

# Evaluating Traditionalism in the Atlantic Provinces: Voting, Public Opinion and the Electoral Project

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## ABSTRACT

Using electoral and survey data, this article explores the degree to which "traditionalism" accurately describes the political agenda in the Atlantic region. The authors find that the region is less traditional than often assumed, although electoral politics continues to be dominated by the Liberal and Conservative parties and religious beliefs remain stronger than in other regions in the country. On questions of women's equality and moral traditionalism, however, the region appears decidedly average in its attitudes.

## RÉSUMÉ

En se servant des données du recensement électoral, cet article explore à quel point le « traditionalisme » décrit de façon exacte l'ordre du jour politique dans la région de l'Atlantique. Les auteures trouvent que cette région est moins traditionnelle que l'on ne le pense, quoique les politiques électorales continuent d'être dominées par le parti Libéral et Conservateur et que les croyances religieuses demeurent plus fortes que dans toute autre région au pays. Sur les questions de l'égalité des femmes, le traditionalisme, la région paraît résolument moyenne dans ses attitudes.

The regional dimension of Canadian politics has been well documented: regionalism is identified in the party system, partisanship and voting (Carty et al. 2002; Carty and Stewart 1996; Gidengil et al. 1999), and is often said to be a characteristic of the political culture as well (Stewart 1994; Simeon and Elkins 1980; Clarke et al. 2002). In this context, the portrayal of Atlantic Canada is that of an area more "traditional" than other regions of the country. There is, for example, the dominance of the two traditional political parties, the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives (PCs), and the apparent absence of the sort of populist streak to which the Reform Party and, more recently, the Canadian Alliance, appeal. The traditional label has also been applied in light of additional characteristics such as the greater strength of partisan ties compared to elsewhere in the country and the dominance of particular social characteristics that might seem to support a more traditional culture. For example, Atlantic Canadians are more likely to be of British descent, to live in rural communities, and to show higher levels of religiosity, identified by levels of church membership and attendance rates (Stewart 1994). The combination of low immigration and high out-migration would also seem to ensure that the region's culture is fairly stable (Stewart 2002, 172).

The uniqueness of the Atlantic Canadian culture is the focus of this article. It explores the degree to which "traditionalism" is an enduring characteristic of

the region. Building women's leadership in the region requires at a minimum a clear understanding of its political context and political agenda. This understanding should, we would argue, be one based more on evidence than on stereotype. As Ian Stewart has argued about Maritime culture more specifically, much knowledge regarding politics in the region is based on stereotype and myth (1994). Thus, while regionalism is a characteristic of some aspects of Canadian politics, the mantra of regional differences, including the portrayal of Atlantic Canada as the most traditional region of the country, seems to have taken on a life of its own. Using evidence from national voting patterns and survey data<sup>1</sup> we develop a more nuanced understanding of politics and the political context of the Atlantic region.

## REGIONAL VOTING PATTERNS

The traditionalism of Atlantic politics is often argued on the basis of the stability of the party system (Adamson and Stewart 2001). The region is characterized by the strength of the two oldest Canadian parties and the relative weakness of other parties. Even as the rise of the Reform and Bloc Québécois (BQ) parties permanently altered the dynamics of federal electoral politics in 1993, politics in Atlantic Canada seemed largely immune to such dramatic changes. In 1993, federal politics in Quebec was transformed by the unprecedented success of the Bloc Québécois, Reform

became the leading political party in British Columbia and the Prairies, and even in Ontario the configuration of party competition saw the replacement of Canada's oldest federal party with this new political formation. Yet in Atlantic Canada, the presence of a new party on the national scene just barely registered in its regional vote shares (see Table 1).

Subsequent elections in 1997 and 2000 have confirmed that Atlantic Canada has maintained a party system that is more traditional than that found elsewhere in the country. As shown in Table 1, the Reform Party/Canadian Alliance polled only 9 and 10 percent of the popular vote share in the region. In contrast, the Canadian Alliance polled roughly half of the popular vote share in British Columbia and the Prairies in the last federal election and almost a quarter of the vote in Ontario. In Quebec, the other new party, the BQ, retained 40 percent of the popular vote.

