A Social Democratic Province?: An Examination of Saskatchewan Public Opinion in 2011-12

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Saskatchewan has long been viewed as possessing a unique form of social democratic politics that sets it apart from other Canadian provinces. Drawing on three separate academic surveys, the authors argue that Saskatchewan residents are in fact very centrist in their political values, while their policy positions depict less consistency. Moreover, Saskatchewan residents appear to hold values and support policy positions quite similar to those of residents of other Canadian provinces. This centrism means that Saskatchewan's political parties must be able to attract centrist voters while maintaining policies that motivate their social democratic or conservative electoral bases.

La Saskatchewan a longtemps été perçue comme possédant une forme unique de politique socio-démocrate qui la différencie des autres provinces canadiennes. À l'aide de trois sondages universitaires distincts, les auteurs font valoir que les résidents de la Saskatchewan ont en fait des valeurs politiques très centristes, bien que leurs positions de principes soient moins uniformes. De plus, les résidents de la Saskatchewan semblent détenir des valeurs et appuyer des positions de principes qui sont assez similaires à celles des résidents d'autres provinces canadiennes. Ce centrisme signifie que les partis politiques de la Saskatchewan doivent pouvoir attirer des électeurs centristes tout en maintenant des politiques qui motivent leurs bases électorales socio-démocrate et conservatrice.

Saskatchewan has traditionally been viewed as a strongly social democratic province (Wesley 2011; McGrane 2014). The vast majority of the literature that baptizes Saskatchewan as such, however, is qualitative in nature, and social democratic attitudes among the general public have yet to be academically assessed through survey data. These public attitudes are of interest now due to the electoral domination of the right-of-centre Saskatchewan Party in recent years, while several observers have noted that Saskatchewan politics has become more centrist and less "ideological" (Wishlow 2001, 178; Leeson 2008, 130-39). Given recent changes in Saskatchewan's political climate, and research pointing towards the province's embrace of the political centre, now is an opportune time to ask to what extent contemporary Saskatchewan public opinion reflects the prototypical social democratic attitudes historically associated with it.

Academic research on ideology and public opinion in provincial politics is rare, and most research of this nature is concentrated on federal politics (see Gidengil et al. 2013). As such, the extent to which Saskatchewan public opinion conforms to its conventional social democratic stereotype offers an important opportunity to assess the role that ideology plays in provincial public opinion not just in Saskatchewan but across Canada. Using original data from three separate academic surveys conducted in the four months following the 2011 Saskatchewan provincial election, this essay constructs a model of social democratic ideology that includes both values and policy positions. Analysis of this model illustrates that Saskatchewan residents are very centrist in their political values, while their policy positions display less consistency, falling at various points on the political spectrum. The research also shows that highly educated residents in Saskatchewan tend to lean towards left-of-centre policy positions and values while high-income residents generally favour right-of-centre policy positions and values. When we compared Saskatchewan residents with Canadians from other provinces, we found a public opinion structure that is quite similar. In the conclusion, we argue that the centrist nature of the Saskatchewan public's values means that political parties should be cognizant of the need to reach out to centrist voters while also motivating their electoral bases.

Before we launch into our analysis, it is important to make a distinction between public policies and public opinion. As we show below, most of the existing qualitative literature on social democracy and Saskatchewan assesses the public policy of Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) and New Democratic Party (NDP) governments (Lipset 1950; Richards and Pratt 1979; Johnson 2004; McGrane 2014). Unfortunately, historic public opinion polling in Saskatchewan does not exist, and so it is not possible to assess the extent to which the social democratic public policy enacted

during these time periods reflected public opinion. Rather, this essay looks at contemporary public opinion in Saskatchewan and how well it conforms to or deviates from what could be considered touchstones of social democratic ideology.

Defining Left Wing, Right Wing, and Social Democracy

Prior to defining the concept of *social democracy*, it is informative to examine the literature that aims to define *left* and *right* attitudes in Canadian public opinion. The earliest Canadian researchers of the subject were fascinated by how the general public understood the terms *left* and *right* (Laponce 1970, 1972; Ogmundson 1979), if the public could apply these terms correctly to Canadian federal parties (Elkins 1974; Lambert and Hunter 1979), and how perceptions of left and right affected voting patterns (Kay 1977; Zipp 1978). Noting public confusion about these terms, researchers began to explore the inability of citizens to understand the concepts of left and right and, subsequently, to place themselves correctly on the then-standard seven-point scale (1=very left, 7=very right). Researchers found this method of ideological self-placement insufficient, and instead identified the need for a battery of questions to discern degrees of left-wing and right-wing attitudes within Canadian public opinion (Ornstein et al. 1980; Lambert 1983; Lambert et al. 1986, 1988; Gibbins and Nevitte 1985; Langford 1991).

