoothing parameters selected by Generalized Cross Validation or Un-Biased Risk Estimator criterion. See <http://www.stats.gla.ac.uk/~simon/>.

$f_2(D_i)Z_i$ serves as an interaction between the influence mechanism Z_i and $f_1(D_i)$. The final term $\sum_{j=1}^k \beta_j X_{i,j}$ represents the remaining control variables.

This semiparametric approach will provide a more nuanced perspective on the relationship between key predictor variables and vote choice by allowing the data to show us the functional form of the relationship, rather than assuming a specific functional form. In addition, our confidence in the findings presented below is bolstered by the similar results produced by both the semiparametric and parametric methods

The Messenger

In this section, I test the extent to which citizen's feelings toward Trudeau explain the dramatic change in vote intentions that followed his speech. Put simply, upon becoming aware of Trudeau's opposition to the Accord some individuals may have combined their feelings toward Trudeau with their knowledge of his position to form an opinion about the Accord.¹⁰ In response to his speech, those citizens with positive feelings toward Trudeau would be expected to shift toward greater opposition to the Accord. If citizens employed such a heuristic, the relationship between feelings for Trudeau and support for the Accord should be negative, and this relationship should be much stronger in the immediate post-speech period than in the days prior. The expected effect of Trudeau's speech among those who felt more negatively toward Trudeau is less clear. These individuals may simply have ignored Trudeau's cue or they may have become more supportive of the Accord in light of Trudeau's opposition.

Results of Parametric Analysis:

As a first test of this hypothesis, I specified an ordinal logit regression with respondents' intended vote choice as the dependent variable¹¹. The key independent variables are the continuous measure of feelings toward Trudeau, a series of dichotomous variables

¹⁰ Interestingly, this sort of effect was openly discussed during the campaign when Prime Minister Mulroney suggested that many people in Quebec will say to themselves "if [Trudeau is] against it, it's got to be good". Quoted in Edison Stewart, "Trudeau giveaway charge draws scorn from PM", *The Toronto Star*, 3 October, 1992, pp.A-12.

¹¹ All of the statistical analysis was conducted using the software 'R'. The ordinal probit models and predicted probabilities were estimated using 'Zelig' a program which works in 'R' written by Imai, King, and Lau. See <http://gking.harvard.edu/zelig/>

	<i>Very positive evaluation of Trudeau</i>		<i>Very negative evaluation of Trudeau</i>	
	Predicted Probability of No Vote	95% Confidence Interval	Predicted Probability of No Vote	95% Confidence Interval
Days 1-8	0.27	(0.18,0.38)	0.28	(0.17,0.42)
Days 9-16	0.53	(0.42,0.65)	0.22	(0.13,0.33)
Days 17-24	0.43	(0.32,0.55)	0.33	(0.22,0.46)
Days 24-32	0.51	(0.40,0.62)	0.32	(0.22,0.44)

Table 1: Effect of Feelings Toward Trudeau on Predicted Probability of Voting ‘No’ Over the Course of the Campaign.

Note: This table displays the predicted probability of intending to vote ‘No’ for an individual who rated Trudeau at 100/100 on the thermometer scale (left hand side of table) and 0/100 (right hand side of table) and for whom all other variables constant at their mean. Results are based on 1,000 simulations using the parameter estimates from the model displayed in Table A1. The 95% confidence interval is given in parentheses. Note the dramatic increase, for an individual who felt very positively toward Trudeau, in predicted probability of intending to vote ‘No’ between the pre-speech (Days 1-8) and immediate post-speech period (Days 9-16).

indicating the phase of the campaign in which each respondent was interviewed, and interactions between these indicators variables and feelings toward Trudeau. In order to ease interpretation of the results, Table 1 presents the predicted probability of a No vote when changing the variables of interest and holding all other variables at their mean¹².

The results presented in Table 1 offer clear support for the cue-taking explanation of Trudeau’s impact¹³. Prior to his speech (Days 1-8) there is virtually no difference in the predicted probability of voting ‘No’ between two respondents who differ only in their evaluations of Trudeau (0.27 vs. 0.28). Following Trudeau’s speech, however, this 0.01 gap increases to 0.31 as the predicted probability of a ‘No’ vote for an individual who feels very positively toward Trudeau increased by 26% to 0.53. In addition to providing clear support for the cue-taking hypothesis, these results suggest an asymmetry in individuals’ responsiveness to cues. While the predicted probability of a No vote for someone who evaluated Trudeau as 0 on the thermometer scale did drop somewhat, this 0.06 point change is substantially smaller than the 0.26 increase in predicted probability of a person who rated Trudeau at 100.

In addition to providing evidence consistent with the cue-taking explanation of Trudeau’s impact, these data allow us to explore this mechanism of influence more closely by

¹² The results of the full model are presented in Table A1 in the appendix.

¹³ The predicted probabilities presented throughout the paper are probability of intending to vote ‘No’. In most all cases the probability of intending to vote ‘Yes’ is the mirror image of these results while the probabilities of responding ‘lean yes’, ‘lean no’, or ‘don’t know’ are both very small and exhibit no overtime trends.

	<i>More politically sophisticated</i>		<i>Less politically sophisticated</i>	
	Very positive evaluation of Trudeau	Very negative evaluation of Trudeau	Very positive evaluation of Trudeau	Very negative evaluation of Trudeau
Days 1-8	0.32 (0.11,0.60)	0.25 (0.05,0.62)	0.24 (0.14,0.40)	0.32 (0.17,0.53)
Days 9-16	0.80 (0.57,0.93)	0.04 (0.01,0.13)	0.40 (0.26,0.55)	0.42 (0.24,0.63)
Days 17-24	0.48 (0.27,0.69)	0.23 (0.08,0.47)	0.40 (0.24,0.58)	0.40 (0.23,0.60)
Days 24-32	0.46 (0.26,0.67)	0.14 (0.05,0.31)	0.55 (0.36,0.73)	0.48 (0.29,0.68)

Table 2: Effect of Feelings Toward Trudeau on Predicted Probability of Voting ‘No’ Over the Course of the Campaign by Political Sophistication.

Note: This table displays the predicted probability of intending to vote ‘No’ for an individual where all variables are held at their mean except date of interview, feelings toward Trudeau, and political sophistication. The second and third columns illustrate the effect on vote intention of moving from a very positive to very negative evaluation of Trudeau for an individual who scored 5/5 on the political sophistication scale. The fourth and fifth column present similar results but where the individual scored 0/5 on political sophistication. Results are based on 1,000 simulations using the parameter estimates from the model displayed in Table A2. The 95% confidence interval is given in parentheses. Note that the change in predicted probability of intending to vote ‘No’ is much larger for the more sophisticated individual compared to one who is less sophisticated.

considering the extent to which political sophistication moderates cue-taking. While early work on cue-taking emphasized the possibility that this and other forms of ‘low-information rationality’ could enable less informed citizens to reach sound decisions (e.g. Lupia, 1994; Popkin, 1991), more recent work suggests, however, that relatively more informed citizens are better prepared to employ these cognitive heuristics (Lau & Redlawsk, 2001; Delli-Carpini & Keeter, 1996). For reasons of both superior organization of political information and greater willingness to think through political matters, more sophisticated people should be better able to put an elite’s cue to use. I therefore expect a much larger cue-taking effect among the relatively more politically sophisticated respondents.

