The education and income voting divides in Canada and their consequences for redistributive politics

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A B S T R A C T

Profound changes in the nature of class cleavages in advanced capitalist economies have been documented in recent years. Some have posited that the increasingly educated nature of left electorates has weakened impulses for redistribution. In contrast to most advanced democracies, class voting has largely been neglected in Canada, as it has traditionally been viewed as being comparatively weak in the face of strong linguistic, regional, and religious identities. Using the entire series of the Canadian Election Study (1965–2019) we examine the education and income political divides in Canada. We find strong support for a divergence between the effect that income and education have on party voting, as people with high incomes continue to vote for the right, while people with higher levels of education have shifted significantly to the left. However, we also find a strengthening income cleavage, whereby lower-income individuals are increasingly supporting the social democratic New Democratic Party, with redistribution a key driver. The findings reveal that Canada, despite a strengthening class cleavage, largely fits the mould of a multi-elite party system. However, it does so in a distinct fashion from the party systems previously examined in the cleavage literature.

1. Introduction

The story of voting as a democratic class struggle between a manual working class voting for the left and the rich voting for the right becomes less convincing as higher education participation rates increase, the manual working class shrinks as a share of the electorate, and as cultural and moral issues grow in salience. Researchers have spent more than three decades making sense of the new dimensions of political competition, and of their impact on political dealignment and realignment (among many others see Clark et al., 2001; Evans et al., 2021; Kitschelt 1994; Knutsen and Scarbrough 1998). In this context, education emerges as a new type of class cleavage, which relates to the earlier income- and occupation-based ones in complex ways. Parties of the left have succeeded in developing an electorate among the well-educated, who may appreciate their socially liberal or anti-authoritarian positions, their willingness to invest in human capital formation, or their commitments to expand the pool of public sector jobs requiring higher education (see Beramendi et al., 2015). However, there is a concern that these new left voters denature the left by diluting its commitments to redistribution. Instead of emphasizing economic inequality and demanding redistribution, the left comes to be led by a "Brahmin Left" more concerned with the cultural politics that interest the better educated. For some (see Gethin et al., 2022; Piketty 2020), this helps explain the paradox of redistribution, namely, why the rise of income inequality over recent decades has not led to greater redistribution.

Such claims are controversial and have produced counter-arguments. For instance, are the well educated citizens necessarily hostile or ambivalent to redistribution? Here, a crucial debate has been on the linkage of different dimensions of class voting to non-redistributive policy outcomes. For Gethin et al. (2022), and Piketty (2020), the presence of the cleavage in advanced capitalist countries is enough to spur this outcome. For others (e.g. Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021), this works through individual countries' electoral and party systems. The institutional specificities of these systems produce complicated dynamics that do not automatically diminish redistributive impulses. The talk of "left" and "right" blocs loses sight of the particularities of multi-party competition found in most political systems, and perhaps even miscomprehends how this functions in many party systems.

Below we review the current debates about the nature and

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consequences of class voting in international political science literature. Then we present an extended time series examining the evolution of class voting in Canada, as well as more in-depth examinations in order to investigate three questions. First, is the Canadian electorate now characterized by an educated left and a wealthy right? Second, does this pattern hold when we consider the parties within the left bloc, specifically the NDP and the Liberals, separately? Third, is there evidence that changed relationships affect the potential for redistribution? These questions work at the interface of the debate between Piketty et al. and Abou-Chadi and Hix. Motivated by the findings of the latter, analysis must go beyond left and right blocs to consider dynamics within the left bloc. At the same time, we can overcome limitations in Abou-Chadi and Hix's work (e.g., not controlling for second dimension issues when testing support for redistribution; short temporal scope), and potentially find varying degrees of support for redistribution among the voters for parties in the left bloc.

This study should interest scholars of electoral behaviour for three reasons. First, education and income are highly inter-related yet distinct dimensions of social class whose effects are rarely analyzed together, especially for Canada. Second, we go further than previous Canadian research by considering the different attitudes of the party's electorates and how these interact with commitments to redistribution. Third, by restricting focus to a single country, we can better take into account temporal developments and socio-political idiosyncrasies. By doing so, we reveal that Canada largely fits the mould of a multi-elite party system, but it does so in a distinct fashion from the party systems previously examined in the cleavage literature.

Canada provides an interesting case in the present context. On the one hand, class voting has been neglected in Canada, as it has been viewed as comparatively weak compared to strong linguistic, regional, and religious identities (Alford 1963; Johnston 2017). Anderson and Stephenson describe class voting as nearly non-existent (2010: 17). On the other hand, economic inequality is rising faster and at a more sustained level in Canada than most other advanced economies (Heisz 2016; Polacko 2020: 1325), and Polacko et al. (2022) recently find a discernible class cleavage in Canada, with support for redistribution increasingly binding workers to the social democratic New Democratic Party (NDP). Given this background, Canada provides a key case study for examining the recent salient class cleavage debate.

We develop four main conclusions. First, we find strong support for an increasing education cleavage, previously documented cross-nationally (Gethin et al., 2022; Houtman et al., 2009; Kitschelt 1994; Piketty 2020; Simon 2021; Stubager 2010). This has led to a divergence between the effect that education and income have on party voting. People with high incomes continue to support the right while people with higher levels of education have shifted to the left. Second, disaggregating the left bloc between the Liberal Party and NDP, yields substantively different results for Canada than what Gethin et al. (2022) found when combining both in a left bloc. Both higher income and degree holders are much more likely to vote for the Liberals, whereas the NDP is increasingly attracting lower income, and to a lesser extent, higher educated voters. Third, like Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021, we find evidence that educated voters who vote for the left support redistribution. However, it is NDP voters that drive this support, as redistributive degree holders are more likely to vote NDP, but the same does not hold for the Liberals. Lastly, despite being a majoritarian system, we find that the left/right bloc framework is insufficient in explaining changing class cleavages. Although we find that Canada largely fits the mould of a multi-elite party system, it differs substantively in composition from this framework, as disentangling the NDP from the Liberals, reveals that the characterization holds well for the Liberals and right bloc, but not for the NDP, which is the "half," in Canada's unique "two-and-a-half" party system (Johnston 2017). This finding importantly uncovers changing patterns of support within the left/right bloc, beyond those associated with green and radical right parties outlined by Abou-Chadi and Hix, which has ramifications for understanding the dynamics of multiparty

competition amidst changing political cleavages.

To illustrate these points the paper is organized as follows. We first provide an overview of the relevant theoretical literature and summarize the fervent changing class cleavages debate. We then outline the data and methodology utilized in our analysis, followed by a presentation of our main results stemming from analysis of the entire series of the Canadian Election Study (CES) (1965–2019). Lastly, we conclude with a short discussion and implications for future research.

2. Changing cleavages in advanced capitalist countries

As noted above, that Lipset's (1960) "democratic class struggle" has been supplemented by a second dimension of cultural politics is a well-worn argument reaching back to at least the 1990s (Clark et al., 2001; Houtman et al., 2009; Kitschelt 1994). The addition of this dimension produces pressures to partisan dealignment and realignment. While postwar politics in many countries involved alternation between the parties of the economic elite and pro-redistribution parties representing the low-paid and low-educated, the effects of income and education have since become disconnected. High income voters have continued to vote for the right, but the highly educated have shifted to the left. Meanwhile, parts of the traditional working class migrated rightward (Gingrich and Häusermann 2015; Kitschelt and Rehm 2022; Rennwald 2020; Stubager 2010).

Much of this work is pessimistic about the prospects for future redistributive politics. A politics of "cultural backlash" has allowed conservative parties to win over parts of a cross-pressured working class with authoritarian appeals around immigration or status loss (Norris and Ingelhart, 2019). For example, Beramendi et al. (2015), Gethin et al. (2022), and Piketty (2020) are pessimistic about the consequences of this for redistribution. On the one hand, these authors argue that the inclusion of highly educated new middle classes, often working in the public sector, privilege investment in social programs, with a declining emphasis on a pure redistribution of wealth as a consequence. Gethin et al. (2022) and Piketty (2020), consider this a "multi-elite" system, dominated by the "Merchant Right" and "Brahmin Left". This has negative consequences for redistributive politics because a "Brahmin Left" embraces investments in human capital and meritocratic ideals of deservingness over redistribution. Less well-off voters come to see these parties as "defending primarily the winners of the higher education competition" and may defect to the right bloc (Gethin et al., 2022: 4). In the process, the system ceases to offer a robust economic redistributive option; this is not a priority for a "Brahmin Left," while the "Merchant Right" can ignore working-class preferences for redistribution if it can win their votes with cultural or nativist appeals. Gethin et al. (2022: 4) produce further evidence that parties in their dataset are not dividing on redistribution matters, but are dividing on cultural issues. While "the correlation between the income gradient in their electorates and their position on the economic-distributive dimension has remained very stable" over the past half century, the correlation "between the educational dimension and the parties' position on the sociocultural axis has dramatically increased" (ibid).

While Gethin et al. (2022), and Piketty's (2020) conclusions do not break greatly with those in the existing literature, the scope of the team's project (50 countries over more than half a century) is exceptional. The parsimony of the "dual elite" thesis (and its explicit joint focus on income and education), also provides a way of concentrating attention on the topic. As Kitschelt and Rehm (2022) note, education and income are attractive choices as they are associated to the kinds of processes that feature in studies of realignment, such as secularization, exposure to immigrants, generational change, and gender relations. The fact that this argument helps account for why the political system has accommodated the increased wealth inequality observed in Piketty's earlier work (2013), augments its appeal.

Piketty's pessimistic conclusions about increased inequality are nevertheless not unanimously shared. One can point to at least two

promising strands of critique. First, on redistribution, Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021 raise questions about how methodological choices oversimplify the inequality dynamics. They note that Gethin et al.'s analysis involves collapsing the range of parties operating in multi-party settings into left and right blocs. This flattens distinctions between parties within a bloc in terms of their membership and receptivity to redistribution. In proportional systems, they argue that the influx of new generations of more highly educated voters has strengthened newer parties with more left-libertarian values such as Green parties, while the disaffected choose newer anti-immigration parties of the right. This has left the social composition of the mainstream right and left parties largely unchanged. This critique echoes Evans and Nan Dirk de Graaf (2013) entreaties that cross-country multivariate research designs that operationalize the partisan variable as left and right should be complemented with country case studies that do not lose relevant information by collapsing the heterogeneity within the blocs.