Following these initial studies of ideology in Canada, researchers became interested in how Canadian public opinion divided *new ideology* and *old ideology* (Nevitte, Bakvis, and Gibbins 1989; Nevitte 1996; Ornstein and Stevenson 1999; Nevitte et al. 2000; Blais et al. 2002; Nevitte and Kanji 2002, 2004, 2008; Henderson 2007a, 2007b, 2011; Gidengil et al. 2006; Nevitte and Cochrane 2007; Gidengil et al. 2012; Cochrane and Perrella 2013; McGrane and Berdahl 2013). *Old ideology* refers to respondents' views on economic issues and wealth redistribution through the welfare state. Within old ideology, a right-wing person might endorse minimal state intervention in the economy and favour a relatively streamlined welfare state, while a left-wing person might take the opposite positions. *New ideology* concerns so-called *post-materialist issues* that stress moral values, personal identity, and concern about the natural environment as opposed to debates over how to divide up the wealth generated through increased economic growth. People on the left display high levels of post-materialist attitudes, while people on the right display low levels. In this sense, people on the left tend to support feminism, concern themselves with discrimination against visible minorities, and express a willingness to sacrifice economic growth for environmental protection, while people on the right take opposing positions. Right-wing citizens generally support social conservatism's claims that the state should circumscribe citizens'

choices according to Christian morality, by, for example, banning practices like abortion, same-sex marriage, euthanasia, and marijuana use.[1] In contrast, left-wing citizens might endorse government legalization of these same practices, allowing diverse lifestyle choices. Those on the left would also favour solutions to crime that stress reducing inequality in society and promoting the rehabilitation of criminals, whereas right-wing people would focus more on stiffer punishments and increased policing. Thus, this literature established useful definitions of the characteristics that make a citizen right wing or left wing.

Using batteries of questions to test various aspects of old and new ideology—as opposed to ideological self-placement—researchers found that Canadians generally did organize their ideas in ideologically coherent ways. The measures of ideology that researchers have created hold together well and provide clues for understanding how people vote and why they identify with certain political parties. Further, despite widely differing national contexts, similar divisions between left and right in public opinion are found throughout the Western world (Felling and Peters 1986; Fleishman 1988; Middendorp 1992; Jacoby 1995; Heath, Evans, and Martin 1994; Cheng et al. 2012). Nevertheless, it is important to note that considerable debate remains surrounding the degree of internal consistency within citizens' ideologies and the extent to which citizens can simultaneously hold what may be considered left-wing and right-wing ideas (Scheepers, Eisinga, and Van Snippenburg 1992; Nevitte and Cochrane 2007; Ansolabehere, Rodden, and Snyder 2008; Achterberg and Houtman 2009; Ellis and Stimson 2009; Cochrane 2010). Research indicates that some citizens can hold left-wing views on measures concerning new ideology and right-wing views on measures concerning old ideology. The reverse is also true. Education and income can play a mediating factor here. Better-educated and higher-income individuals often lean to the left on post-materialism, but are suspicious of state intervention in the economy and generous spending on social programs, while lower-income and less-educated citizens often lean to the right on post-materialism, but are more inclined to support government intervention into the economy and social programs that smooth out wealth inequalities.

As with any ideology, the meaning of social democracy is contested and shifts over time and across political actors. In order to render it applicable to the case of public opinion in Saskatchewan, then, we must first define and operationalize prototypical social democratic attitudes. The seminal writers of the Fabians, Eduard Bernstein, Anthony Crosland, and Anthony Giddens are generally held to be representative of an archetypal version of social democratic ideology (Vaizey 1972; Barrientos and Powell 2004). Interestingly, the task of understanding social democratic ideology within the writings of these political theorists can be conceptualized using the themes of wealth

redistribution and post-materialism found in the above discussion of new and old ideology.

The Fabian Society and Eduard Bernstein produced the two foundational texts of social democracy at the end of the nineteenth century: *Fabian Essays in Socialism* (Shaw et al. 1889) and *The Preconditions of Socialism* (Bernstein [1899] 1993) respectively. On the issue of wealth redistribution, the Fabians established the core idea of social democracy that the free market must be restrained to ensure economic equality. For the Fabians, the concentration of wealth caused by the unfettered free market was responsible for the poverty of the labouring and middle classes. Their solutions included the regulation of monopolies, adequate labour standards, the encouragement of co-operatives and trade unions, investment in public works to employ those without jobs, a rudimentary welfare state, and the nationalization of monopolistic industries key to a country's industrial structure or essential public services. In addition to the solutions proposed by the Fabians, Bernstein argued that social democracy guarantees civil and minority rights, as well as economic rights, going beyond liberalism's political democracy (equal right to vote and be free from discrimination) to include social and economic democracy (equal right to an education, medical care, pensions, employment, and safe working conditions). The infusion of democracy with a desire for liberal human and civil rights would become a hallmark of social democracy.