The strength of the two traditional parties in the region is unquestionable: neither party polled less than 31 percent of votes in the last two federal elections. For the PCs in particular, this electoral strength far surpassed its strength elsewhere. In the 2000 election, for example, the party's next best result came in Ontario where it earned only 14 percent of the total vote share. For the Liberals, 41 percent of voters in Atlantic Canada opted for their candidates in that election.

Evidence of the region's traditional party system is offset somewhat by the gains made by the New Democratic Party (NDP) in recent elections. With 24 percent of the popular vote share in the 1997 election, the party appeared on the verge of a breakthrough in Atlantic Canada, ready to challenge the front-running status of the traditional parties. The subsequent election, however, suggested that such a conclusion might have been premature as the party lost ground, sliding back to a popular vote share of 17 percent.

Focussing on the traditionalism of the party system in the Atlantic region as a whole, however, fails to properly account for the distinct patterns of party support within each province. As shown in Table 2, traditionalism in the Atlantic region is strongest in the partisan politics in Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. In these two provinces, no third party gained a single seat and the Liberal and the PC vote shares accounted at a minimum for 75 percent of votes polled in the last three federal elections.

Challenges to the dominance of the two traditional parties have been relatively more successful in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Their combined electoral strength in the last two federal elections accounted for 59 and 66 percent of the vote share in Nova Scotia and 68 and 73 percent in New Brunswick. The identity and strength of the challenger differs, however, between the two neighbouring provinces. In

Nova Scotia, the challenge came principally from the NDP, reflecting Alexa McDonough's ties in the province. In New Brunswick the challenge was mounted equally from the NDP and Reform/Canadian Alliance parties.

On the whole, the recent history of federal party politics in Atlantic Canada seems to confirm the region's reputation for the traditionalism of its party politics. With the inroads of the NDP, traditionalism may have weakened to some degree, but it nevertheless continues (Stewart 2002). The strength of the PC party is particularly striking compared to its apparent demise (in federal politics) in the rest of the country. Of note, however, is the fact that speaking of a particular pattern in the region ignores the diversity that exists across the four provinces.

An examination of women and men's voting patterns in the region reveals some differences between this and the country's remaining regions. A comparison of women and men's national election voting patterns in the Atlantic region since 1993 reveals very little in the way of noticeable gender gaps (results not shown).<sup>2</sup> Women and men have been more likely to vote for the Liberal and Conservative parties, and at similar levels, than in much of the rest of the country in the last three national elections. Elsewhere in the country significant gender gaps have appeared in voting for the major parties, most notably in women's greater propensity to support the NDP and weaker support for the Reform/Alliance Party.<sup>3</sup> The one exception to the lack of significant gender gaps in the Atlantic region, however, is in a sizeable gender gap in voting for the Alliance Party in 2000. In that election, 16 percent of men but only 7 percent of women cast ballots for the party led by Stockwell Day. This gender gap, a significant 9 percentage points, reflects the pattern found elsewhere in the country and in previous elections (Erickson and O'Neill 2002; Gidengil et al. 2000). Yet while the voting gender gap for this party mirrors the pattern found in the rest of the country, the overall support given to the party by both women and men in Atlantic Canada does not. Atlantic women and men are both less likely to vote Alliance than are other Canadians outside of Quebec.

#### POLITICAL OPINIONS IN THE REGION

The traditionalism of the Atlantic region political culture has been remarked upon in various academic treatments. Nelson Wiseman, for example, identifies Loyalist political control in the Maritimes and British control in Newfoundland as key political events resulting in "a broadly similar and pervasive political culture throughout the Atlantic region: elite-oriented, conservative and traditional" (1996, 25). Earlier, Richard Simeon and David Elkins identified the region

as unique in the country for its "pervasive disaffection from the political process" (1974, 433). Rand Dyck has also suggested that Atlantic Canada's political culture is based on a set of values including "tradition, caution, parochialism, cynicism, and conservatism" although he acknowledges that the strength of these values has decreased over time (1996, 130). For his part, Ian Stewart concludes that the political culture in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI is less "traditional, corrupt, non-ideological, deferential and disaffected" than the stereotype would have us believe (1994, 156).