In order to test this hypothesis I added seven new variables to the above model including interactions between political sophistication and the date variables, between sophistication and feelings toward Trudeau, and a three-way interaction between feelings toward Trudeau, political sophistication, and campaign phase that will indicate whether political sophistication moderated the relationship between feelings toward Trudeau and vote intentions in the days following Trudeau’s intervention¹⁴. Table 2 presents the change in the predicted probability of a ‘No’ vote resulting from changes in the values of these three variables of interest.

¹⁴ See Table A2 in the appendix for the results of this regression.

For a hypothetical individual who was unable to identify the positions on the Accord of any of the five elite intervenors included in the political sophistication scale, moving from a Trudeau thermometer score of 0 to 1 decreases the probability of a No vote by only .08 prior to the speech and has almost no effect (0.02) in the immediate post-speech period. In addition to rather small predicted effects of feelings toward Trudeau, in both the pre and post speech period, feelings toward Trudeau are *negatively* related to *opposition* to the Accord which seems to contradict the fact that Trudeau himself was opposed to the Accord. While these results also indicate that opposition toward the Accord was somewhat greater among the less sophisticated following Trudeau's speech, Table 2 makes clear that this increase is unrelated to feelings toward Pierre Trudeau.

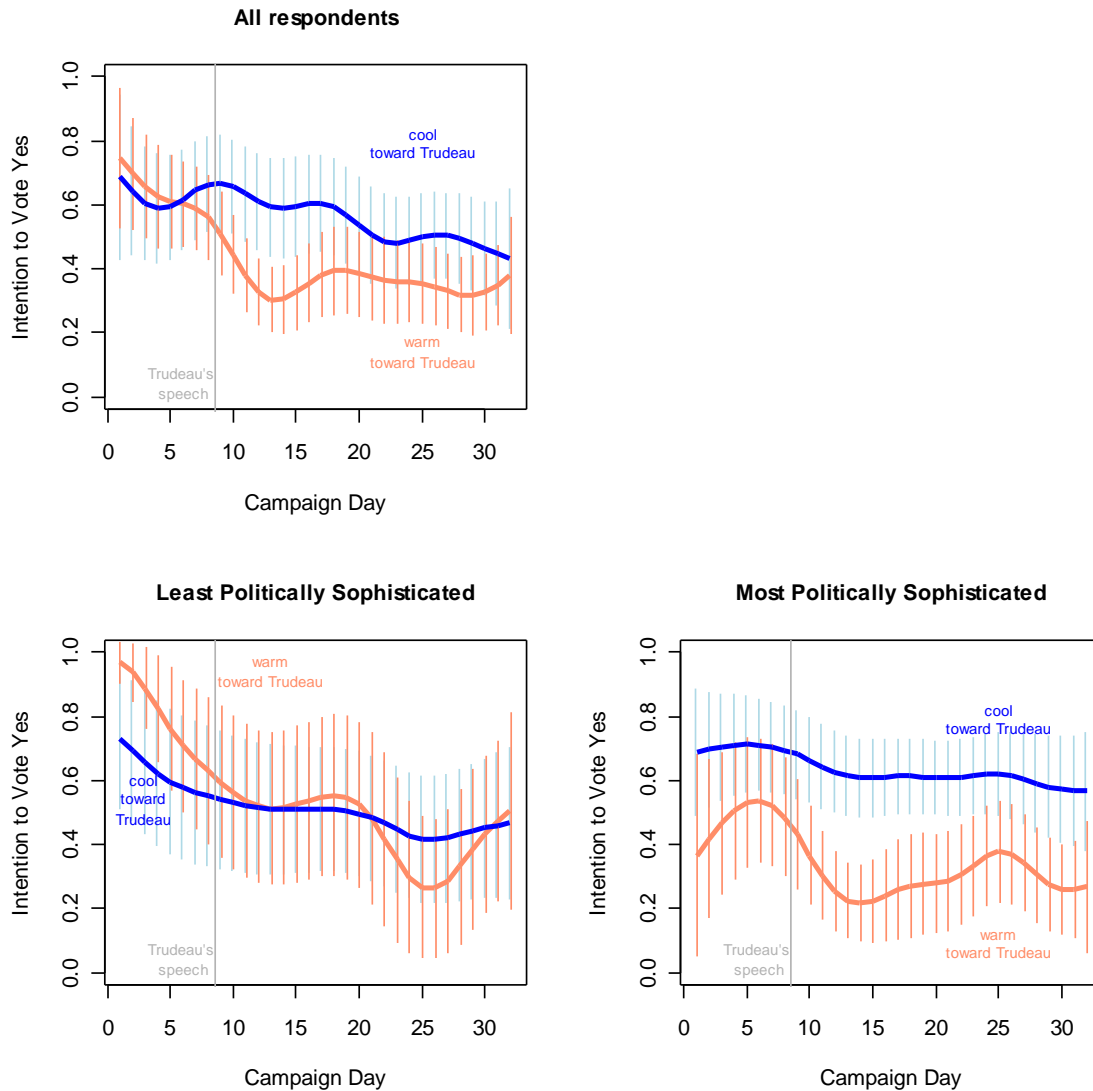
Among the more politically sophisticated, there is dramatic evidence in support of the cue-taking explanation of Trudeau's impact. For an individual with the highest possible score on the political information scale, moving from a very negative evaluation of Trudeau to a very positive one results in a 0.07 point increase in the probability of voting 'No' prior to Trudeau's speech. Following Trudeau's speech, however, this same shift yields a 0.76 point shift in the predicted probability of a 'No' vote. While feelings toward Trudeau were weakly and *positively* related to opposition to the Accord prior to Trudeau's intervention, this relationship becomes dramatically stronger after Trudeau's speech¹⁵. These results also demonstrate that people with negative feelings toward Trudeau did in fact respond to his cue, though still somewhat less dramatically than did those who felt positively toward Trudeau.¹⁶

Results of Semiparametric Analysis:

¹⁵ These results are also consistent with Zaller's (1992) conception of opinion formation. While there is no evidence of a "mainstream" effect during the first phase of the campaign despite elite consensus, there is clear evidence of a "polarization" effect among the more sophisticated following Trudeau's speech which shattered this consensus.

¹⁶ In a separate analysis not presented here, I find that the cue-taking explanation depends importantly on awareness of Trudeau's position. By including measures of both awareness of Trudeau's opposition to the Accord and evaluations of the former Prime Minister, I demonstrate that while awareness of his position was a necessary condition for evaluations of Trudeau to matter, citizens only began to 'use' these evaluations after Trudeau's high-profile speech. Specifically, when only those who were aware of Trudeau's opposition are considered, the relationship between feelings toward Trudeau and support for the Accord is dramatically stronger following after his speech. In addition, I also find that the effect of political sophistication is not due primarily to greater awareness of Trudeau's position. There is no evidence of polarization among the more sophisticated who were aware of Trudeau's position prior to his speech. Only after his speech is the relationship between evaluations of Trudeau and support for the Accord evident among the more politically sophisticated.