The general prosperity of the postwar era and the establishment of a functioning welfare state in most Western countries produced some subtle revisions to the model of social democracy outlined by the Fabians and Bernstein. Anthony Crosland's *Future of Socialism* ([1956] 2006) best exemplifies this revision. Crosland argued that society's primary concern should be to ensure that the economic growth and high employment of the postwar period continue unabated in order to bring about full economic equality. Crosland advised social democrats to encourage economic growth through aggressive state intervention in the economy and mechanisms such as public subsidies to business. He further advised the British Labour Party to focus on what would now be termed *postmaterialist issues* that increase citizens' freedom, such as abortion, divorce, censorship, gay rights, civil rights, and protection from discrimination for minorities.

The end of the twentieth century brought yet another revision to social democratic ideology. In 1998, Anthony Giddens published *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*, which he followed up with other writings (2002, 2003) that further refined his ideas. Giddens was concerned that the unrestrained operation of the free market had created considerable additional economic and social inequality in Western countries. His solution charged the state with ensuring greater wealth redistribution and acting decisively to protect social and political rights. In terms of the welfare state, Giddens argued that social assistance should provide the resources (particularly

education) necessary for the poor to find jobs, but that the right to assistance from the state comes with the responsibility to make an effort to find employment. Like Crosland, Giddens also prescribed a more aggressive stance on post-material issues, including feminism, the environment, and multiculturalism. Although the third way represents a move to the political centre, Giddens argues that it still falls within the tradition of social democracy dating back to Bernstein and the Fabians because it preserves a vital role for the state in realizing these values. For Giddens, the third way is "social democracy, brought up to date and made relevant to a rapidly changing world" (2002, 78). Interestingly, similar claims have been made about the Romanow NDP government (1991-2001) in Saskatchewan. While some researchers question whether the Romanow government should be considered social democratic (Warnock 2004, 2005; C. Smith 2011), others have argued that Romanow followed a third way social democratic ideology that reacted to the external realities of globalization while remaining loyal to the original values of the Saskatchewan CCF-NDP (MacKinnon 2003; McGrane 2014).

Taken together, the work of these four theorists reveals certain key themes of social democratic ideology that can be grouped under the categories of old and new ideology. These themes relate to the political history of social democracy in Saskatchewan in so far as they reflect a package of social democratic public policies and political stances historically associated with the Saskatchewan CCF-NDP. First, under the rubric of old ideology, social democracy involves a commitment to wealth redistribution. State intervention in the economy through public ownership, regulation, and subsidies to private companies is needed to reduce economic inequalities created by the operation of the free market and to stimulate economic growth. This state intervention is coupled with a general mistrust of business as an obstacle to wealth redistribution, and a belief that strong unions are necessary for greater economic equality. At the same time, social democrats are generally committed to increasing personal and corporate taxes as a way to raise revenue and fund generous social programs. In Saskatchewan, the Douglas CCF government created several new crown corporations in the late 1940s, the Blakeney NDP government nationalized the potash industry in 1975, the Romanow NDP government created regional economic development authorities in the early 1990s, and the Calvert government passed the *Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act* in 2004 (McGrane 2014, 172). During the 1944 Saskatchewan provincial election, Tommy Douglas criticized eastern Canadian banks for foreclosing on Saskatchewan farmers; several times during his first mandate from 1971 to 1975, Allan Blakeney criticized potash companies for refusing to pay their "fair share" of taxes (McGrane 2014, 155; Burton 2014, 63-80); and in 2011 NDP leader Dwain Lingenfelter called for

higher potash royalties to pay for better social programs (McGrane et al. 2013, 4). Every CCF-NDP government in Saskatchewan history has begun its mandate by making changes to labour legislation favourable to unions (McGrane 2014, 116-18, 180-81). Finally, with respect to taxes, the Lloyd government increased corporate income, personal income, and sales taxes to pay for the costs of the new medicare system in 1962; the Blakeney government increased corporate income tax and personal income tax rates to pay for expansions to the provincial welfare state during the early 1970s (123), and the Romanow government paid down its deficit and reinvested in social programs by increasing corporate income taxes, personal income taxes, and sales taxes during its first budgets from 1991 to 1995 (McGrane 2011a, 95).