Which picture is currently more appropriate? Does contemporary opinion in Atlantic Canada deserve the traditional label, or is a major shift in how we view the context of politics in this region in order? The Canadian Election Study 2000 provides a fairly comprehensive set of questions for tapping into traditional sentiment in the Canadian regions. Some caveats are in order, however, including the fact that the share of survey respondents drawn from the Atlantic region is relatively small but nevertheless of a sufficient size to allow for conclusions to be drawn regarding attitudes in the region. The limited numbers do, however, preclude any analysis at the level of individual provinces. Further, the complexity of untangling the multiple sources of opinion is worthy of note; the following examination should be seen as only a first step in such a process. We begin our exploration by comparing regional opinions on issues that seem most relevant for building women's political leadership: attitudes about women, women in politics and feminism.

As Table 3 demonstrates, Atlantic Canada is *not* the most traditional region in the country with respect to opinions about women. Indeed, while Quebec is clearly the most progressive province, Atlantic Canadians are as sympathetic as other English Canadians to women. Regarding representation in the House of Commons, Atlantic Canadians may not consider the lack of women to be a serious problem (only 31 percent said that they thought it was) but their lack of concern is similar to that in much of the rest of English-speaking Canada. On the other hand, a slight majority in Atlantic Canada do think that the best way to protect women's interests is to increase their numbers in Parliament, while respondents in the Prairies in particular appear to be less convinced that this is important. Moreover, compared to other regions outside Quebec, respondents in Atlantic Canada were noticeably more likely to favour requiring gender parity across candidates in elections. Forty-four percent of respondents indicated their support for requiring parity while by comparison only 31 and 30 percent of respondents in Ontario and British Columbia did. In terms of traditional attitudes to women's representation, it is the Prairie region, rather than Atlantic Canada, that is distinctive.

On more general questions about women, two-thirds of Atlantic Canadians thought that more should be done for women, a percentage clearly higher than that in the rest of the country outside Quebec. In Ontario, for example, only 56 percent believed that more should be done. And a majority in Atlantic Canada, as high as any outside Quebec, agreed that discrimination makes it extremely difficult for women to get jobs equal to their abilities. As for their views on feminism, most respondents in the region said that they were sympathetic and that they thought the feminist movement encourages women to be independent. Given these responses, respondents in Atlantic Canada were, next to Quebec, the least traditional in their opinions. When asked to choose whether the feminist movement simply tries to get equal treatment for women or tries to put men down, a smaller majority, 58 percent, supported the more sympathetic response which was well within the mainstream of opinion in the rest of the country. Only in Quebec did proportionately more respondents see the feminist movement as an equality-seeking group. On the whole, public opinion in Atlantic Canada was as well disposed to feminism as it is in Ontario and British Columbia. On this set of questions, the Prairie region rather than Atlantic Canada is distinctively traditional.

While the pattern of responses with respect to women certainly suggests the region leans toward the more progressive side of the spectrum, the evidence for traditionalism on moral issues is less straightforward. Beginning with questions related to specific moral issues, we see that with the exception of abortion, the Atlantic region is decidedly positioned within mainstream Canada (see Table 4). The first question, asking whether only legally married people should be allowed to have children, suggests that Atlantic respondents sit with those from Ontario and British Columbia at midpoint on this issue, with one in three agreeing with the statement. At the most liberal end of the spectrum, just over one in ten Quebecers agreed with the statement while just under half of respondents in the Prairie region agreed. On the question of whether gays and lesbians should be allowed to marry, the values of Atlantic Canadians again occupy the middle ground: 54 percent agreed with the statement, a result similar to that found in Ontario and British Columbia. The Prairies (with only 49 percent agreement) and Quebec (with 59 percent agreement) again occupy the two poles of opinion on the issue. A third question asked respondents whether "society would be better off if women stayed home with their children." Although only nine percentage points separates the extremes of opinion on this issue, Atlantic Canadians, along with respondents in Ontario, occupy the more liberal end of the spectrum of opinion. Forty-four percent agreed with the statement,

compared to the Prairies and British Columbia where roughly half of the population did so.