Figure 2. Effect of Feelings Toward Trudeau on Predicted Probability of Intending to Vote ‘Yes’ Over the Course of the Campaign



Note: In each panel, the thicker dark lines represent the predicted probability of intending to vote ‘Yes’ for an individual who rated Trudeau as 0/100 on the thermometer scale and all other variables held at their mean. The thicker light line represents the same prediction when the individual rates Trudeau at 100/100. The distance between these two lines at any point in time indicates the strength of the relationship between feelings toward Trudeau and vote intention. In the top panel, the sharp decline in the days following Trudeau’s speech is consistent with the cue-taking explanation of Trudeau’s impact. The bottom two panels suggest that this effect is evident primarily among the more politically sophisticated. Thinner vertical lines represent the 95% confidence interval for each predicted value.

The semiparametric results discussed in this section offer both further support for the cue-taking hypothesis and present a more nuanced picture of the dynamics of the cue-taking process. The top panel of Figure 2 presents the predicted probability of voting Yes for

individuals with mean scores on all variables other than feelings toward Trudeau and date of interview. In the early stages of the campaign, there is very little difference between the predicted score of individuals who rated Trudeau at the extremes of the thermometer scale. The mean difference between these two individuals over the first seven days of the campaign is only 0.03. In the days surrounding Trudeau's speech, however, the two lines diverge in dramatic fashion with the largest difference between the two (0.46) occurring five days after Trudeau's speech on Day 13. On that day, an individual who rated Trudeau at 0 on the thermometer scale has a predicted probability of voting Yes of 0.68 compared to a score of 0.23 for someone who rated Trudeau at 100. Interestingly, over the second half of the campaign, these two lines begin to converge suggesting that the impact of feelings toward Trudeau mattered little in the final days of the campaign¹⁷.

The bottom two panels of Figure 2 clearly demonstrate the relationship between political sophistication and the cue-taking effect. To produce these figures I divided the sample into more and less politically sophisticated respondents based on respondents' ability to name 2 or more elite intervenors and then ran the same generalized additive model on the two subsets of the data¹⁸. As was the case in the parametric analysis, among the less sophisticated there is some relationship between evaluations of Trudeau and support for the Accord prior to his speech. This relationship disappears in the days following Trudeau's intervention as the two lines converge for much of the rest of the campaign. In contrast, among the more sophisticated, there is little difference in predicted support for the Accord prior to Trudeau's speech and substantial differences following his speech and throughout the remainder of the campaign.

The analyses presented in this section offer compelling support for the cue-taking explanation of Trudeau's impact. Prior to Trudeau's speech, respondents' evaluations of Trudeau were only weakly related to their intended vote choice. In the days following, Trudeau's speech, however, the relationship between evaluations of Trudeau and vote intention is much stronger. These results also suggest that cue-taking was greater among relatively more sophisticated citizens.

¹⁷ One critical decision required in the use of GAM which rely on scatterplot smoothing is the smoothness of the fitted line. One criterion is to choose the smoothed function that best fits the data based on prediction criteria such as Generalized Cross Validation. In the present case, this approach yields an extremely smooth line that provides little insight into the dynamics surrounding Trudeau's speech. I adopt a much smaller smoothing parameter in order to capture some shorter-term changes. This choice reflects the relatively small amount of data available for analysis.

¹⁸ A three way interaction term is not suitable for the GAM framework.

The Message

While the messenger clearly mattered, a second explanation of Trudeau's impact concerns the effect that the content of his speech had on support for the Accord. From this perspective, Trudeau's impact was mediated by the increased salience of certain arguments he raised during his speech that were communicated by the media. The actual text of Trudeau's speech runs counter to the conventional wisdom of political consultants who often emphasize repetition of a single straightforward argument or frame. Instead Trudeau raised a number of different and rather complex arguments concerning the flaws of the proposed constitutional amendments. While his speech involved considerable nuance and complexity, media coverage was quite effective at conveying his central points in a fairly straightforward manner.

The media play a critical role in this story since Trudeau's speech was not seen or heard directly by citizens outside Quebec. In addition to consulting the text of his speech, I therefore conducted a content analysis of newspaper coverage of Trudeau's speech during the nine days following his speech in order to identify which aspects of Trudeau's speech the media covered and the relative amount of attention these different points received. Newspaper reports of Trudeau's speech emphasized: a) Trudeau's arguments about the likely outcome of a 'Yes' or 'No' vote received, and b) his assertion that certain elements of the Accord threatened the principle of equality of rights¹⁹.

After identifying survey questions that measure respondent's opinions about these considerations, I conducted the same set of empirical analyses I used to explore the cue-taking explanation. In the case of Trudeau's message, the variables of interest are agreement with a certain consideration, date of interview, and the interactions between these two variables. All of the consideration measures are scored 0 or 1 since, in each case, respondents faced a dichotomous choice, such as agree or disagree. 'Don't know' responses were coded as missing and each variable is coded so that a score of 1 indicates acceptance with Trudeau's perspective on the consideration. For example, a 1 for the 'distinct society' clause consideration means one *opposed* this element of the Accord. In each case, if Trudeau had the impact he desired, we

¹⁹ Media coverage also emphasized Trudeau's concerns about effect of the Accord on the distribution of powers between the federal and provincial governments. Unfortunately, the CES did not contain questions that enable a consideration of the impact of this argument on support for the Accord.

should see a stronger relationship between respondents' positions on the argument and their opposition to the Accord in the days following Trudeau's speech²⁰.

In the decade leading up to the Charlottetown Referendum, Canadians witnessed a failed Quebec referendum on sovereignty, a major revision and 'patriation' of the Constitution, a failed attempt to further amend the Constitution, and the elite negotiations which resulted in the Charlottetown Accord. When 'Yes' side elites argued that passing the referendum would resolve Canada's ongoing constitutional challenges, they were tapping into Canadians' general fatigue with constitutional politics and desire to focus on other issues. Trudeau took this assertion head on and argued precisely the opposite, suggesting that a 'Yes' vote would only result in further rounds of constitutional negotiations and that a 'No' vote would bring an end to the constitutional debate. Both opponents and supporters thus sought to tap the publics' wish to move on, but offered competing theories about how to do so.