Second, Abou-Chadi and Hix also question the assumption that more educated leftists are less redistributive, especially given the role of public sector professionals in the pro-welfare state coalition. After all, there is a strong degree of overlap between working-class voters and socio-cultural professionals on questions of redistribution (Hildebrandt and Jäckle 2022: 10). Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021 provide some evidence that the well-educated who support left parties are as redistributive, if not more redistributive, than poorly educated leftist voters.

Overall, some of Abou-Chadi and Hix' observations are serious rejoinders to the "Brahmin Left" thesis while others are more marginal. The finding that educated left voters are more committed to redistribution than uneducated left voters is good evidence against the basic "Brahmin Left" thesis that an educated left imperils redistribution. Moreover, they document the importance of the way in which sociodemographic cleavages, transforming as they may be, interact with institutional variables such as the electoral and the party system. On the other hand, whether educated voters find a home in left-libertarian parties as they document, or in traditional social democratic parties as Gethin et al. imply, matters very little if both party families support redistribution.

But there are also limitations to Abou-Chadi and Hix's findings. While their analyses show that left educated voters tend to support redistribution, recent evidence in Europe (Gelepithis and Giani 2022), the UK (Scott 2022), and United States (Bullock 2022), reveals that more education weakens support for redistribution. Abou-Chadi and Hix's models also do not control or test for second dimension issues such as values, identity, order, and lifestyle. This is an important omission that weakens their assertions, as evidence from Denmark and the UK shows that cultural attitudes greatly reduce the magnitude of education's effect on vote choice (Fieldhouse et al., 2019; Stubager 2013).

Gethin et al. have gone some way to addressing this by identifying a significant relationship between the socio-cultural positioning of parties and the share of educated voters in their electorate. This suggests a possibility that educated voters in the left-bloc (via left-libertarian parties or not) may be paying lip-service to redistribution; what matters to them is second dimension, identity-based politics. Indeed, when Abou-Chadi and Hix argue that the educated leftists are pro-redistribution and thus pose no threat to social democratic parties' traditional redistributionist impulses, they also concede that the new "Brahmin green left" values "other forms of emancipation, equality and identity" (2021: 90). The existence of a wider range of goals lays the groundwork for tension within the left coalition across classes precisely because of the politics of agenda-setting. It is entirely possible to be for something in the context of a survey response and not want to do anything about it. However, the survey questions used to document the widespread support for redistribution do not ask how highly redistribution should be ranked amongst this wider menu of priorities. Along these lines, Houtman et al. (2009) used data from the Netherlands to distinguish class-voting by workers for parties of the left because of demands for redistribution, from cultural-voting by educated voters for

parties of the left because of higher levels of social and cultural capital. It is an open question whether this applies in other countries.

There is room for further study about how income and education affect redistribution, especially by looking at the different parties that compose the traditionally redistributive left-bloc and understanding both how education and income affect the sorting of voters into those parties, as well as the relative importance of redistributive commitments to that sorting. This follows Abou-Chadi and Hix's call for attention to the detail of electoral and party systems and seems consistent with Evans and Nan Dirk de Graaf (2013) suggestion for national case studies to elucidate how cross-national left-right tendencies produce specific effects in the heterogeneous space of national electoral lefts and rights.

In this paper, we consider the anomalous Canadian case. Gethin et al. have assigned the Liberal Party to the "left bloc" in their analyses and yet, this presumably sits uneasily with observers of Canadian politics who remember the Liberal Party's close relationships with business classes through the post-war period (Porter 1965). Certainly, Kitschelt and Rehm's (2022) parallel large-scale analysis of education and income trends in voting, places Liberal parties in the right bloc due to their neoliberal tendencies. Although the Liberals and the NDP have historically traded votes, the NDP brings a distinct class profile to the left bloc. The combination of a single member plurality electoral system in a federal system where the NDP could displace the Liberals at the sub-national level has added staying power to the NDP, which has then generated pressure for redistribution inside the left bloc (Johnston 2017). Canada's experience with the libertarian left is also unique. Its Green Party was late in gaining significant support and it has flirted with eco-conservatism. If anything, left-libertarian voters have had to choose between the historically business-friendly, brokerage Liberals and the stock standard social democratic NDP (Kiss 2005). On the right, Canada also stands out as lacking a consistently viable far-right political party.

Gethin has provided a close examination of the specifics of Canada in a chapter in *Political Cleavages and Social Inequalities* (2021), including prying apart the Liberals and the NDP in the left bloc. He argues that: "historical specificities in the course of colonialist expansion" structured Canada's party system around a linguistic cleavage as compared to the religious one in Australia and the Māori-European one in New Zealand. In the latter two countries, class dislodged the earlier cleavage in the postwar period, but it failed to displace language in Canada (ibid: 191–192). Nevertheless, he notes that education has had a "growing impact on electoral behaviors" creating transformations within the Liberal and New Democratic parties (ibid: 192). As a result, despite a different starting point, Canada ends up with the rest in terms of having a "multi-elite" party system: high-income voters support the Conservatives and the more highly educated support the Liberals, NDP, and Greens.[1] However, in an interesting twist on the "Brahmin Left" narrative, Gethin suggests that class voting has if anything strengthened in Canada recently, with the Liberals gaining greater support among those with high incomes while NDP support "has become increasingly concentrated among low-income constituencies" (ibid: 216).

Accordingly, it is hard to fit Canada as a clear case of a redistributive left party falling into the hands of a less redistributive educated elite. Neither does it fit the Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021 story of new well-educated cohorts investing post-materialist green parties, as in this instance they come to populate the dominant centrist party. Gethin (2021) notes that the Liberals in the past three elections have brought together a Macron-esque coalition of some of the high income and some of the highly educated, but it is hard to determine the impact on redistributive impulses in the party system, as the Liberals were never necessarily all that redistributive and Liberal governments have shifted rightward on matters of redistribution since the 1990s (Banting and

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[1] "Regionalization and linguistic identities may explain why class politics in Canada differed significantly from most Western countries in the early postwar decades, but this is not the case today" (Gethin 2021: 218).

Myles 2013). In sum, while Gethin starts the process of pulling the left bloc apart, there remains many unanswered questons about the education and income-based cleavages in Canada and their impact on party choice, and particularly attitudes to redistribution.

Based on the foregoing we investigate several hypotheses. To start, we propose to verify the basic assumptions about the impacts of income and education on voting that underlie the literature that we are engaging.

H1a. There is a left-right income voting cleavage, where lower earners are increasingly more likely to vote left and higher earners to vote right.

H1b. There is a right-left education voting cleavage, where the higher educated are increasingly more likely to vote left and lower educated to vote right.

Second, we address the question of whether this pattern is the same for both the NDP and the Liberal parties within the left bloc. Following Abou-Chadi and Hix, we expect that education and income cleavages will express themselves differently across the parties, but contra these authors, we expect commitments to redistribution will be a meaningful distinction.

H2. Disaggregating the left bloc reveals different cleavages separating the voters of left bloc parties (H2a), as pro-redistribution left-bloc voters are significantly more likely to support the NDP (H2b).

If hypothesis two is validated, this would suggest that the parties that make up the two large blocs in Canada have different socio-demographic profiles. But what motivates these voters? Are highly educated left-bloc voters motivated by the same concerns as lower-income left voters? Are highly educated Liberal voters motivated by the same concerns as highly educated NDP voters? Previous comparative research leads in different directions. One of the earliest attempts to investigate the changing education cleavage in the Netherlands, found it essential to examine voters' motivations by distinguishing between class and cultural voting, as the links between educated voters and the left, and non-educated voters and the right, were motivated by issues on the second dimension (Houtman et al., 2009). By contrast, using European Social Survey data from 2002 to 2018, Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021 document that educated leftist voters do support redistribution, although their models crucially do not control for second-dimension issues of libertarian-authoritarian attitudes and individual identities. The final two hypotheses, consistent with the expectations of the former scholars, will allow us to probe that question:

H3. Low-income voters' support for parties of the left, especially the NDP, is motivated by demands for redistribution.

H4. Highly educated voters' support for parties of the left, especially the Liberals, is motivated by cultural concerns such as support for more immigration and opposition to traditional lifestyles.

3. Data and methodology

We rely on the entire series of the Canadian Election Study (CES). Our dataset comprises all 17 federal elections from 1965 to 2019, containing an average of roughly 3000 respondents per election.

To measure party voting, the dependent variable is the reported vote choice from the post-election wave of each CES. They are produced for each main national party (Liberal, Conservative, NDP, and Green). Conservative vote is the amalgamated vote of a number of right-wing

parties including the Progressive Conservative Party (1965–2000), Reform Party (1988–2000), Canadian Alliance (2000), Conservative Party (2004–2019), and the People's Party (2019). For analysis, we rely on separate OLS and multinomial regression models using binary dependent variables to represent voters' support for each party compared to all other parties.[2]

Our key explanatory variables measure education and income. We also rely on income rather than occupation because income is increasingly attaining paradigmatic status within class analysis, accounting for 74 percent of socio-economic status analyses in the 2015–2019 period, up from 47 percent in the 1990s (Barone et al., 2022). Throughout the CES, respondents were typically given the option of providing total household income or identifying their placement within categories.[3] The coding of *income* is complicated for this reason, due to the lack of consistency in the inclusion of either option for each wave, the real value of the dollar changing substantially from 1965 to 2019, and the difficulty of assigning category responses to terciles. As a remedy, respondents are divided into terciles (low to high) that come closest to matching the boundaries provided by the values for total household income found in the nearest five-year census or national labour market survey.[4] For education, prior to the 1980s, the CES inconsistently asked respondents about their education levels, therefore we measure education as a dummy variable coded 1 for *degree* holders and 0 for non-degree holders.

We rely on the standard demographic controls known to influence vote choice in Canada (Fournier et al., 2013; Gidengil et al., 2012; Johnston 2017). A binary *male* variable measures gender and *age* is included as a continuous variable.[5] To reflect Canada's pronounced regional cleavage, *region* is coded as a 4-category variable (Atlantic, Ontario, Quebec, and West). Religion has historically featured prominently in Canadian vote determinants with a pronounced cleavage existing between Catholics and Protestants, although it has weakened in recent years with the cleavage now centring around secularism (Wilkins-Laflamme 2016). Thus, *religion* is a categorical variable (no religion, Catholic, Protestant, and other).

We also include core attitudinal values in our analysis. The CES did not begin to consistently measure attitudinal beliefs until the late 1980s, therefore, we construct these variables from 1993 onwards. Most importantly for our analysis, we include respondent support for *redistribution*. The independent variable is based on variations of the question: "how much do you think should be done to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor in Canada." The variable is re-scaled 0–1, with higher levels indicating greater support for redistribution.