Contrary to what we have seen so far with respect to moral issues, attitudes in the region anchor the conservative end of the spectrum on the issue of abortion: 49 percent of Atlantic respondents said they thought that abortion should be fairly or very difficult to get. Twenty-four percentage points separates this region from the most liberal in the country. A mere one in four respondents in Quebec said that access to abortion should be fairly or very difficult. As we will see below, the strength of religious attitudes in the Atlantic region undoubtedly plays some part in shaping attitudes on this issue.

On more abstract moral questions, we find evidence of traditionalism among Atlantic Canadians. Both Atlantic Canada and the Prairies reveal a high degree of support for traditional family values, over 80 percent, given their support for the statement "the country would have many fewer problems if there were more emphasis on traditional family values." In comparison, only 65 percent of respondents in British Columbia agreed with the statement, with respondents in Ontario and Quebec falling between these two extremes. And when asked about whether we should adapt our views of moral behaviour in a changing world, respondents from Atlantic Canada also leaned toward a more traditional answer. However, so too did respondents from Ontario and the Prairies. With only Quebecers, and to a smaller extent those from British Columbia, giving a less traditional response, on this item it could be argued Atlantic respondents still tend to be mainstream. Overall then, while the Atlantic region does not lean toward the most liberal end of the regional spectrum, neither can it be characterized as distinctly "traditional," at least in comparison to the set of attitudes revealed in Canada's remaining regions.

The next set of responses deals with opinions relevant to capitalism (Table 5). Opinion regarding capitalism and the role of government in the economy is indirectly tied to the electoral project in that parties on the left are more likely to endorse state involvement in the economy and have historically fielded more women candidates than other parties. Hence, public opinion that supports a strong government can potentially translate into greater political representation for women. Moreover, traditionalism can refer to the inability of new ideological currents (such as neo-liberalism) to take hold in a region. As shown, however, the attitudes of Atlantic Canadians closely mirror those of most other Canadians when it comes to issues related to the functioning of the system. When respondents were asked whether people who don't get ahead should blame themselves and not the system and whether people who really want to work can find a job, all regions exhibit significant agreement with the statements with

difference regions limited to a mere six and seven percentage points respectively. On the third question, regarding the degree to which business success benefits all of society, there is more variability. The two poles of the opinion spectrum are anchored by Quebec, with only 27 percent of respondents agreeing with the statement, and British Columbia, with almost one in two respondents in agreement. But here again the opinions of Atlantic Canadians sit in the mainstream, along with those in Quebec and Ontario who were similarly sceptical that business success extends throughout society. Only thirty-one percent of Atlantic Canadians agreed that everyone benefits when businesses make money, along with 33 and 27 percent of respondents in Ontario and Quebec respectively. Where regional distinctiveness is demonstrated here, it appears to be British Columbia that stands out.

Table 6 provides a set of questions tapping respondents' expectations regarding government involvement in the economy. The results are mixed regarding the degree to which the opinions of Atlantic Canadians differ from those elsewhere. On two questions, moving to find work and the effects of the Welfare State, Atlantic Canadians occupy a middle position. On the first question, just over one half of respondents in Quebec agreed that those without work should move to find work, an understandable position given language concerns. In the Prairies and British Columbia, however, almost three quarters of respondents agreed with the statement reflecting perhaps the fact that many residents in those two regions may have had to move to find work themselves. In comparison, just over two thirds of respondents in Atlantic Canada and Ontario agreed with the statement. On the second question, regarding the effects of the Welfare State, Atlantic Canadians again occupy a middle position with just over two thirds agreeing that the Welfare State makes people less willing to look after themselves, a level of agreement similar to that found in Ontario and British Columbia. Respondents in Quebec were the least likely to agree with the statement (only half of respondents agreed) while those in the Prairies had the highest level of agreement with the statement (just over three quarters of respondents were in agreement).