Opponents and supporters of the Charlottetown Accord offered competing versions of the effect of a 'Yes' vote. In contrast to the 'Yes' side's suggestion that ratifying the Accord would result in constitutional peace, Trudeau argued this outcome would only yield further rounds of constitutional negotiations. More specifically, Trudeau argued that a yes vote would only encourage Quebec to make further demands. Beliefs about the general outcome also hinged on expectations about the impact of a 'No' vote. 'Yes' side elites argued that a rejection of the Charlottetown Accord would provide a boost to nationalist and secessionist sentiment among the Quebec population that might lead to the break up of the country. Again, Pierre

²⁰ Beyond priming, there are two alternative mechanisms through which message content might affect opinions. Lenz (2005) persuasively argues that researchers have paid too little attention to the possibility of biased estimates of priming by failing to account for citizens who adjust their beliefs about specific considerations in order to reflect their summary opinions such as party identification. I attempted to evaluate the possibility of opinion adjustment by inspecting the aggregate movement in support for the various considerations over the course of the campaign. In addition to plotting aggregate support for the different considerations included in my analysis and feelings toward Trudeau, I ran a series of bivariate regressions with date of interview predicting responses to these considerations. In only one case was there considerable movement in aggregate support for a consideration. Over the course of the campaign, individuals became more likely to disagree with the idea that a 'Yes' vote would allow the country to 'move on to other problems like the economy'. I therefore excluded this argument from my analysis. A second alternative to priming is learning. Trudeau may have either presented information new to certain respondents or persuaded them to change their position on certain considerations. Unfortunately because I do not have panel data where respondents were re-interviewed in the days following Trudeau's speech, I can not effectively assess the potential impact of learning. In general, there is no significant change in the percentage of individuals who respond with 'don't know' to questions about various considerations. Moreover, as mentioned above, there is little aggregate change in the public's position on most of the considerations discussed here which likely indicates that few individuals changed their minds about the considerations included in the analyses presented here.

	<i>If the agreement is approved, do you think the constitutional question will be settled?</i>		<i>No agreement will satisfy Quebec, they will always ask for more.</i>	
	No	Yes	Agree	Disagree
Days 1-8	0.33 (0.25,0.40)	0.14 (0.08,0.22)	0.17 (0.12,0.24)	0.07 (0.02,0.14)
Days 9-16	0.46 (0.38,0.54)	0.15 (0.09,0.24)	0.24 (0.15,0.36)	0.09 (0.05,0.17)
Days 17-24	0.45 (0.37,0.52)	0.13 (0.07,0.21)	0.21 (0.13,0.32)	0.14 (0.08,0.23)
Days 24-32	0.47 (0.39,0.55)	0.16 (0.08,0.24)	0.25 (0.16,0.38)	0.13 (0.07,0.23)

Table 3: Effect of Position on Two Arguments Central to Trudeau’s Critique on Predicted Probability of Voting ‘No’ Over the Course of the Campaign.

Note: This table presents the results of two separate ordinal logit regressions. The second and third columns display the predicted probability of intending to vote ‘No’ for an individual where all variables are held at their mean except date of interview, response to the question about future constitutional negotiations in the even of a ‘Yes’ vote. The gap between predicted probabilities between ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ responses offers an estimate of the relationship between responses to this question and support for the Accord. Notice the slight increase in this gap from (0.33-0.14=0.19) to (0.46-0.15=0.31) between the pre (Days 1-8) and immediate post speech period (Days 9-16).

The fourth and fifth column present similar results but with respect to the question of Quebec’s future constitutional demands in the event of a ‘Yes’ vote. An even smaller increase in the relationship between position on this consideration and opposition to the Accord following Trudeau’s speech is evident (0.17-0.07=0.10) to (0.24-0.09=0.15). Results are based on 1,000 simulations using the parameter estimates from the models displayed in Table A3. The 95% confidence interval is given in parentheses.

Trudeau argued the opposite and claimed that a No vote was the best way to ensure that constitutional conflict could be halted.

Fortunately, the campaign wave of the survey provides a series of questions that tap these claims. First, with respect to the impact of a ‘Yes’ vote, respondents were asked: a) “If the agreement is approved, do you think the constitutional question will be settled?” and b) whether they agree or disagree with the statement: “No agreement will satisfy Quebec, they will always ask for more.” Table 3 summarizes two ordinal logit regression models by presenting predicted probabilities of voting No.

Despite the strong language Trudeau employed to emphasize this point, the question of whether the Charlottetown Accord would diminish or enhance Quebec’s desire for further renegotiation of the constitution does not appear to have mediated Trudeau’s impact²¹. An individual who shared Trudeau’s belief that Quebec would continue to demand more was 10%

²¹ In his talk Thursday, Trudeau said ... nationalist forces in Quebec are just pressuring the rest of the country to enhance their own power. The Accord is like tossing meat to a tiger, he warned. It will only heighten Quebec's appetite.” Sharon Kirkey & Les Whittington, “Taking stock of the Trudeau Factor”, *Calgary Herald*, 4 October 1992, pp.B-1.

more likely to vote ‘No’ than someone who disagreed with this assertion prior to Trudeau’s speech. In the days following Trudeau’s intervention, this gap increased only slightly from 10% to 15%.

Table 3 also offers only limited support for the idea that Trudeau’s impact was mediated by his claim that a No vote would result in a constitutional cease-fire²². The predicted probabilities presented in the left-hand side of Table 3 clearly demonstrate that responses to this question were strongly related to the vote throughout the campaign. More to the point, there is a slight increase in the relative strength of the relationship between this consideration and vote intention following Trudeau’s speech. Shifting from an affirmative response to a negative response to this question prior to Trudeau’s intervention is associated with a 19% increase in the probability of voting ‘No’. The same shift following Trudeau’s speech yields a 31% change in the predicted probability. The results of the GAM model involving this consideration, presented in the first panel of Figure 3, echo the findings of the logit analysis²³. The slopes of the two lines in the days following Trudeau’s speech are quite similar suggesting that those who agreed with Trudeau’s argument on this point and those who disagreed became less supportive of the Accord by similar amounts following Trudeau’s speech. While closer inspection reveals that the slope of the line for those who shared Trudeau’s belief that a Yes vote would not ‘settle’ the constitutional question is somewhat steeper in the week following his speech, overall there is little difference between the two trends during the time frame of interest²⁴.