For attitudinal controls we also construct two indexes, one measuring the economic (state-market) sphere and another the socio-cultural (libertarian-authoritarian) sphere. *Market liberalism* measures the economic dimension via two questions: "the government should leave it to the private sector to create jobs" and "people who do not get ahead have only themselves to blame." *Moral traditionalism* measures the

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[2] We utilize OLS for the bloc binary models to replicate findings from Gethin et al. (2022) but also because empirical comparisons of OLS versus logit show nearly identical outcomes and linear measures have interpretations that are intuitively easy to comprehend compared to logit, as one can interpret coefficients in terms of probability change (Angrist and Pischke, 2009; Hellevik 2009). We estimate multinomial models for the multi-party regressions.

[3] A prominent problem with surveys of household *income* is non-response. We acknowledge this limitation exists in the CES, however, within the CES response rates were not far off most of the other socio-demographic variables and the *income* missing values total is 9.1%. See Appendix A1 for comparison.

[4] We control for household size from the 1990s onward when it first becomes available.

[5] For 1972 *age* is only included as 11 categories, therefore all respondents within a category are assigned the median of their respective category.

libertarian-authoritarian dimension via a question pertaining to gender roles and another question on attitudes towards gays and lesbians.[6] We supplement the socio-cultural index with a respondent's views on immigration, which are measured via answers to a question asking whether *immigration rates* should increase, stay the same, or decrease. Each of these three attitudinal controls are re-scaled between 0 and 1 (left to right) for consistency. The attitudinal items do not perfectly capture all dimensions of a respondent's opinion on these issues but are the best available over time in Canada measuring party voting. See Appendix A2 for the full questions and scales used in the attitudinal variable composition.

4. Results

4.1. Education and income cleavages

Following Gethin et al. (2022), we model the degree of support for Canadian left parties versus all others as a function of degree status and income, with controls for age, gender, region, and religion. The results of these OLS regressions are shown in Fig. 1, which displays the probability of supporting the left bloc versus the right bloc.[7]

Where Andersen (2013) found no education cleavage in his class voting analysis between 1965 and 2004, we find a strong educational cleavage has emerged, where respondents with university degrees are now much more likely to support the NDP, Greens, or Liberals over conservative parties. While degree voters alternated supporting the left bloc then the right boc between 1965 and 1980, a clear trend towards supporting the left parties starts in 1984. But at the same time, there is a less dramatic decline in support for left parties by wealthier voters.[8] Overall, this largely supports both (H1a) and (H1b).

However, this analysis lumps the Liberals with the NDP, which is a debatable strategy as the two come from different traditions. The NDP derives from the social democratic party family and the Liberal Party is a business-friendly regional brokerage party without clear ideological commitments. Therefore, (H2a) asks whether the two parties draw support equally from educated and lower income voters?

We maintain the right bloc as an amalgamation of right-wing parties that split off from the original Progressive Conservative Party. We do so because the split parties (Reform, Canadian Alliance, and the People's Party) have only contested 5 elections alongside the Conservatives (1988–2000 and 2019), and the split parties are largely similar in their ideological and class compositions to the Conservatives. Results are robust to the removal of these parties from the right bloc, as Reform voters were more right-wing than Conservative voters, but only on attitudes towards moral traditionalism was this appreciably so.

We unpack the patterns identified in the left bloc more in the next

section with Fig. 2. This figure takes the predicted probability from multinomial models fit to each of the three largest parties' vote from 1965 to 2019. The key variables of interest here are a dichotomous variable indicating degree status and three-category variable indicating income (low, medium, and high). The underlying models contain controls for age, gender, region, and religion. For simplicity, the models are not broken up between Canada and Quebec. From 1965 to 1974 we observe that degree holders largely preferred the Liberals before reversing in the 1979–80 elections. This is followed by a rather astonishing increase in the importance of degree status for both the Conservative and Liberal parties. The education cleavage seems to have opened permanently between the Liberals and the Conservatives starting in the 1980s, with a gradual cleavage opening up for the NDP. Non-degree holders have increasingly turned to the Conservatives, while degree holders have turned to the Liberals, and the NDP to a lesser extent. The education results from Figs. 1 and 2 are robust to an alternative measure of postgraduate education in place of degree (see Appendix A5).

On the other hand, the income trends differ. Overall, income has not been a strong predictor of Liberal support. Although higher earners gravitated to the Liberals from 1965 to 1972, they did not do so again until the financial crisis of 2008. By contrast, high earners have increasingly turned to the Conservatives and away from the NDP, which has increased their support from low-income earners over time.

Thus, we find evidence for (H2a), whereby disaggregating the left bloc reveals different cleavages separating voters from the two parties within its bloc. But what motivates these voters? In the next section, we incorporate attitudes towards redistribution to test whether the differences we have identified over education and income within the left bloc, affect this related policy domain. We do so, because any differences could be creating tensions within the bloc that could pose a threat to redistribution.

4.2. Class cleavages and redistribution

First, we present the redistribution preferences by degree and income for each main party voter in Figs. 3 and 4 (see Appendix A6 for scores by all four attitudes). Here again, disentangling the effects of education by party is important. Overall, NDP voters are more supportive of redistribution than the Liberals (by 7 percentage points in the full sample) who are again more supportive of redistribution than the Conservatives. Looking at higher education, it is strongly and regularly linked to opposition to redistribution for Conservative voters, not linked to redistribution for the Liberals, and marginally linked with support for redistribution for the NDP. For the latter, although formal tests of statistical significance show differences in three elections, the actual point estimates for average levels of support for redistribution are almost always higher for NDP degree holders than for non-degree holders. By contrast, this gap does not exist for the Liberals in recent elections and when it did exist in earlier elections, it was in the other direction.

Turning to income, Fig. 4 shows that low earners have consistently been considerably more pro-redistribution than high earners. In our sample they are 7 percentage points more in favour of redistribution, which is relatively moderate in international comparison (Romero-Vidal and Van Hauwaert, 2022; Rueda 2018). The gap was reduced nearly by half at the turn of the century, remained roughly consistent and then widened again in 2019. When we once again disaggregate by party, there are nuances. Conservative low-income voters are consistently more supportive of redistribution than their high-income co-partisans, although this gap has dramatically decreased over time. This was true for Liberals, but only up until 2006, although a gap reappeared in 2019. The NDP have not yet had an election where there was a class difference in support for redistribution.

Overall, these figures show that the higher educated are not more redistributive in Canada, which contrasts with recent findings for Europe. In support for (H2b) we find that NDP voters are much more redistributive than Liberals, especially NDP degree holders. The largest

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[6] The gender roles question used throughout is "society would be better off if more women stayed home with their children." From 1993 to 2015, the same question on same-sex marriage is used, whereas in 2019 it is based on a thermometer rating of gay people.

[7] While Figs. 1 and 2 are near reproductions of representations in Gethin et al. (2022), these results are slightly different in that they report the gap between degree and non-degree educated voters. Gethin et al. (2022) compare the top 10% most educated to the bottom 90% least educated voters. We attempted to replicate this analysis and provide the material in Appendix A5. The pattern remains largely the same, but we were less confident that post-graduate degree status was successfully measured given limitations to data in early surveys. Because the overall patterns are the same, with slightly different measures, these serve as robustness checks on the general claim of an increasing left-right education divide.

[8] One reason for the slightly weaker trend for income is in part due to the variable's construction as a tercile rather than binary as with the degree variable. The coefficient for income compares the effect of a respondent moving exactly one-third up the Canadian income scale. The coefficient for degree represents the effect of holding a degree on the probability of voting for a party.
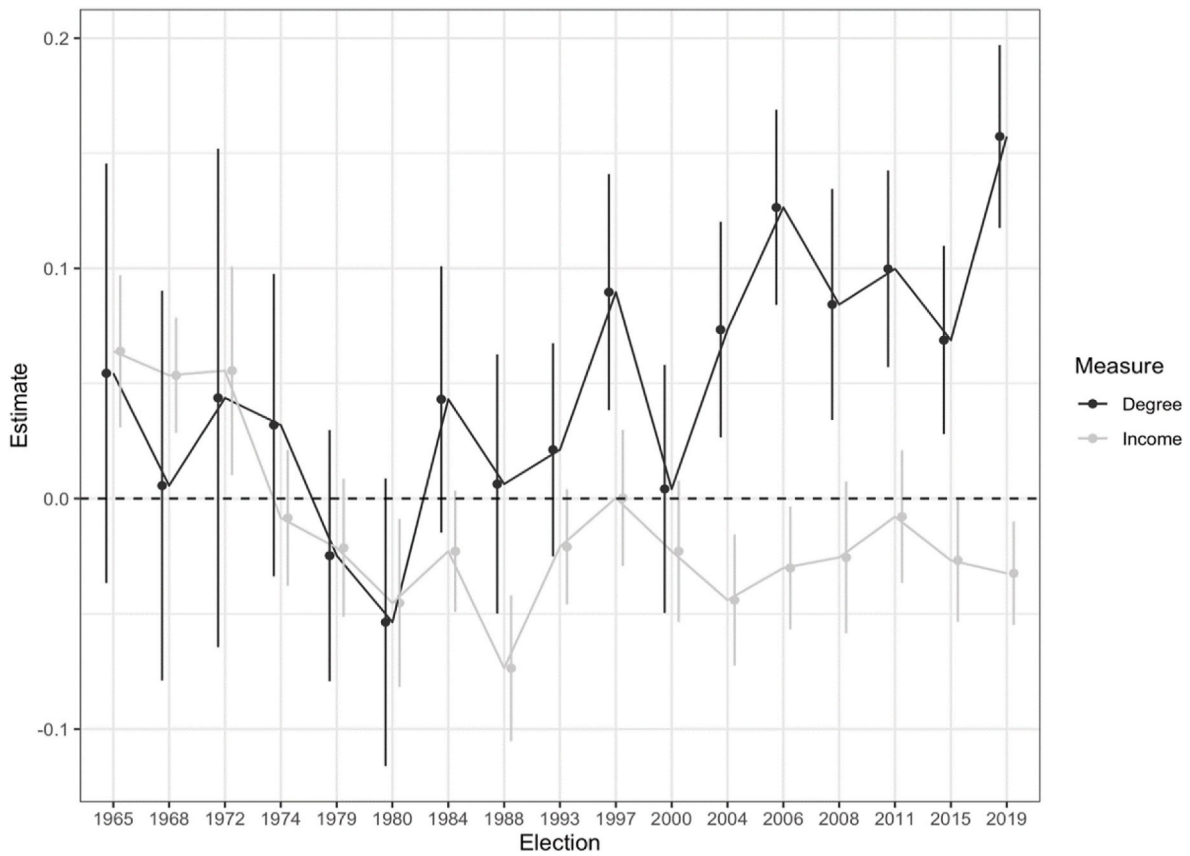
Fig. 1. OLS coefficient of degree status and income on vote support for the left bloc (Greens, Liberals, and NDP) versus the right bloc (Canadian Alliance, Conservative Party, Reform Party, and People's Party).
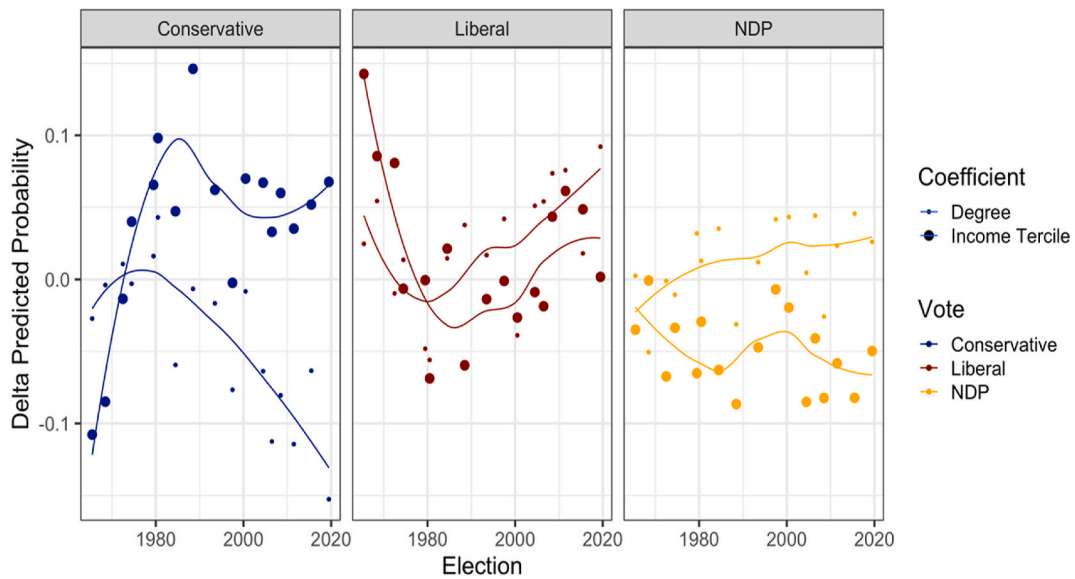
Fig. 2. Predicted probability of voting for each main party for degree holders versus non-degree holders and the highest income tercile versus the lowest income tercile. Estimates are derived from a multinomial logistic regression model controlling for age, gender, region, and religion. Confidence intervals are not reported to improve readability.