On the two remaining questions, Atlantic Canadians were clearly on the interventionist side of economic issues and more consistently so than elsewhere. On the question of whether the government should leave people to get ahead on their own rather than see to it that everyone has a decent standard of living, only a small minority of respondents in Atlantic Canada agreed (15 percent). On this question only respondents in Quebec were as interventionist as those in Atlantic Canada (fourteen percent of Quebecers agreed with the statement). Although never reaching a

level of majority support, the share agreeing with the statement was substantially higher in other regions; almost 30 percent agreement in Ontario and British Columbia, and 40 percent in the Prairies. On the question of government's role in job creation, Atlantic Canadians are again on the interventionist side with respect to economic policy, although respondents from Ontario join them on this question; only 39 and 38 percent of respondents in these two regions agreed "government should leave it entirely to the private sector to create jobs." In the Prairies and British Columbia opinion was more evenly divided, while in Quebec 61 percent of respondents agreed. Thus, while one might have expected Atlantic Canada to be especially supportive of an interventionist government, the set of questions examined here suggests that this expectation does not always hold true. Atlantic Canadians might stand apart for their reluctance to allow market forces to work unaided by government, but they hold decidedly mainstream opinions regarding the Welfare State and the responsibility of Canadians to find work.

While the evidence on economic issues provides a mixed picture of Atlantic Canadian attitudes, responses on the final set of attitudes are more consistent (see Table 7). Without a doubt, religion plays a more important role for Canadians living in this region than in any other. Eighty-three percent of Atlantic Canadians suggest that religion is at least important, if not very important, in their lives. This compares to roughly three in four respondents in the Prairies and Ontario and to the two-thirds of respondents in British Columbia and Quebec that responded in a similar fashion. And when queried about the Bible, 31 percent of respondents in Atlantic Canada agree at some level that "it is the word of God and is to be taken literally word for word." At the other end of the attitudinal pole, only 16 and 17 percents of respondents in British Columbia and Quebec agreed with the statement. On the final measure of religious attitudes, the degree of confidence held in organized religion, Atlantic Canada again anchors the traditional end of the religious pole. A clear majority of respondents, 60 percent, indicated that they had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in organized religion. The only other region in which a majority of respondents expressed such confidence was Quebec, a region that on the other two measures would be judged clearly less religious. To the degree that traditionalism encompasses the strength of religious attitudes, Atlantic Canadians exhibit a measure of traditionalism in this domain that is unmatched in the other regions.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The argument that the limited success of the electoral project in Atlantic Canada can be explained in part by the region's political culture has been made (Arscott 1997; Carbert 2002). As Carbert (2002) rightly points out, political culture is closely related to factors such as the proportion of urban/rural constituencies, the success of parties on the left such as the NDP and the rate of incumbency at elections, factors that play a key part in shaping the level of women's representation. But as this paper has shown, the "traditional" political culture of the Atlantic region is a myth too broadly applied to the region, and one that deserves to be substantially modified.

If the politics of Atlantic Canada can be characterized as traditional, the label fits because of the degree to which the two traditional Canadian parties, the Liberals and the PCs, have dominated in national elections in the region. Although this characterization is less true of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, it nevertheless remains the case that the PC Party has retained an electoral strength in the whole of the Atlantic region that is unmatched in any of the remaining regions in the country. In terms of women's representation, the inability of the NDP to translate electoral strength into legislative strength has undoubtedly hindered the success of the electoral project in the region as the strength of the party has been linked to higher levels of electoral success for women across Canada (Carbert 2002). On the other hand, the failure of the Canadian Alliance Party to achieve a breakthrough may have helped, but certainly hasn't harmed, the electoral project as parties on the right tend to elect fewer women as a proportion of their caucus than other parties.

Atlantic Canada also reveals a distinct level of traditionalism on a few of the dimensions of public opinion examined here. Most uniquely, Atlantic Canadians reveal strength of religious belief that sets them apart from other Canadians. As an element of traditionalism, religious beliefs can perhaps help to explain women's poor electoral showing: religious attitudes might be linked to an acceptance of patriarchal institutions generally, and patriarchal political practices, more specifically. Such attitudes certainly play some part in shaping opinion on certain public policy issues, such as abortion.

The evidence provided here, however, suggests that religious beliefs in the Atlantic Provinces are not feeding a particularly negative nor unique set of attitudes towards women and feminism. As our examination of survey data suggests, Atlantic Canadians reveal decidedly mainstream attitudes on such questions, weakening arguments that look to this element of political culture as an explanation for

women's poor legislative representation in the region. And neither do Atlantic Canadians reveal a set of attitudes on moral traditionalism that would allow the "traditionalism" label to stick to the region. Apart from a distinct set of attitudes on abortion, Atlantic Canadians appear decidedly average in the opinions they express. The same can be said for their attitudes on capitalism. However, the region displays a tendency toward a greater acceptance of government economic intervention than other regions of the country. Citizens in the region, more than those in any other, argue that the state must assume a vital role to mitigate against the worst excesses of free market. Yet overall, the characterization of the Atlantic Canadian political culture as traditional seems open to serious challenge.