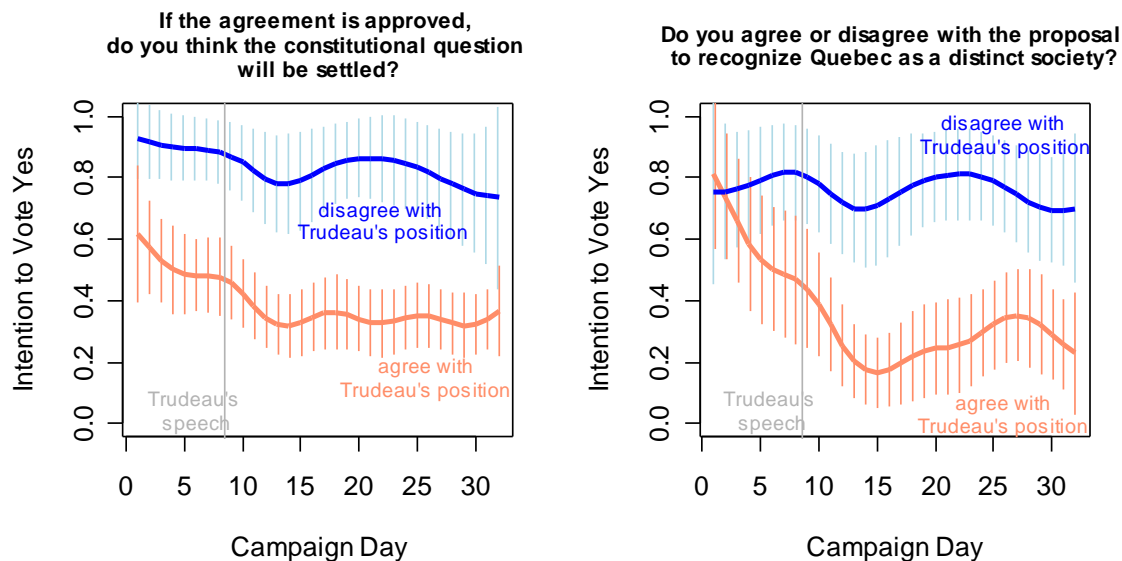
Finally, Trudeau argued passionately that the Accord would undermine the equality of rights among Canadians. He argued that various clauses in the Accord privileged certain groups and would allow some majorities to overrun the rights of minorities. The Charlottetown Accord’s recognition of the collective rights of Aboriginals and Quebecers was a direct challenge to Trudeau’s constitutional vision. Trudeau argued in both general and specific terms

²² “You think you’ll have peace if you vote Yes? You’ll have peace if you vote No. Because No means we’ve had enough of the Constitution, we don’t want to hear any more about it.” The Canadian Press, “Collective rights must prevail, Trudeau insists”, *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, 2 October 1992, pp F-11

²³ A GAM for the question: “If the agreement is approved, do you think the constitutional question will be settled?” confirms the results from the null results of the ordinal logit model is therefore not shown.

²⁴ I also ran a logit model to test whether the relationship between respondents’ positions on this consideration and vote intention depended on levels of political sophistication. Unlike the cue-taking results presented above, I found no support for the idea that more sophisticated citizens were more likely to respond to Trudeau’s claims about the effect of a ‘Yes’ vote.

Figure 3. The Effect of Positions on Two of Trudeau’s Central Arguments on Predicted Probability of Intending to Vote ‘Yes’ Over the Course of the Campaign



Note: In each panel, the thicker dark lines represent the predicted probability of intending to vote ‘Yes’ for an individual who disagreed with Trudeau’s position on the question listed above each plot and for whom all other variables are held at their mean. The thicker light line represents the same prediction when the individual agrees with Trudeau’s position. The distance between these two lines at any point in time indicates the strength of the relationship between feelings toward Trudeau and vote intention. In the left hand panel, there is little difference in the slope of the two lines in the immediate post-speech period which suggests that the relationship between respondents’ positions on the question of whether a ‘Yes’ vote would ‘settle’ Canada’s constitutional concerns and vote intention did not change following Trudeau’s intervention. In contrast, the drop in predicted probability of voting ‘Yes’ is much sharper among those respondents who shared Trudeau’s opposition to the distinct society clause (lighter line) than the same change among those who disagreed with Trudeau in supporting this feature of the Accord. Thinner vertical lines represent the 95% confidence interval for each predicted value.

about the threat of collective rights to the equality of rights among individuals. Unfortunately the survey contains no questions related to respondents’ general concerns about the accords’ implications for the rights protected in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The campaign wave of the survey does include a question about respondents support for a particularly contentious aspect of the Accord, the distinct society clause, designed to recognize Quebec’s unique culture and language.²⁵

There are a number of reasons to suspect that Trudeau’s discussion of the distinct society clause mediated his impact on the campaign. Efforts to include a clause that recognized

²⁵ There is a similar question that gauges support for ‘Aboriginal self-government’ which Trudeau also identified as violating the equality of rights of all citizens. This consideration played only a minor role and was virtually absent from media coverage of the event. Empirical analysis confirmed that Trudeau’s speech did not result in a stronger relationship between support for the Accord and this consideration.

	<i>Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to recognize Quebec as a distinct society?</i>			
	Disagree		Agree	
Days 1-8	0.25	(0.16,0.35)	0.16	(0.08,0.27)
Days 9-16	0.47	(0.36,0.58)	0.20	(0.11,0.30)
Days 17-24	0.45	(0.34,0.57)	0.15	(0.09,0.25)
Days 24-32	0.49	(0.38, 0.60)	0.17	(0.10,0.26)

Table 4: Effect of Position on Distinct Society Clause on Predicted Probability of Voting ‘No’ Over the Course of the Campaign.

Note: This table presents the predicted probability of intending to vote ‘No’ for an individual where all variables are held at their mean except date of interview, and position on the distinct society clause. The gap between predicted probabilities between ‘Disagree’ and ‘Agree’ responses offers an estimate of the relationship between responses to this question and support for the Accord. Notice the large increase in this gap from (0.25-0.16=0.09) to (0.47-0.20=0.27).

Results are based on 1,000 simulations using the parameter estimates from the models displayed in Table A4. The 95% confidence interval is given in parentheses.

Quebec’s unique cultural and linguistic heritage were motivated by the 1982 Constitutional amendments, spearheaded by Trudeau, which entrenched a vision of Canada as a single nation unified by the shared and equal rights of individuals. Put simply, the distinct society clause was crucial to the constitutional debate of the 1980’s and 90’s. Previous empirical work has confirmed this fact. Johnston et al (1996) and Leduc and Pammet (1995) both identify the salience of this clause as an important reason for the demise of the Charlottetown Accord. In addition, since a similar clause was included in the failed attempt to revise the constitution in the late 1980’s, public opinion about the clause was fairly well developed. Over the course of the campaign, only 11% of Canadians outside Quebec failed to take a position on the clause, with 58% opposed and 32% supporting the distinct society clause.

Table 4 reports the results of an analysis aimed at identifying whether Trudeau’s speech had any impact on the salience of this consideration. Unfortunately, due to a survey

administration error, this question was asked of only 60% of the sample and thus there are only 702 cases included in this analysis²⁶. Despite this limitation, these results offer support for the notion that Trudeau's intervention resulted in a stronger relationship between individuals' position on the distinct society clause and support for the Accord. During the first week of the campaign, the effect of an individual moving from support to opposition to this clause resulted in only a 9% change in her predicted probability of voting 'No'. Following Trudeau's speech, this difference increased to 27%. Holding all other variables at their means, an individual who agrees with the distinct society clause in the days following Trudeau's speech had a predicted probability of voting No of 0.2. For an individual who disagreed with the clause, this probability is much larger at .47.

The GAM results presented in the second panel of Figure 3 further suggest that much of the impact of Trudeau's speech was mediated by the increased relevance of the distinct society clause in voter's minds following Trudeau's speech. While there is some decline in predicted support for an individual who supports the distinct society clause following Trudeau's speech, the decline is much greater for someone who shares Trudeau's opposition to this element of the Accord. The distance between these two lines is .34 on the day of Trudeau's speech and increased to 0.5 five days later. Interestingly, a sharp divergence in support for the Accord is also evident during the first few days of the campaign. This fact does raise some questions about the validity of attributing the post-speech decline in support for the Accord among those who oppose the distinct society clause solely to Trudeau's intervention²⁷.