redistribution cleavages exist between Conservative voters over both education and income, with lower-status individuals more pro-redistribution than their higher status counterparts. More in-line with findings from Europe, we reveal the pro-redistribution tendencies of lower-income earners in comparison to high-income earners, as well as

the tendency for Canadians to stratify their party voting along redistributional lines left to right.

Next, we test how these preferences are linked to party vote through regression analysis, which allows us to control for other demographic characteristics and attitudinal preferences, such as cultural values.

Fig. 3. Support for redistribution for degree and non-degree holders by party vote choice, with 95% confidence intervals; larger points indicate a p-value less than 0.05 from a two-sided *t*-test.
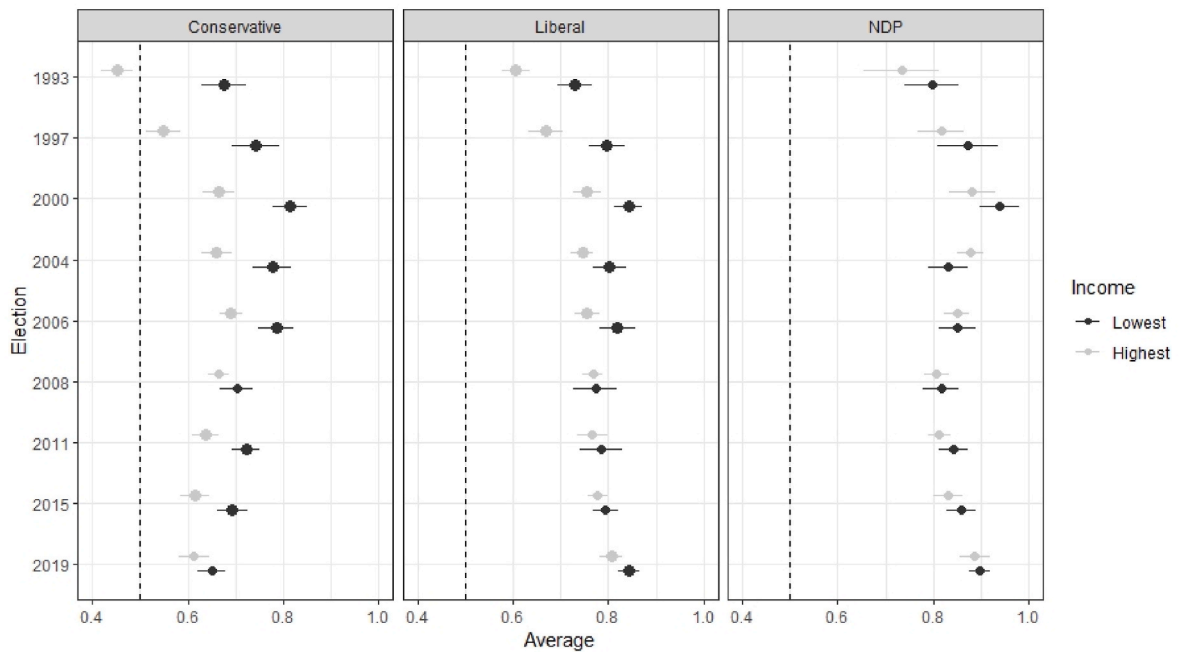
Fig. 4. Support for redistribution for low and high earners by party vote choice, with 95% confidence intervals; larger points indicate a p-value less than 0.05 from a two-sided *t*-test.
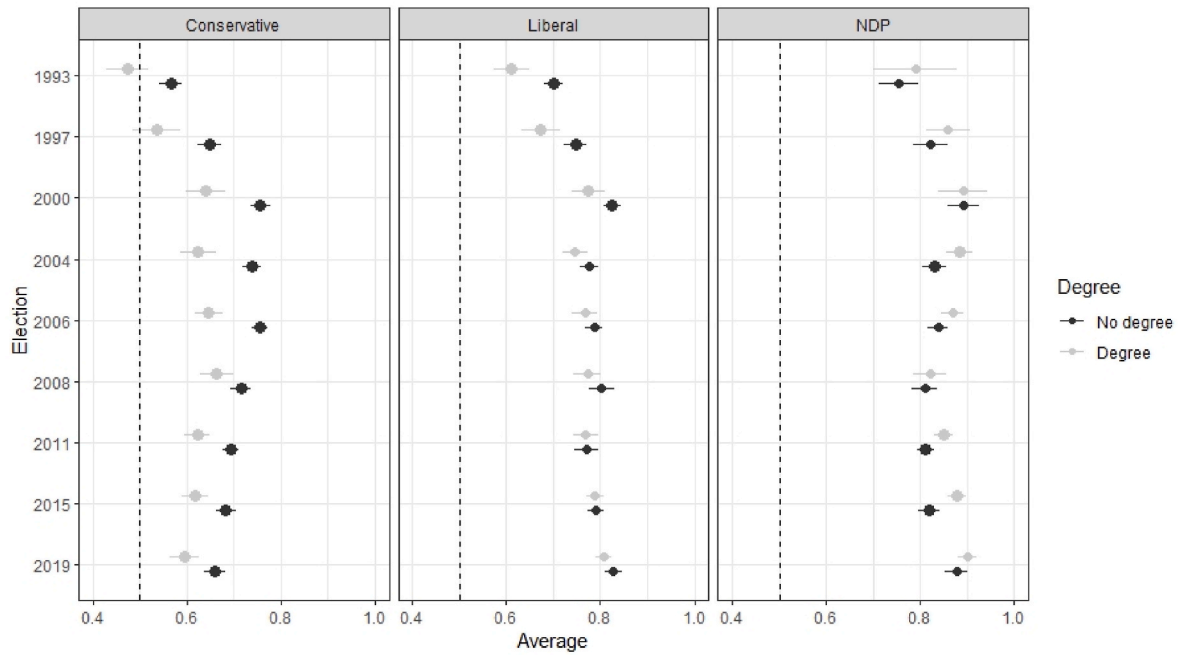
Table 1 presents the pooled results of multinomial regression models for the NDP and Liberals with the Conservatives as the reference category. We fit the models by decade 1993 to 2019, with year fixed effects. Each model includes controls for degree status, income, age, gender, region, religion, household size, and our four attitudinal preferences.

We emphasize four findings. First, we find significant sorting occurring on the socio-cultural dimension between the Liberals and Conservatives. In the 1990s, moral traditionalism had a limited negative effect for the Liberals, only reaching significance at (p < 0.05). However, the effect size has increased dramatically post-2000, attaining the highest level of significance each decade at (p < 0.001). Compared to the 1990s, the coefficient size is more than three times larger in the 2000s and more than four times larger in the 2010s, as the Conservatives have increasingly won over morally traditional voters. Similarly, the immigration coefficient sizes have roughly tripled in the 2010s compared to the previous decades for the Liberals. We also see significant negative effects for the NDP for both cultural variables, but the increase is minimal over time. Second, income has become a much stronger cleavage, especially for the NDP. In the 1990s, income was not a significant predictor for any party but post-2000 it reaches statistical significance for

Table 1

Multinomial models predicting party vote, with key controls for age, degree, gender, household size, income, region, and religion, and attitudinal preferences.