In summary, the region is less traditional than commonly assumed, providing a measure of optimism for success in increasing women's electoral chances. Indeed, attitudes in the region are supportive of specific measures aimed at increasing women's political representation. The dominance of the two traditional parties suggests, however, that the political context differs here from elsewhere in the country requiring perhaps a specific set of electoral strategies targeted to its specific political context. While opinion in the region provides a perhaps necessary condition for increasing women's political representation, this alone is not sufficient for ensuring that it comes about.

#### ENDNOTES

1. The 2000 Canadian Election Study was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Elections Canada, The Institute for Research on Public Policy, The Université de Montréal, McGill University and the University of Toronto. Principal investigators include André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte.
2. The Canadian Election Studies between 1993 and 2000 provide survey data that allows for an examination of voting gender gaps. These studies provide for relatively small samples of voters in the region, however, resulting in especially small samples for political parties with weak electoral support in the region.
3. The size of gender gaps in Atlantic Canada in some cases suggests that gender gaps may exist, but the small samples for the region make it difficult for such gaps to achieve statistical significance.

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**Table 1**

<b>Party Vote Shares by Region in the 1993, 1997, 2000 Federal Elections, as percent of Total Vote</b>					
<i>1993 Election</i>	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>PC</i>	<i>NDP</i>	<i>Reform</i>	<i>BQ</i>
BC	28	14	16	36	--
Prairies	31	13	12	40	--
Ontario	53	18	6	22	--
Quebec	33	14	2	--	49
Atlantic	57	26	5	8	--
<i>1997 Election</i>	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>PC</i>	<i>NDP</i>	<i>Reform</i>	<i>BQ</i>
BC	29	6	18	43	--
Prairies	27	14	16	43	--
Ontario	49	19	11	19	--
Quebec	37	22	2	0	38
Atlantic	33	34	24	9	--
<i>2000 Election</i>	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>PC</i>	<i>NDP</i>	<i>Alliance</i>	<i>BQ</i>
BC	28	7	11	49	--
Prairies	23	12	13	50	--
Ontario	51	14	8	24	--
Quebec	44	6	2	6	40
Atlantic	41	31	17	10	--

Source: Elections Canada. Figures may not add up to 100 given the exclusion of some political parties in the calculations.

**Table 2**

<b>Party Vote Shares in Atlantic Provinces in the 1993, 1997, 2000 Federal Elections, as percent of Total Vote</b>				
<i>1993 Election</i>	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>PC</i>	<i>NDP</i>	<i>Reform</i>
<b>Newfoundland</b>	67	27	4	1
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	52	24	7	13
<b>PEI</b>	60	32	5	1
<b>New Brunswick</b>	56	28	5	8
<i>1997 Election</i>	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>PC</i>	<i>NDP</i>	<i>Reform</i>
<b>Newfoundland</b>	38	37	22	3
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	28	31	30	10
<b>PEI</b>	45	38	15	2
<b>New Brunswick</b>	33	35	18	13
<i>2000 Election</i>	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>PC</i>	<i>NDP</i>	<i>Alliance</i>
<b>Newfoundland</b>	45	35	13	4
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	37	29	24	10
<b>PEI</b>	47	38	9	5
<b>New Brunswick</b>	42	31	12	16

Source: Elections Canada. Figures may not add up to 100 given the exclusion of some political parties in the calculations.