In addition to the results discussed above, I conducted a similar set of analyses including a handful of other Accord-relevant considerations mentioned in Trudeau's speech. Respondents' positions on four other questions, addressed more or less directly by Trudeau, did not become more strongly related to vote intention in the period following Trudeau's speech.

²⁶ Johnston et al attempt to overcome this problem by using responses to the same question from the post-election wave of the survey as indicators of campaign wave opinion about the distinct society clause for those respondents who were not asked the question in the original survey. I do not adopt this approach since the use of post-election opinion about a consideration is particularly vulnerable to opinion adjustment effects and because the correlation between campaign and post-election responses to this question among those asked during both waves is only 0.56.

²⁷ Unfortunately, due to the limited number of respondents who were asked for their position on the distinct society clause I was unable to ascertain the extent to which political sophistication moderated the relationship between support for the distinct society clause and the Accord in general over time. The coefficient estimates of a logit analysis and the trends evident in the results of a GAM approach do suggest that the stronger relationship between position on the distinct society clause and support for the Accord following Trudeau's speech exists primarily among the more sophisticated. But the standard errors are much too large to meet even a relaxed standard of statistical significance.

These considerations are: a) whether a No vote would result in Quebec separation, b) whether the Charlottetown Accord was the ‘best compromise’ available, c) the guarantee that Quebec would control 25% of the seats in the House of Commons, and d) whether a ‘No’ vote would make the constitutional question ‘disappear’.

Taken together, the results presented in this section offer limited support for the idea that the content of elite communications matters. Interpretation of these results hinges on how much one expects citizens to grapple with the content of elite messages. Trudeau raised many different reasons for opposing the Accord but only one, the distinct society clause, seems to have substantially influenced citizens’ support for the Accord. On the one hand, those who believe a fully informed citizenry is crucial to the health of democracy will find these results disappointing. On the other, that some of Trudeau’s arguments appear to have affected vote intentions poses a challenge to the assertion that citizens engage solely in cue-taking and ignore the content of elite messages. Regardless, at this stage firm conclusions are avoided since we have yet to consider the relationship between the messenger and his message.

Considering both Message and Messenger

Before concluding that cue-taking was the primary mechanism behind Pierre Trudeau’s dramatic effect on the campaign, we must first consider both the messenger and message effects in the same model in order to identify whether or not the two separate explanations actually moderate one another. That is, the impact of elite communication may depend on both citizens’ feelings about the source and the substantive content of the message. Essentially, this explanation assumes people interpret the content of elite communications through the lens of their feelings toward the sender. Those who feel positively toward a communicator are surely more likely to attend to the substantive points she raises and to accept these considerations as valid. The alternative explanation, that people decide whether to use their feelings toward an elite only when they agree with the elite’s arguments, seems less likely, but certainly possible. In order to test whether feelings toward an intervenor moderate the effect of message content, I estimated a regression model that included interactions between these two explanations, and three-way interactions between the two variables and the three date periods.

The results of this analysis, presented in Table 5, are intriguing and suggest that the impact of Trudeau’s speech was dramatic among those who felt positively toward the

	<i>Very positive evaluation of Trudeau</i>				<i>Very negative evaluation of Trudeau</i>			
	Support Distinct Society Clause		Oppose Distinct Society Clause		Support Distinct Society Clause		Oppose Distinct Society Clause	
Days 1-8	0.16	(0.04,0.36)	0.23	(0.10,0.43)	0.18	(0.03,0.48)	0.26	(0.10,0.50)
Days 9-16	0.20	(0.07,0.38)	0.60	(0.41,0.78)	0.19	(0.05,0.45)	0.29	(0.12,0.50)
Days 17-24	0.12	(0.04,0.28)	0.55	(0.35,0.74)	0.22	(0.07,0.48)	0.32	(0.14,0.55)
Days 24-32	0.25	(0.11,0.48)	0.48	(0.30,0.66)	0.11	(0.04,0.26)	0.50	(0.28,0.71)

Table 5: The Effect of The Messenger and his Message on Predicted Probability of Intending to Vote ‘No’ Over the Course of the Campaign.

Note: This table presents the predicted probability of intending to vote ‘No’ computed by holding all variables at their mean except date of interview, position on the distinct society clause, feelings toward Trudeau, and the interaction between these three variables of interest. Note that the change in predicted probability between the pre and post speech period is much larger for those who rated Trudeau as 100/100 and who oppose the distinct society clause than it is for the three other combinations of these two variables.

Results are based on 1,000 simulations using the parameter estimates from the models displayed in Table A6. The 95% confidence interval is given in parentheses.

messenger and agreed with his message, and quite limited in all other instances. For an individual who felt quite negatively toward Trudeau and/or who supported the distinct society clause, there is a very minimal change in the predicted probability of voting ‘No’ between the pre and post speech period: a) for an individual who felt warmly toward Trudeau but supported the distinct society clause, the increase was only 0.04; b) for someone who felt negatively toward Trudeau yet supported the clause, there was a 0.01 increase; and c) for a person who opposed both Trudeau and the distinct society clause, there is a small 0.03 increase. In contrast, for an individual who felt very warmly toward Trudeau and who opposed the distinct society clause, this same change was 0.37 moving from a predicted probability of 0.23 prior to his speech to 0.60 following it. These results are consistent with the idea that the dramatic decline in support for the Accord was concentrated among those who both liked the messenger and agreed with his message²⁸.

Conclusion.

This paper has offered some useful insights into the basic question of how Trudeau’s speech resulted in such a dramatic decline in support for the Charlottetown Accord. Overall, the various analyses contained above offer substantial support for the idea that cue-taking provides a powerful explanation of the public’s response to Trudeau’s speech. The relationship between

²⁸ Because the distinct society question was asked of only 60% of the sample and the number of variables included in this model there are an insufficient number of cases to enable an informative estimation of a GAM.

feelings toward Trudeau and support for the accord became much stronger in the days immediately following Trudeau's speech compared to those preceding his intervention. In addition to providing support for this basic premise, I have further demonstrated that this cue-taking behavior was more prevalent among the relatively more politically sophisticated members of the public. In contrast, only one of the numerous arguments Trudeau put forth, his rejection of the 'distinct society' clause, appears to have resonated with the public.

The most notable absence of a cue-taking relationship in the above analyses suggests, however, that cue-taking alone cannot fully explain the impact of Trudeau's speech. Among those who disagreed with Trudeau's opposition toward the distinct society clause, there is no evidence of cue-taking. Coupled with the clear evidence of cue-taking among those who were opposed to the distinct society clause, this particular result suggests that some individuals responded to both their opinions of Trudeau and his arguments. More generally, the third section of this paper suggests that analytical gains may be made by studies that consider both elite messengers and their messages. In addition to providing a more accurate description of opinion formation, such an approach may lead us to re-evaluate existing conceptions of citizen competence. If the success of elite efforts to influence citizens through means such as priming and framing is conditional on citizens' evaluations of these elites, then we may feel somewhat more confident about citizens' ability to reach sound political decisions.