Multinomial Regression of Party Vote, 1993–2019						
	Liberal/Conservative			NDP/Conservative		
	1990s	2000s	2010s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Region (Atlantic)	*Ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
Region (Quebec)	0.072	0.186+	0.088	−1.309***	−0.142	1.054***
	(0.179)	(0.112)	(0.125)	(0.327)	(0.154)	(0.138)
Region (Ontario)	0.071	−0.051	−0.421***	−0.512*	−0.079	−0.343**
	(0.154)	(0.096)	(0.102)	(0.240)	(0.124)	(0.123)
Region (West)	−0.829***	−0.902***	−1.274***	−0.427*	−0.043	−0.199+
	(0.150)	(0.099)	(0.104)	(0.215)	(0.121)	(0.118)
Age	0.008*	0.012***	0.011***	0.016**	−0.001	−0.005+
	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Male	−0.125	−0.138*	−0.200**	−0.381*	−0.145+	−0.058
	(0.094)	(0.062)	(0.071)	(0.152)	(0.077)	(0.078)
Income (Terciles)	−0.055	−0.151***	−0.090+	−0.077	−0.342***	−0.267***
	(0.065)	(0.044)	(0.049)	(0.105)	(0.053)	(0.053)
Degree	0.116	0.156*	0.377***	0.024	−0.010	0.225**
	(0.114)	(0.071)	(0.076)	(0.179)	(0.087)	(0.083)
Religion (None)	*Ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
Religion (Catholic)	0.318*	0.076	−0.288**	−0.202	−0.530***	−0.543***
	(0.152)	(0.095)	(0.100)	(0.234)	(0.110)	(0.107)
Religion (Protestant)	−0.240	−0.584***	−0.582***	−0.374+	−0.823***	−0.713***
	(0.146)	(0.092)	(0.096)	(0.215)	(0.101)	(0.103)
Religion (Other)	0.189	0.433**	0.060	0.083	−0.322	−0.375*
	(0.237)	(0.154)	(0.167)	(0.344)	(0.199)	(0.185)
Household Size	0.088	0.119	−0.006	0.074	0.130	0.059
	(0.117)	(0.075)	(0.074)	(0.192)	(0.091)	(0.080)
Redistribution	0.726***	0.642***	1.757***	1.874***	1.980***	2.982***
	(0.149)	(0.131)	(0.165)	(0.283)	(0.185)	(0.195)
Market Liberalism	−1.241***	−1.081***	−1.434***	−2.596***	−2.147***	−2.423***
	(0.186)	(0.120)	(0.145)	(0.309)	(0.152)	(0.160)
Immigration Rates	−0.436***	−0.431***	−1.147***	−0.561**	−0.510***	−0.843***
	(0.131)	(0.097)	(0.113)	(0.211)	(0.123)	(0.124)
Traditionalism	−0.399*	−1.251***	−1.690***	−1.381***	−2.033***	−1.736***
	(0.165)	(0.103)	(0.146)	(0.263)	(0.134)	(0.160)
Constant	0.461*	0.700***	0.625**	−0.111	0.898***	0.431+
	(0.223)	(0.194)	(0.210)	(0.346)	(0.242)	(0.231)
Fixed Effects	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
N	2961	7793	6769	2961	7793	6769
R²	0.55	0.40	0.31	0.55	0.40	0.31

+ $p < 0.1$, *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$.

both the NDP and Liberals vis-à-vis the Conservatives, at ($p < 0.001$), although the negative coefficient is roughly 2.5 times stronger for the NDP. The effect size declines for each party in the 2010s, although to a much larger extent for the Liberals as statistical significance is attained at only ($p < 0.1$). Therefore, lower-income individuals are increasingly voting NDP, while higher earners are increasingly voting for the Liberals and Conservatives. Third, education is becoming a much stronger cleavage, especially for the Liberals and Conservatives. Degree carried a limited effect for the NDP until the 2010s, when it becomes significantly positively related at ($p < 0.05$). However, the effect is much stronger for the Liberals in each decade. These trends also mean that non-degree holders have been significantly more likely to vote Conservative but only greatly so in the 2010s. These findings provide more support for disaggregating the left bloc, as again we see some divergence in the strength of both the education and income voting trends for left bloc members, as well as largely confirming the results from Fig. 2 for all three parties.

Finally, we find greater partisan sorting over redistribution. Liberal voters' redistributionist preferences remained positive and somewhat centrist until the 2010s, but have now become significantly more pro-redistribution. Meanwhile NDP and Conservative voters demonstrate much stronger and significantly increasing (or decreasing in the latter's case) commitments to redistribution over time. The redistribution coefficient sizes for the NDP, also outweigh both the cultural variables throughout the period examined and increasingly so in recent elections. This suggests that support for redistribution is now a key predictor of party voting in Canada alongside second dimension issues such as

immigration and moral traditionalism.

To test for our third and fourth hypotheses, that the income cleavage can be best explained via the economic dimension (H3), and that the education cleavage can be best explained via the cultural dimension (H4), we estimate stepwise party voting models that can determine the relative effect of each policy attitude. We first estimate a model with just our independent variable of interest (degree or income), then a model including demographic controls as listed above, then separate models with the addition of one of the four attitudinal controls, and lastly the full model with all controls. This allows us to better determine the issues that are driving support based on degree and income status by their reduction in coefficient strength, from the introduction of each attitudinal control.

First, we estimate stepwise models for degree, which are displayed in Table 2. We can see that the positive effect of education on NDP voting has remained relatively steady since the 1990s, while degree holders have increasingly gravitated to the Liberals. The effects largely remain with the introduction of demographic controls and also with the addition of attitudes toward redistribution. Market liberalism has a strong effect for the NDP, but a minor one for the Liberals. Immigration is the largest driver for the Liberals post-2000, as the degree coefficient declines by over a quarter from the demographic controls model. Moral traditionalism also has a significant effect for the Liberals. In more comprehensive models not reported here, when the issues are combined for each dimension, the cultural dimension has a larger effect for all parties, across each decade. Therefore, voters with degrees seem to be motivated by second-dimension issues such as immigration and moral

Table 2
Degree coefficients from stepwise multinomial models predicting party vote with year fixed effects.

Degree Coefficients	Liberal/Conservative			NDP/Conservative		
	1990s	2000s	2010s	1990s	2000s	2010s
No Controls	0.167*	0.344***	0.620***	0.405***	0.347***	0.456***
Demographic Controls	0.200*	0.353***	0.623***	0.421**	0.329***	0.518***
Demo + Redistribution	0.274*	0.379***	0.640***	0.390*	0.393***	0.535***
Demo + Market Lib	0.139	0.270***	0.493***	0.282*	0.127	0.308***
Demos + Immigration	0.143	0.265***	0.461***	0.306*	0.210**	0.373***
Demo + Traditionalism	0.163+	0.244***	0.512***	0.326*	0.147+	0.394***
Full Model	0.116	0.156*	0.377***	0.024	−0.010	0.225**

+ $p < 0.1$, *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$.

worldviews more than by attitudes towards redistribution. This is most noticeable for the Conservatives, where non-degree holders have increasingly gravitated to the party. Whereas these voters often go to the far-right in other countries, in Canada, the pressures of a single member plurality electoral system create pressures to integrate those voters into a larger party of the right.

Next, we estimate stepwise models for income, which are displayed in Table 3. The income results are not as clear-cut as those for degree, but we do see a substantial difference in attitudes towards redistribution, which plays a greater role here. The NDP models confirm our earlier results that lower earners are increasingly voting for the party, while higher earners prefer the Conservatives. In contrast to the degree analysis, the introduction of cultural controls to the demographic models tends to increase the effect of income on voting for the NDP post-2000 and for the Libearls in the 2000s. Redistribution has a much larger impact and significantly reduces the effect of income on voting for the NDP, which is relatively steady over time. In contrast, most of the attitudinal variables tend to exhibit a limited effect for the Liberals. Thus, we find further evidence that economic attitudes play a greater role for NDP and Conservative voters, than for Liberal voters, reflecting what Houtman et al. (2009) found in the Netherlands, that working class support for the left and upper-class support for the right, was driven primarily by redistribution. It also demonstrates the difficulty in classifying the Liberals as a uniquely left or right party.

Overall, the increased divides displayed even when full controls are added to the stepwise tables likely indicates that our dimension indexes do not fully capture the drivers of the two divides. Nevertheless, the stepwise results for degree and income provide evidence for (H3) and (H4), whereby the reversal of the education cleavage is particularly driven by cultural attitudes, while the income cleavage is particularly driven by economic attitudes. However, the way in which income has a different relationship with vote choice for Liberal voters than for the NDP, provides further support for (H2), in that the two parties composing the left bloc in Canada are distinct.

4.3. Interacting redistribution and class

However, these findings do not fully clarify whether the increasing educational and income cleavages documented here affect commitments

to redistribution (H2b). Following Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021, we fit additional models that include interactions between degree status and a measure of support for redistribution. However, we test a more complex set of models. First, we examine interactions between income and redistribution, not just degree status and redistribution. Second, we include controls for second-dimension issues of moral traditionalism and immigration. Thus, these interactions between social status and first and second-dimension issues control for each other. Third, we pull the left bloc apart to test whether both components – the NDP and the Liberals – are attracting educated leftists committed to redistribution. Lastly, we also fit models by decade to test whether there are changes in the way that degree and income interact with redistribution preferences in relation to vote choice. To simplify the findings, the predicted probabilities for each degree and income level are visualized in Figs. 5 and 6. A positive interaction indicates pro-redistribution positions above the mean, while a negative interaction, suggests a less redistributive position than the mean.

Fig. 5 reveals no significant interactions between redistribution and degree status in relation to Liberal voting, beyond a negative one in the 2000s. There is a consistently negative effect for degree holders, meaning that degree-holding Liberal voters are less supportive of

Fig. 5. Predicted probabilities for degree × redistribution interaction models of party vote by decade. From multinomial regressions controlling for age, gender, income, region, religion, household size, and attitudinal preferences. See Appendix A3 for full table.

Table 3
Income coefficients from stepwise multinomial models predicting party vote with year fixed effects.