**Table 3**

Attitudes about Women/Feminism by Region					
	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	BC
Lack of women in H of C serious problem (very or quite serious)*	31 (119)	49 (342)	31 (527)	26 (257)	39 (190)
Best way to protect women's interest to have more women in Parliament (agree or strongly agree)*	52 (133)	60 (312)	47 (540)	39 (248)	53 (175)
Favour requiring equal number male and female candidates*	44 (108)	55 (327)	31 (495)	28 (234)	30 (180)
Much more or somewhat more should be done for women*	68 (290)	81 (914)	56 (1253)	56 (528)	58 (448)
Discrimination makes it difficult for women to get jobs equal to ability (agree or strongly agree)*	59 (140)	61 (330)	53 (537)	46 (258)	58 (176)
Sympathetic to feminism (very or quite sympathetic)*	68 (222)	75 (681)	64 (997)	58 (540)	66 (354)
Feminist movement tries to get equal treatment for women*	58 (144)	67 (345)	56 (576)	51 (268)	58 (188)
Feminist movement encourages women to be independent not selfish*	83 (145)	83 (344)	71 (581)	72 (269)	77 (189)

Note: entries are percentage for region; number of respondents appears in parentheses; some responses collapsed (see Appendix). All tables exclude Don't Know responses from the calculations except for the feminism questions in this table. For these three questions, Not sure/Depends responses were included in the calculations and coded as unfavourable towards feminism.

\* regional differences are significant at the p<.01 level.

**Table 4**

Attitudes on Moral Traditionalism by Region					
	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	BC
Only legally married people should have children (agree or strongly agree)*	33 (136)	12 (339)	30 (547)	45 (259)	32 (181)
Gays and lesbians should be allowed to get married (somewhat or strongly disagree)*	45 (283)	41 (862)	45 (1228)	52 (531)	44 (436)
Society better off if women home with children (strongly or somewhat agree)**	44 (283)	45 (905)	43 (1272)	52 (551)	50 (459)
Abortion should be difficult or impossible for women to get*	49 (216)	25 (677)	38 (956)	46 (423)	35 (348)
Country have fewer problems if more emphasis on traditional family values (agree or strongly agree)*	81 (142)	74 (329)	72 (565)	80 (264)	65 (183)
The world is changing and we should adapt view of moral behaviour (disagree or strongly disagree)*	58 (136)	30 (332)	61 (562)	60 (264)	50 (179)

Note: entries are percentages for region; number of respondents appears in parentheses; responses collapsed (see Appendix).

\* indicates regional differences significant at the p<.01 level; \*\* at p<.05 level.

Table 5

Attitudes to Capitalism by Region					
	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	BC
Don't get ahead blame self not system (strongly or somewhat agree) **	70 (233)	74 (681)	70 (1015)	76 (471)	70 (355)
If people really want to work, they can find a job (agree or strongly agree) **	78 (139)	84 (325)	80 (569)	84 (267)	77 (181)
When businesses make money, everyone benefits including the poor (strongly or somewhat agree) *	31 (234)	27 (694)	33 (1044)	36 (478)	47 (366)

Note: Entries are percentage for region; number of respondents appears in parentheses; responses collapsed.

\* indicates regional differences significant at the  $p < .01$  level; \*\* at the  $p < .05$  level.

Table 6

Attitudes on the Role of Government by Region					
	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	BC
Can't find work, should move to find a job (somewhat or strongly agree)*	67 (296)	51 (904)	68 (1288)	74 (567)	73 (450)
Welfare state makes people less willing to look after themselves (agree or strongly agree) *	68 (137)	50 (324)	65 (557)	78 (264)	69 (179)
Government should leave people to get ahead on their own *	15 (132)	14 (311)	29 (492)	40 (227)	28 (165)
Government should leave it entirely to private sector to create jobs (somewhat or strongly agree)*	39 (289)	61 (908)	38 (1278)	45 (555)	46 (457)

Note: Entries are percentages in each region; number of respondents appears in parentheses.

\* indicates regional differences significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

Table 7

Religious Beliefs and Views on Religion by Region					
	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	BC
Importance of religion in your life (important or very important)*	83 (295)	66 (932)	76 (1319)	77 (582)	66 (466)
The Bible is the word of God and is to be taken literally word for word (agree or strongly agree) *	31 (129)	17 (312)	20 (543)	25 (260)	16 (179)
Have confidence in organized religion (a great deal or quite a lot) *	60 (142)	59 (346)	44 (577)	40 (268)	31 (188)

Note: Entries are percentage for region; number of respondents appears in parentheses.

\* indicates regional differences significant at the  $p < .01$  level.