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Appendix: Question Wording

Vote Intention

refc2a: The referendum question asks, “Do you agree that the constitution of Canada should be renewed on the basis of the agreement reached on August 28th 1992”

[If you do vote], do you think you will vote *yes* or *no*?”

refc2d:[If you do vote], do you think you will vote *yes* or *no*?”

refc3: Which way are you leaning: *yes* or *no*?

Considerations:

Do you *Agree* or *Disagree* with the following statements.

refd1: No agreement will satisfy Quebec, they will always ask for more.

refd3: The agreement is *the best compromise* we can get under the circumstance.

refd4: The agreement allow us move on to other problems, like the economy.

refd5: Voting *No* to this agreement means saying *Yes* to Quebec’s independence.

refd8: In the agreement, is the *Federal Government* a winner or a loser

reff4: If the agreement is approved, do you think the constitutional question will be settled?

refe10: Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to recognize Quebec as a distinct society?

refe11: Guarantee of 25% of seats in House of Commons to Quebec

There are four different version of this question:

1. Quebec has been guaranteed one-quarter of the seats in the House of Commons. Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with this PROPOSAL?
2. Quebec has been guaranteed one-quarter of the seats in the House of Commons regardless of its population. Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with this PROPOSAL?
3. In return for losing most of its Senate seats, Quebec has been guaranteed one-quarter of the seats in the House of Commons. Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with this PROPOSAL?
4. In return for losing most of its Senate seats, Quebec has been guaranteed one-quarter of the seats in the House of Commons regardless of its population. Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with this PROPOSAL?

Feeling Thermometers:

I am going to name some people and ask you how you feel about them on a thermometer that runs from 0 to 100 degrees. Ratings between 50 and 100 are positive. Ratings between 0 and 50 are negative. You may use any number from 0 to 100.

refh2: How do you *feel* about *Pierre Trudeau*?

refh27: How do you *feel* about *Quebec*

refh3: How do you *feel* about *Brian Mulroney*?

refh5: How do you *feel* about *Jean Chretien*?

refh6: How do you *feel* about *Audrey McLaughlin*?

Awareness of Trudeau’s position:

refg1a: First, has *Pierre Trudeau* taken a public position on the agreement?

refg1b: Has he [Pierre Trudeau] come out *for* or *against*?

Political Sophistication:

I'm going to name *some* people and groups who *might* take a public position on the Constitutional agreement. For each can you tell me *as far as you know* if they have taken a *public* position on the agreement.

refg2a: Has the *business community* taken a public position on the agreement?

refg2b: Has it [the business community] come out *for* or *against*?

refg3a: Has the *women's movement* taken a public position on the agreement?

refg3b: Has it [the women's movement] come out *for* or *against*?

refg4a: Have *union leaders* taken a public position on the agreement?

refg4b: Have they [union leaders] come out *for* or *against*?

refg5a: Has *Preston Manning* taken a public position on the agreement?

refg5b: Has he [Preston Manning] come out *for* or *against*?

refg6a: Has *Peter Lougheed* taken a public position on the agreement?

refg6b: Has he [Peter Lougheed] come out *for* or *against*?

Interest in the Campaign:

refint1: Would you say you are very interested, fairly interested, not very interested, or not at all interested in the referendum campaign?

Party Identification:

refi1c: Thinking of federal politics, do you usually think of yourself as a Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Reform, or none of these?

Table A1. Cue-Taking and Trudeau's Impact

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t-Value</i>
Days 9-16	0.33	0.40	0.85
Days17-24	-0.24	0.38	-0.62
Days 25-32	-0.19	0.37	-0.52
Trudeau Feelings	0.07	0.47	0.16
Days 9-16 * Trudeau Feelings	-1.51	0.64	-2.36
Days17-24* Trudeau Feelings	-0.53	0.63	-0.84
Days 25-32* Trudeau Feelings	-0.88	0.62	-1.43
Resident of 'West'	-0.27	0.11	-2.35
Resident of 'East'	0.64	0.16	3.94
Liberal Identifier	0.51	0.14	3.74
PC Identifier	0.78	0.15	5.25
NDP Identifier	-0.01	0.17	-0.03
Reform Identifier	-1.13	0.28	-4.05
Completed High school	-0.33	0.15	-2.20
Completed college or some university	-0.22	0.15	-1.47
Completed university degree	0.26	0.18	1.43
Female	0.12	0.11	1.07
Age	-0.19	0.28	-0.69
Income	-0.19	0.27	-0.69
Not Very Interested in Politics	-0.19	0.32	-0.60
Somewhat Interested in Politics	0.73	0.25	2.92
Very Interested in Politics	0.95	0.22	4.25
Political Sophistication	1.05	0.24	4.49
Intercepts			
No Lean No	0.01	0.39	0.02
Lean No Don't Know	0.36	0.39	0.92
Don't Know Lean Yes	1.01	0.39	2.60
Lean Yes Yes	1.42	0.39	3.64
N	1317		

Note: The dependent variable is 'vote intention'. Quebec respondents are excluded.

Table A2. Cue-Taking and Trudeau's Impact by Political Sophistication

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	<i>t-Value</i>
Days 9-16	-0.43	0.58	-0.75
Days17-24	-0.37	0.57	-0.65
Days 25-32	-0.70	0.57	-1.23
Trudeau Feelings	0.34	0.70	0.49
Days 9-16 * Trudeau Feelings	-0.24	0.95	-0.26
Days17-24* Trudeau Feelings	-0.32	0.97	-0.33
Days 25-32* Trudeau Feelings	-0.64	0.98	-0.65
Political Sophistication	0.51	1.06	0.48
Days 9-16* Political Sophistication	2.44	1.45	1.69
Days17-24* Political Sophistication	0.34	1.33	0.25
Days 25-32* Political Sophistication	1.31	1.32	0.99
Political Sophistication* Trudeau Feelings	-0.78	1.75	-0.45
Days 9-16* Political Sophistication* Trudeau Feelings	-4.02	2.34	-1.72
Days17-24* Political Sophistication* Trudeau Feelings	-0.39	2.19	-0.18
Days 25-32* Political Sophistication* Trudeau Feelings	-0.64	2.20	-0.29
Resident of 'West'	-0.27	0.12	-2.30
Resident of 'East'	0.61	0.16	3.74
Liberal Identifier	0.52	0.14	3.74
PC Identifier	0.77	0.15	5.14
NDP Identifier	-0.01	0.17	-0.09
Reform Identifier	-1.18	0.28	-4.21
Completed High school	-0.35	0.15	-2.33
Completed college or some university	-0.25	0.15	-1.61
Completed university degree	0.25	0.18	1.39
Female	0.10	0.11	0.89
Age	-0.27	0.28	-0.97
Income	-0.17	0.33	-0.52
Not Very Interested in Politics	0.70	0.25	2.77
Somewhat Interested in Politics	0.92	0.23	4.10
Very Interested in Politics	1.03	0.24	4.35
Intercepts			
No Lean No	-0.028	0.48	-0.059
Lean No Don't Know	0.325	0.48	0.682
Don't Know Lean Yes	0.984	0.48	2.061
Lean Yes Yes	1.398	0.48	2.923
N	1317		

Note: The dependent variable is 'vote intention'. Quebec respondents are excluded.