Income Coefficients	Liberal/Conservative			NDP/Conservative		
	1990s	2000s	2010s	1990s	2000s	2010s
No Controls	−0.091*	−0.052	−0.003	−0.210**	−0.127**	−0.136***
Demographic Controls	−0.031	−0.029	0.091*	−0.142+	−0.207***	−0.153***
Demo + Redistribution	0.013	−0.002	0.161***	0.056	−0.129**	−0.047
Demo + Market Lib	−0.034	−0.047	0.073+	−0.141+	−0.250***	−0.173***
Demos + Immigration	−0.045	−0.057	0.011	−0.182*	−0.241***	−0.217***
Demo + Traditionalism	−0.053	−0.133**	−0.057	−0.193*	−0.375***	−0.305***
Full Model	−0.055	−0.151***	−0.090+	−0.077	−0.342***	−0.267***

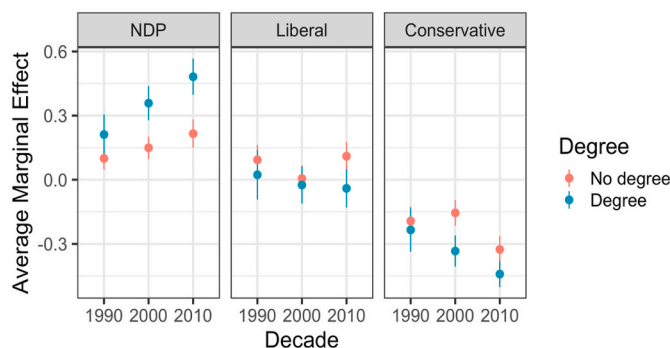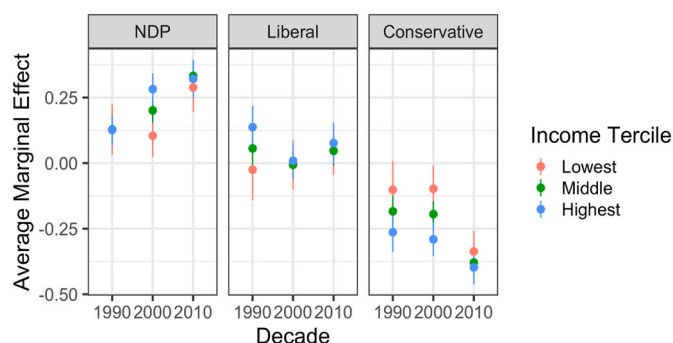+ $p < 0.1$, *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$.

Fig. 6. Predicted probabilities for income × redistribution interaction models of party vote by decade. From multinomial regressions controlling for age, degree, gender, region, religion, household size, and attitudinal preferences. See Appendix A4 for full table.

redistribution than average. Similarly, the interaction is consistently negative for the Conservatives, although it is consistently negative and increasingly significant for non-degree holders and especially degree holders. However, the interactions are significant for the NDP in each period and the coefficient more than doubles in size over time for degree holders. This suggests that those with degrees who vote for the NDP have become increasingly strongly motivated by redistributionist preferences, controlling for both dimensions, while Liberal degree holders are not. Therefore, we find further evidence in support of (H2), as disaggregating the left bloc reveal pronounced differences in the redistribution preferences of the educated voters within the bloc that support either the NDP or the Liberals.

Fig. 6 displays the results of interactions between redistribution and income. We again detect differences between the interactions for the NDP and Liberals. The interactions are significant and positive throughout for the NDP and increasingly so over time, especially for high-income earners. However, the interactions are mixed in direction for the Liberals, with significance only barely attained in the 1990s for high-earners (positively). In contrast, the interactions are increasingly negative and statistically significant throughout for the Conservatives, especially for high earners. This suggests that variation in redistribution sentiment between income groups for NDP and Liberal voters is not as pronounced as for education, but that higher income Conservative voters have been significantly less redistributive than lower income Conservative voters. Similar to Fig. 4 then, we find a sizable Conservative income cleavage, with their voters' redistribution tendencies stratified by income, more so than left bloc parties, revealing the class tensions that exist within the party, as they increasingly appeal to working-class voters (Polacko et al., 2022).

These findings have two consequences for the existing literature. First, they offer a corrective to Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021 who argue that the Brahmin Left is capable of sustained support for redistribution because educated leftist voters are more redistributive than uneducated leftist voters. But this finding did not distinguish between parties of the left bloc. In support of (H2b), we note that educated leftists *who vote for the NDP* are significantly more committed to redistribution than non-degree holding NDP voters, but this is not the case for the Liberals, as their degree holding voters are less redistributionist than their non-degree holders. Thus, comparative scholars should be cautious interpreting the Liberal Party as a party of the left. On the other side of the party system, poorer Conservative voters have been more redistributive than their richer co-partisans, suggesting a greater likelihood of tension within the party if redistribution were to be become more salient.

5. Conclusion

In examining the competing impact of education and income on vote

choice, it is clear that there has been a socioeconomic shift tied to increased rates of education, which lies on top of an earlier cleavage pattern defined by class conflict. The political parties that operate in this space are products of history, meaning that the conflict is in some ways different in each country. So, when we look at the Canadian case, we find evidence that the electorate is dominated by increasingly disconnected education and income cleavages, whereby degree holders are more likely to support the Liberals and to a certain extent, the NDP, and less likely to support the Conservatives. This is entirely consistent with the development of a "Brahmin Left" and a "Merchant Right" multi-elite system. However, the consequences of this are not entirely clear. First, when pulling apart the left bloc, we find that education and income work in different ways for all three parties. Educated voters are increasingly flocking to the Liberals, while poorer voters are turning to the NDP. The Conservatives, by contrast, are taking poorly educated and richer voters.

We documented the importance of separating the left bloc when, following Abou-Chadi and Hix, 2021, we examined the interaction of redistributive preferences and education for the individual parties. There, we found that NDP voters who hold degrees – but not Liberal voters with degrees – were more redistributive than those without degrees. This raises some doubts about the overall commitment of the broad "Brahmin Left" bloc in Canada to redistribution.

Although there is widespread support for redistribution across degree and income status, Canadian efforts at addressing income gaps have not followed public preferences. If anything, the shift to neoliberal macroeconomic policy that has allowed inequality to grow has increased support for redistribution (Sealey and Andersen 2015). Instead, it appears that party offerings are essential to translate voters redistributive preferences into policy (Polacko 2020). Thus, the finding that educated leftists support redistribution is not enough, on its own, to demonstrate that the increasing educational cleavage documented in Canada and elsewhere, is not implicated in worsening problems of income inequality. Much more goes into public policy than voter preferences.

Canada is a multinational federal state with a single-member plurality electoral system. This combination of institutional rules and divided society has produced a party system that is also unique, dominated by an amorphous, flexible brokerage party in the center and a standard labour party on the left. Nevertheless, Canada has been subjected to many of the same socio-economic forces that have disrupted historic alliances between classes and parties, such as decreased manufacturing employment and increased participation in higher education. The results reported here, as well as those of Gethin et al. (2022), suggest that Canada's party system is beginning to exhibit a clearer class character. Johnston (2017) has documented that the NDP and the Liberals trade voters much more than the NDP and the Conservatives, but our evidence shows a different class profile for each of the three parties, as well as differing levels of commitment to redistribution, even within the so-called "Brahmin Left".

These differences are likely to have complex impacts on redistribution. The pressures of the majoritarian electoral system may weigh most heavily on the smaller and more redistributive party to moderate its electoral appeals. On the other hand, might this lay the groundwork for a type of competition on economic and redistributive issues in a "progressive primary" between the Liberals and the NDP, followed by a general election fought on social issues? If so, this might mean that the overall finding of a "Brahmin Left" dominated by educated voters might still generate serious proposals for redistribution that can periodically prevail, largely because of the pressure inside the left bloc provided by the NDP, dominated by pro-redistribution and poorer voters. Indeed, if regional divisions continue to deliver frequent minority governments, the continued presence of a party with a pro-redistributive electorate may provide the "contagion from the left" that in the past powered redistributive politics in Canada (see Johnston 2013).

Looking beyond Canada, what next steps are implied by these results? It is hard to extrapolate these findings to other countries. Methodologically, this study had to work within the limits of the Canada

Election Study, which meant using pre-existing measures of education and income. Other election studies may provide greater opportunities to innovate in employing more complex measures. As well, the particularities of the Canadian case, where the party drawing the most educated voters is a historically dominant centrist party, are not broadly shared in other post-industrial democracies.

However, the strategy of pulling apart the left bloc to understand the different class composition and redistributive and cultural attitudes of the constituent parties could be promising. Considering these differences, and how they play out in electoral strategies and coalition negotiations, might clarify how the educational cleavage affects the possibilities for redistribution. For instance, does the distribution of attitudes across parties allow for forms of positive-sum specialization in the left bloc? Evans et al., 2021 provide the example of Denmark in 2019 where the Social Democrats won new voters by adopting left economic and restrictive immigration positions, while losing existing voters to their coalition partners, with the net effect of strengthening the left bloc. Or does social democratic competition with post-materialist left parties produce a negative-sum result of pushing working class voters into abstention or the arms of the right?

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

APPENDIX

A1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N = 52,829
Election	
1965	2118 (4.0%)
1968	2767 (5.2%)
1972	1296 (2.5%)
1974	2562 (4.8%)
1979	2744 (5.2%)
1980	1748 (3.3%)
1984	3377 (6.4%)
1988	3609 (6.8%)
1993	3340 (6.3%)
1997	3949 (7.5%)
2000	3651 (6.9%)
2004	3141 (5.9%)
2006	3249 (6.2%)
2008	3689 (7.0%)
2011	3362 (6.4%)
2015	4202 (8.0%)
2019	4025 (7.6%)
Male	
Female	27,399 (52%)
Male	25,427 (48%)
(Missing)	3
Age	
Mean (SD)	48 (17)
(Missing)	1222
Degree	
No degree	39,025 (76%)
Degree	11,990 (24%)
(Missing)	1814
Income	
Lowest	15,123 (32%)
Middle	17,100 (36%)
Highest	15,777 (33%)
(Missing)	4829
Religion	
None	7517 (15%)
Catholic	21,151 (42%)
Protestant	19,255 (38%)
Other	2498 (5.0%)
(Missing)	2408
Region	
Atlantic	7541 (14%)
Quebec	13,197 (25%)
Ontario	15,331 (29%)
West	16,572 (31%)
(Missing)	188

(continued)

Variable	N = 52,829
Redistribution	
Mean (SD)	0.77 (0.25)
(Missing)	23,312
Market Liberalism	
Mean (SD)	0.50 (0.28)
(Missing)	21,280
Traditionalism	
Mean (SD)	0.40 (0.32)
(Missing)	19,169
Immigration Rates	
Mean (SD)	0.58 (0.35)
(Missing)	18,075
Vote	
Conservative	14,233 (37%)
Liberal	13,874 (36%)
NDP	6228 (16%)
BQ	2050 (5.4%)
Green	865 (2.3%)
Other	1040 (2.7%)
(Missing)	14,539
NDP	
Mean (SD)	0.16 (0.37)
(Missing)	14,539
Liberal	
Mean (SD)	0.36 (0.48)
(Missing)	14,539
Conservative	
Mean (SD)	0.37 (0.48)
(Missing)	14,539
Household Size	
Mean (SD)	1.02 (0.49)
(Missing)	21,476

A2. Attitudinal Policy Variable Questions

Variable	Question(s)	Year(s)	Scale
Market Liberalism (α = 0.38)	• Government should leave it entirely to the private sector to create jobs.	1993–2019	1–5[a]
	• People who don't get ahead should blame themselves not the system.	1993–2019	1–5[a]
Moral Traditionalism (α = 0.53)	• Society would be better off if more women stayed home with their children.	1993–2019	1–5[a]
	• Gays and lesbians should be allowed to get married.	1993–2015	1–5[b]
	• How much do you think should be done for Gays & Lesbians?	2019	1–5[c]
Redistribution	• How much should be done to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor in Canada?	1993–2019	1–5[d]
Immigration	• Do you think Canada should admit: more immigrants, fewer immigrants, or about the same?	1993–2019	1–3[e]

Scale Answers.

[a] 1 = "strongly disagree"; to 5 = "strongly agree".

[b] 1 = "strongly agree"; to 5 = "strongly disagree".

[c] 1 = "much more"; to 5 = "much less".

[d] 1 = "much less"; to 5 = "much more".

[e] 1 = "more"; to 3 = "fewer".

A3 Results of Degree × Redistribution Interactions for Fig. 5: Regressions of Party Vote, 1993–2019

Table A3

Multininomial models predicting party vote, with key controls for age, degree, gender, income, region, religion, and attitudinal preferences.

	Liberal/Conservative			NDP/Conservative		
	1990s	2000s	2010s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Region (Atlantic)	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
Region (Quebec)	0.07	0.18	0.08	−1.33***	−0.14	1.04***
	(0.18)	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.33)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Region (Ontario)	0.07	−0.04	−0.42***	−0.53*	−0.07	−0.35**
	(0.15)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.24)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Region (West)	−0.83***	−0.90***	−1.27***	−0.43*	−0.04	−0.20+
	(0.15)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.22)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Age	0.01*	0.01***	0.01***	0.02**	0.00	−0.01*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Male	−0.13	−0.14*	−0.20**	−0.38*	−0.14+	−0.06
	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.15)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Income (Terciles)	−0.06	−0.15***	−0.09+	−0.08	−0.34***	−0.27***
	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.10)	(0.05)	(0.05)

(continued on next page)

Table A3 (*continued*)

	Liberal/Conservative			NDP/Conservative		
	1990s	2000s	2010s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Religion (None)	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
Religion (Catholic)	0.32*	0.08	−0.28**	−0.20	−0.51***	−0.53***
	(0.15)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.23)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Religion (Prot)	−0.24+	−0.59***	−0.58***	−0.38+	−0.82***	−0.69***
	(0.15)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.22)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Religion (Other)	0.19	0.43**	0.07	0.06	−0.33	−0.36+
	(0.24)	(0.15)	(0.17)	(0.35)	(0.20)	(0.19)
Household Size	0.09	0.12	−0.01	0.08	0.13	0.04
	(0.12)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.19)	(0.09)	(0.08)
Redistribution	0.72***	0.44**	1.54***	1.54***	1.35***	2.13***
	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.21)	(0.32)	(0.22)	(0.23)
Market Liberalism	−1.24***	−1.04***	−1.41***	−2.57***	−2.08***	−2.37***
	(0.19)	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.31)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Immigration Rates	−0.44***	−0.42***	−1.14***	−0.56**	−0.48***	−0.82***
	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Traditionalism	−0.40*	−1.25***	−1.68***	−1.37***	−2.03***	−1.72***
	(0.17)	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.26)	(0.13)	(0.16)
Degree x Redist	0.05	0.73**	0.72*	1.23+	2.01***	2.39***
	(0.32)	(0.27)	(0.33)	(0.65)	(0.40)	(0.41)
Constant	0.47*	0.79***	0.75***	0.07	1.27***	0.96***
	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.22)	(0.36)	(0.25)	(0.24)
Fixed Effects	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
N.	2961	7793	6769	2961	7793	6769
R^2	0.55	0.40	0.31	0.55	0.40	0.31

+ $p < 0.1$, *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$.

A4: Results of Income × Redistribution Interactions for Fig. 6: Regressions of Party Vote, 1993–2019

Table A4

Multinomial models predicting party vote, with controls for age, degree, gender, income, region, religion, and attitudinal preferences.

	Liberal/Conservative			NDP/Conservative		
	1990s	2000s	2010s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Region (Atlantic)	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
Region (Quebec)	0.07	0.19+	0.09	−1.31***	−0.14	1.05***
	(0.18)	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.33)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Region (Ontario)	0.07	−0.05	−0.42***	−0.51*	−0.09	−0.34**
	(0.15)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.24)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Region (West)	−0.84***	−0.91***	−1.27***	−0.44*	−0.06	−0.19+
	(0.15)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.22)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Age	0.01*	0.01***	0.01***	0.02**	0.00	−0.01*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Male	−0.13	−0.13*	−0.20**	−0.38*	−0.13+	−0.06
	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.15)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Income (Terciles)	−0.34*	−0.40**	−0.27+	−0.35	−1.08***	−0.53**
	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.30)	(0.19)	(0.19)
Religion (Catholic)	0.32*	0.08	−0.29**	−0.20	−0.52***	−0.54***
	(0.15)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.23)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Religion (None)	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
Religion (Prot)	−0.25+	−0.58***	−0.58***	−0.38+	−0.82***	−0.71***
	(0.15)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.22)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Religion (Other)	0.19	0.43**	0.06	0.08	−0.34+	−0.38*
	(0.24)	(0.15)	(0.17)	(0.34)	(0.20)	(0.19)
Household Size	0.08	0.12	−0.01	0.07	0.13	0.05
	(0.12)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.19)	(0.09)	(0.08)
Redistribution	−0.25	−0.11	1.24**	0.98	−0.04	2.26***
	(0.43)	(0.38)	(0.44)	(0.85)	(0.51)	(0.53)
Market Liberalism	−1.23***	−1.06***	−1.43***	−2.59***	−2.13***	−2.41***
	(0.19)	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.31)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Immigration Rates	−0.43**	−0.43***	−1.14***	−0.55**	−0.51***	−0.84***
	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Traditionalism	−0.39*	−1.26***	−1.69***	−1.37***	−2.04***	−1.73***
	(0.17)	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.26)	(0.13)	(0.16)
Income x Redist	0.44*	0.34*	0.24	0.40	0.91***	0.35
	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.19)	(0.36)	(0.22)	(0.23)
Constant	0.89**	1.15***	0.91**	0.30	2.23***	0.85*
	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.31)	(0.54)	(0.40)	(0.38)
Fixed Effects	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
N	2961	7793	6769	2961	7793	6769
R^2	0.55	0.40	0.31	0.55	0.40	0.31

+ $p < 0.1$, *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$.

A5: Postgraduate Degree Robustness Check

As a robustness check on the key education independent variable, we also include replications of Figs. 1 and 2 with postgraduate status as the measure of education, instead of degree status. We include this check because the socio-economic importance and proportion of the population that has attained a degree, has substantially changed over the timeframe of this study. The CES does not allow for distinguishing a direct percentile of the population based on education such as the top 10%, but it does include a postgraduate categorization since 1988. This measure averages 9% of respondents in the sample. Postgraduate status displays a very similar pattern in both Figs A5a and A5b, to degree status in Figs. 1 and 2. The bloc voting pattern is remarkably similar and the only discernible difference in the disaggregated bloc is that postgraduates tend to support the NDP more in recent elections than degree holders, compared to the Liberals.
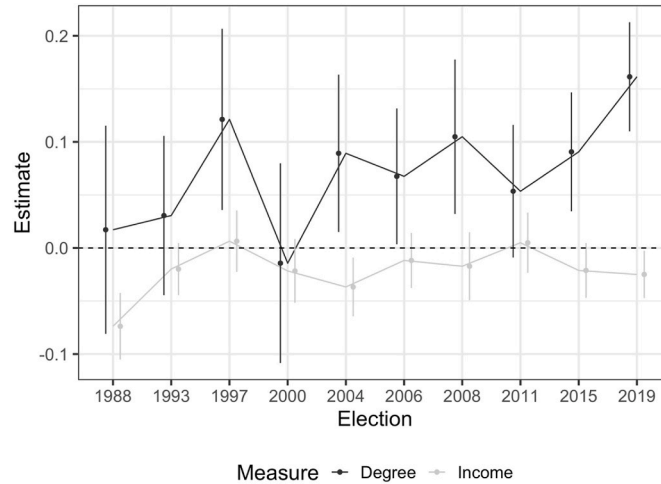

Fig. A5a. OLS coefficient of postgrad degree status and income on vote support for the left bloc (Greens, Liberals, and NDP) versus the right bloc (Canadian Alliance, Conservative Party, Reform Party, and People's Party).
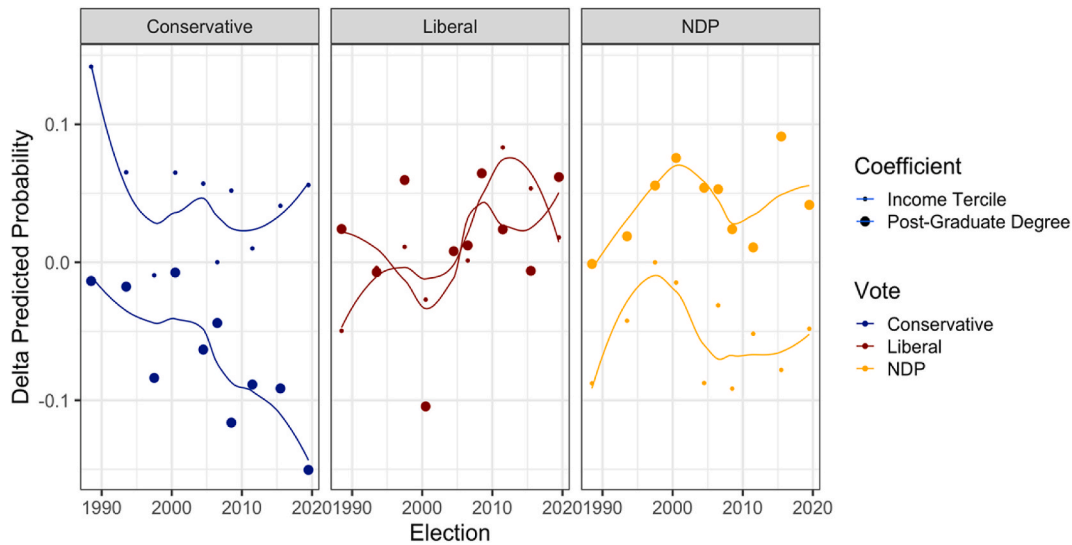

Fig. A5b. Predicted probability of voting for each party by postgraduate degree status and income. Estimates are derived from a multinomial logistic regression model controlling for age, gender, region, and religion. Confidence intervals are not reported to improve readability.