Table A3. Trudeau's Arguments and Support for the Charlottetown Accord I

Variable	<i>If the agreement is approved, do you think the constitutional question will be settled?</i>			No agreement will satisfy Quebec, they will always ask for more.		
	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-Value	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-Value
Days 9-16	-0.11	0.39	-0.28	-0.38	0.30	-1.27
Days 17-24	0.07	0.41	0.16	-0.78	0.29	-2.71
Days 25-32	-0.14	0.41	-0.33	-0.76	0.28	-2.76
Trudeau Feelings	-1.14	0.31	-3.69	-1.05	0.25	-4.21
Days 9-16 * "Consideration"	-0.46	0.43	-1.08	-0.07	0.35	-0.21
Days 17-24* "Consideration"	-0.60	0.45	-1.34	0.49	0.34	1.43
Days 25-32* "Consideration"	-0.49	0.45	-1.09	0.21	0.33	0.64
Resident of 'West'	-0.21	0.12	-1.74	-0.21	0.12	-1.73
Resident of 'East'	0.54	0.17	3.25	0.61	0.16	3.71
Liberal Identifier	0.42	0.14	3.04	0.42	0.14	3.01
PC Identifier	0.80	0.15	5.22	0.85	0.16	5.44
NDP Identifier	0.02	0.17	0.14	0.01	0.17	0.06
Reform Identifier	-0.90	0.27	-3.26	-1.03	0.28	-3.69
Completed High school	-0.37	0.16	-2.36	-0.40	0.16	-2.53
Completed college or some university	-0.17	0.16	-1.06	-0.28	0.16	-1.78
Completed university degree	0.22	0.18	1.22	0.02	0.19	0.11
Female	0.10	0.11	0.89	0.05	0.11	0.48
Age	-0.07	0.28	-0.24	0.16	0.29	0.56
Income	-0.41	0.33	-1.22	-0.10	0.34	-0.29
Not Very Interested in Politics	0.70	0.26	2.69	0.99	0.26	3.74
Somewhat Interested in Politics	0.82	0.23	3.53	1.01	0.24	4.31
Very Interested in Politics	0.96	0.24	3.95	1.09	0.25	4.42
Political Sophistication	0.42	0.20	2.04	0.37	0.21	1.78
Intercepts						
No Lean No	-1.03	0.40	-2.61	-1.60	0.52	-3.071
Lean No Don't Know	-0.67	0.40	-1.70	-1.26	0.52	-2.409
Don't Know Lean Yes	-0.03	0.40	-0.08	-0.64	0.52	-1.233
Lean Yes Yes	0.42	0.40	1.06	-0.23	0.52	-0.442
N				1278		

Note: The dependent variable is 'vote intention'. Quebec respondents are excluded.

Table A4. Trudeau's Arguments and Support for the Charlottetown Accord II

Variable	Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to recognize Quebec as a distinct society?		
	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-Value
Days 9-16	-0.27	0.39	-0.70
Days17-24	0.03	0.40	0.07
Days 25-32	-0.12	0.37	-0.32
Trudeau Feelings	-0.57	0.36	-1.59
Days 9-16 * Trudeau Feelings	-0.76	0.47	-1.60
Days17-24* Trudeau Feelings	-0.98	0.48	-2.04
Days 25-32* Trudeau Feelings	-0.97	0.45	-2.13
Resident of 'West'	-0.31	0.17	-1.84
Resident of 'East'	0.46	0.23	2.02
Liberal Identifier	0.35	0.20	1.76
PC Identifier	0.85	0.21	3.98
NDP Identifier	0.11	0.23	0.46
Reform Identifier	-1.64	0.41	-3.99
Completed High school	-0.37	0.21	-1.74
Completed college or some university	-0.04	0.22	-0.18
Completed university degree	-0.18	0.26	-0.68
Female	0.45	0.15	2.89
Age	0.21	0.40	0.53
Income	0.11	0.47	0.25
Not Very Interested in Politics	0.92	0.39	2.37
Somewhat Interested in Politics	1.34	0.35	3.86
Very Interested in Politics	1.70	0.37	4.61
Political Sophistication	0.29	0.29	1.00
Intercepts			
No Lean No	0.052	0.51	0.102
Lean No Don't Know	0.445	0.51	0.878
Don't Know Lean Yes	1.135	0.51	2.232
Lean Yes Yes	1.514	0.51	2.968
N	702		

Note: The dependent variable is 'vote intention'. Quebec respondents are excluded.

Table A5. Cue-taking and Priming the Distinct Society

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	<i>t-Value</i>
Days 9-16	-0.04	1.05	-0.04
Days 17-24	-0.30	1.01	-0.29
Days 25-32	0.54	0.96	0.56
Trudeau Feelings	0.11	1.25	0.09
Days 9-16 * Trudeau Feelings	-0.26	1.66	-0.16
Days 17-24* Trudeau Feelings	0.64	1.64	0.39
Days 25-32* Trudeau Feelings	-1.18	1.55	-0.76
Oppose Distinct Society	-0.58	0.94	-0.62
Days 9-16* Oppose Distinct Society	-0.11	1.27	-0.08
Days 17-24* Oppose Distinct Society	-0.03	1.24	-0.02
Days 25-32* Oppose Distinct Society	-1.63	1.17	-1.39
Oppose Distinct Society* Trudeau Feelings	0.05	1.51	0.03
Days 9-16* Oppose Distinct Society * Trudeau Feelings	-1.30	2.04	-0.64
Days 17-24* Oppose Distinct Society * Trudeau Feelings	-1.79	2.03	-0.88
Days 25-32* Oppose Distinct Society * Trudeau Feelings	1.13	1.91	0.59
Resident of 'West'	-0.33	0.17	-1.91
Resident of 'East'	0.46	0.24	1.97
Liberal Identifier	0.39	0.20	1.94
PC Identifier	0.83	0.22	3.80
NDP Identifier	0.12	0.24	0.51
Reform Identifier	-1.65	0.41	-3.99
Completed High school	-0.39	0.22	-1.76
Completed college or some university	-0.06	0.23	-0.26
Completed university degree	-0.22	0.27	-0.82
Female	0.48	0.16	3.05
Age	0.10	0.41	0.25
Income	0.21	0.47	0.45
Not Very Interested in Politics	0.98	0.40	2.43
Somewhat Interested in Politics	1.49	0.37	4.07
Very Interested in Politics	1.82	0.38	4.73
Political Sophistication	0.37	0.29	1.27
Intercepts			
No Lean No	0.28	0.91	0.30
Lean No Don't Know	0.68	0.91	0.75
Don't Know Lean Yes	1.37	0.91	1.51
Lean Yes Yes	1.74	0.91	1.92
N	691		