A6: Attitudinal Scores by Party and Decade

Table A6a

Mean score of redistribution by degree, income, party vote, and overall.

Redistribution Score	No Degree	Degree	Low Income	High Income	Overall
NDP 1990s	.7891705	.8411458	.8414634	.7727273	.8051118
NDP 2000s	.8356127	.8641304	.8347826	.8272358	.8420063
NDP 2010s	.8287572	.8741915	.8654224	.8330565	.8481257
Liberal 1990s	.7177508	.6402244	.7601695	.6177778	.6971744
Liberal 2000s	.7977759	.7634264	.8124066	.7514356	.7830049
Liberal 2010s	.7966373	.7911227	.8193109	.7812865	.7943314
Conservative 1990s	.6045648	.5055556	.7300797	.4805726	.583196
Conservative 2000s	.7431373	.643887	.7723547	.6606535	.7120078
Conservative 2010s	.6803797	.6115108	.706	.6108491	.6583333

(continued on next page)

Table A6a (*continued*)

Redistribution Score	No Degree	Degree	Low Income	High Income	Overall
1990s	.699684	.6426991	.7713319	.5974946	.6864958
2000s	.7996311	.7638969	.8227171	.7472015	.7853515
2010s	.7632075	.7680362	.8008242	.7344777	.7650163
Overall	.7704552	.7520085	.8068815	.7207139	.7637516

Table A6b
Mean score of anti-immigration attitude by degree, income, party vote, and overall.

Anti-Immigration Score	No Degree	Degree	Low Income	High Income	Overall
NDP 1990s	.691358	.4558824	.676	.5704698	.6217391
NDP 2000s	.5472313	.3838583	.5574713	.4561688	.4922118
NDP 2010s	.515896	.3402597	.4547244	.416113	.4411927
Liberal 1990s	.7283572	.5232068	.7386364	.6178977	.6771047
Liberal 2000s	.5728997	.4203822	.5660237	.4870235	.5183442
Liberal 2010s	.4474739	.3356582	.4416933	.3604924	.3947587
Conservative 1990s	.7641115	.5967337	.7481108	.7002821	.7278412
Conservative 2000s	.6220034	.4943117	.6147661	.5494949	.5844262
Conservative 2010s	.6262916	.5256257	.6242038	.5624344	.5936655
1990s	.7380576	.5494322	.7331256	.6564258	.6984796
2000s	.6079964	.4510559	.6033616	.516629	.5606448
2010s	.5590633	.4058296	.5331193	.4646669	.4994665
Overall	.6289042	.4472546	.6085771	.5300498	.5723825

Table A6c
Mean score of market liberalism by degree, income, party vote, and overall.

Market Liberalism Score	No Degree	Degree	Low Income	High Income	Overall
NDP 1990s	.3869231	.2771739	.368	.3418874	.3542117
NDP 2000s	.4376356	.3001969	.4475575	.3569692	.3895548
NDP 2010s	.4201489	.2887597	.3686399	.347314	.3643427
Liberal 1990s	.4730259	.4283088	.4770145	.4469858	.4623016
Liberal 2000s	.5407182	.4350477	.5443908	.4642133	.4996755
Liberal 2010s	.4573365	.3747828	.4533493	.3907343	.4178054
Conservative 1990s	.5624565	.5642145	.5369318	.592216	.5629745
Conservative 2000s	.5966467	.5756542	.6065154	.5963734	.5916962
Conservative 2010s	.5862636	.5730404	.5777027	.5931628	.582147
1990s	.4924488	.4508781	.4898211	.4906331	.484051
2000s	.5466407	.4531666	.5460231	.4978334	.5175116
2010s	.4992857	.4050444	.4682253	.4543002	.4626312
Overall	.5171881	.4323401	.5043827	.4830135	.4920134

Table A6d
Mean score of moral traditionalism by degree, income, party vote, and overall.

Moral Traditionalism Score	No Degree	Degree	Low Income	High Income	Overall
NDP 1990s	.505	.2835145	.499	.3584437	.4389849
NDP 2000s	.3384615	.1950495	.3907164	.2151639	.2877907
NDP 2010s	.2639155	.1563307	.2644325	.1661157	.2185267
Liberal 1990s	.5546448	.4430147	.5906508	.4637269	.5276566
Liberal 2000s	.451734	.3074143	.5294228	.3013685	.397679
Liberal 2010s	.2659617	.1905951	.2998405	.1767191	.2306338
Conservative 1990s	.6071056	.506875	.6347362	.536868	.5849593
Conservative 2000s	.5721133	.4569508	.6198529	.4660243	.5379599
Conservative 2010s	.4263444	.3695071	.471627	.353187	.4082948
1990s	.5400658	.4204092	.5551452	.4664976	.5159714
2000s	.4752485	.3309332	.5139994	.3529488	.4321397
2010s	.3322762	.2376076	.3482631	.2442736	.2958767
Overall	.4537633	.3074277	.4687746	.3461915	.4105433

A7: Attitudinal Indices Robustness Check

Unfortunately both of the attitudinal indices display relatively low Cronbach alpha's (market liberalism α = 0.38; moral traditionalism α = 0.53). They have often been used with Canadian Election Studies and are normally measured with more than two items because they are usually used in single-election studies. For a three-decade study such as this only two questions are consistently asked and suitable for measuring each index. Both

variables are also largely controls and the key attitude most central to this study is redistribution. Thus, we also include the two survey items within each index separately in models, as a robustness check.

For Table 1 replication, we note that the two market liberalism variables display similar party voting results for the Liberals and NDP vis-à-vis the Conservatives, although market 2 (individualism), displays a greater effect than market 1 (public vs private sector) for the Liberals. When we split moral traditionalism into gay rights and gender roles variables, gay rights exhibits a larger effect than gender roles, and it is a much larger driver of conservative voting in the 2010s. We can also see that the effects for gay rights are consistently much stronger than for gender roles except in the 2000s where they perform roughly the same for all parties, and for the Liberals vis-à-vis the Conservatives in the 1990s.

Overall, the main results all hold and splitting the attitude index controls does not yield substantively different results.

Multinomial Regressions of Party Vote, 1993–2019

Table A7

Multinomial models predicting party vote, with key controls for age, degree, gender, household size, income, region, and religion, and attitudinal preferences.

	Liberal/Conservative			NDP/Conservative		
	1990s	2000s	2010s	1990s	2000s	2010s
(Region) East	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
(Region) Que.	0.107	0.193	0.111	−1.390***	−0.117	1.067***
	(0.181)	(0.114)	(0.127)	(0.335)	(0.156)	(0.140)
(Region) Ont.	0.088	−0.083	−0.415***	−0.468[+]	−0.100	−0.336**
	(0.156)	(0.097)	(0.103)	(0.243)	(0.125)	(0.124)
(Region) West	−0.812***	−0.920***	−1.266***	−0.412[+]	−0.053	−0.191
	(0.152)	(0.100)	(0.105)	(0.219)	(0.123)	(0.119)
Age	0.007*	0.013***	0.012***	0.016**	−0.000	−0.004
	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Male	−0.141	−0.133*	−0.168*	−0.306*	−0.149[+]	−0.015
	(0.096)	(0.062)	(0.073)	(0.155)	(0.078)	(0.079)
Income	−0.098	−0.156***	−0.100*	−0.128	−0.351***	−0.269***
	(0.066)	(0.044)	(0.050)	(0.107)	(0.054)	(0.054)
Degree	0.127	0.160*	0.399***	0.032	0.008	0.232**
	(0.115)	(0.071)	(0.077)	(0.183)	(0.088)	(0.084)
(Religion) None	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
(Religion) Cath.	0.284[+]	0.085	−0.269**	−0.114	−0.519***	−0.493***
	(0.154)	(0.096)	(0.101)	(0.239)	(0.111)	(0.109)
(Religion) Prot.	−0.242	−0.582***	−0.556***	−0.324	−0.835***	−0.664***
	(0.148)	(0.092)	(0.098)	(0.220)	(0.102)	(0.105)
(Religion) Other	0.160	0.432**	0.088	0.113	−0.362[+]	−0.345[+]
	(0.241)	(0.155)	(0.169)	(0.353)	(0.202)	(0.188)
Household Size	0.125	0.132[+]	0.016	0.139	0.128	0.075
	(0.119)	(0.076)	(0.075)	(0.195)	(0.092)	(0.081)
Redistribution	0.776***	0.671***	1.716***	1.848***	2.044***	2.877***
	(0.151)	(0.132)	(0.168)	(0.287)	(0.189)	(0.198)
Public vs Private Sector	−0.917***	−0.802***	−0.927***	−1.444***	−1.466***	−1.278***
	(0.134)	(0.088)	(0.110)	(0.236)	(0.119)	(0.123)
Market Individualism	−0.212	−0.219*	−0.557***	−1.218***	−0.660***	−1.241***
	(0.151)	(0.093)	(0.112)	(0.234)	(0.113)	(0.120)
Immigration	−0.458***	−0.440***	−1.118***	−0.516*	−0.533***	−0.779***
	(0.133)	(0.098)	(0.114)	(0.215)	(0.125)	(0.126)
Gender Roles	−0.354**	−0.651***	−0.334**	−0.319	−0.980***	−0.118
	(0.127)	(0.081)	(0.116)	(0.205)	(0.106)	(0.127)
Gay Rights	−0.058	−0.606***	−1.387***	−1.238***	−1.066***	−1.627***
	(0.139)	(0.082)	(0.116)	(0.221)	(0.108)	(0.128)
Constant	0.402	0.422[+]	0.834**	0.090	1.119***	0.220
	(0.350)	(0.254)	(0.290)	(0.541)	(0.316)	(0.320)
Fixed Effects	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
N	2908	7671	6668	2908	7671	6668
R²	0.55	0.41	0.32	0.55	0.41	0.32

[+] p < 0.1, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.

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