A second key theme of social democracy in regard to new ideology issues, is that social democracy displays a high degree of post-materialism. Social democracy demonstrates sympathy towards the discrimination faced by visible minorities, urges greater equality between men and women, and calls for enhancements to minority rights and tolerance for alternative lifestyle choices. At the same time, social democrats call on the state to play an important role in protecting the environment. Again, we see this theme play out in the Saskatchewan CCF-NDP context. Under these governments, Saskatchewan became the first Canadian province to pass human rights legislation in 1947, and to pass multiculturalism legislation (the Saskatchewan *Multiculturalism Act*) in 1974 (Patrias 2006; McGrane 2011b, 90-92). The Saskatchewan NDP also advocated for resource revenue sharing for First Nations Bands in the 2011 Saskatchewan provincial election in the face of strong opposition from the Saskatchewan Party (McGrane et al. 2013, 3). Although Saskatchewan CCF-NDP governments have hewed closer to a liberal (as opposed to radical) type of feminism, David McGrane (2014) argues that these governments have better records on promoting equality between men and women than other Saskatchewan provincial governments. On the environmental side, the Lloyd NDP government in 1963 was the first provincial government in Canada to lobby Ottawa on the issue of water conservation, the Blakeney government created one of the first departments of the environment in Canada in 1972 (172), and the Calvert government was praised for the administrative structures and plans it set in place to combat climate change in 2005 to 2007 (Bell and Patrick 2011).

Saskatchewan: A Social Democratic Province?

Although it is problematic to canonize an entire province as social democratic, both research that treats Saskatchewan as a stand-alone case and research that puts Saskatchewan in a comparative perspective often stress the importance of social democracy and the role of ideology in shaping the province's politics. Despite the fact that the Liberal Party was the natural governing party between 1905 and 1944 (O'Fee 2008, 189-91), researchers argue that social democratic ideology played a crucial role in the province's formative years. Several authors have analyzed the important effects the social democratic ideas of agrarian protest movements in Saskatchewan—such as the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association and the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section)—had on politics in the province from 1905 to the 1930s (Lipset 1950; Ward and Spafford 1968; D. Smith 1975; Laycock 1990; Wiseman 2007; McGrane 2014). This work depicts early Saskatchewan politics as a clash of conservative and social democratic ideologies, and analyzes the gradual rise of the CCF, founded in 1932, which grew out of farmers' movements in the province. In these studies, the success of the CCF is depicted as the triumph of social democratic ideology, and taken as proof of the strength of the province's social democratic political culture.

Studies of Saskatchewan politics after the election of the CCF in 1944 generally use social democracy as an organizing principle. Robert McLaren (1995, 1998) and Christopher Dunn (1995), for example, argue that the social democratic ideology of CCF-NDP governments resulted in Saskatchewan leading the country in terms of modernizing public administration structures during the postwar era. Others have analyzed the public policy of CCF-NDP governments according to how they embodied, and sometimes also failed to live up to, the ideological principles of social democracy (La Pierre et al. 1971; Richards and Pratt 1979; Harding 1995; Glor 1997; Houston 2002; Johnson 2004; Warnock 2004, 2005). Conversely, some scholars have criticized the public policies of Grant Devine's Progressive Conservative government (1982-91), and Brad Wall's Saskatchewan Party government (2007 to the present), for eschewing the social democratic tradition of Saskatchewan (Pitsula and Rasmussen 1990; Biggs and Stobbe 1991; McGrane 2011c). Both Jared Wesley (2011) and David McGrane (2014), for example, stress how the Saskatchewan CCF-NDP, both during elections and through public policies adopted while in government, created a distinctly social democratic political culture in Saskatchewan. In comparison with other Canadian provinces, such studies imply a strong social democratic strain in Saskatchewan's political culture and position the province as a national leader in social democratic public policy innovations (Poel 1976; Laycock 1990; Penner 1992; Conway 2006; Wiseman 2007; D. Smith 2010; McGrane 2014). The only account that runs counter

to this narrative belongs to Evelyn Eager (1980), who stresses that despite a strong tradition of supporting social democratic political parties, Saskatchewan politicians and voters are actually more pragmatic than ideological in their political views.

Recently, however, two resounding electoral victories by the Saskatchewan Party, and, in the 2011 provincial election, an NDP popular vote share that reached its lowest point since the Great Depression (McGrane et al. 2013), have called into question the social democratic character of the province. Relying on qualitative analysis, recent books and journal articles affirm the social democratic history of the province, but also advance the idea that Saskatchewan has begun to embrace a more centrist and less ideologically polarizing type of politics (Leeson 2001, 2008; Wishlow 2001; Rasmussen 2001; Eisler 2006; Parsons 2007; Porter 2009; Rayner and Beaudry-Mellor 2009). The underlying theme of this emerging body of qualitative research is that the unique social democratic nature of Saskatchewan has faded, and that Saskatchewan politics is now increasingly similar to politics in other provinces.

It is important to note that the literature that cast Saskatchewan as a social democratic province in the twentieth century has been generally qualitative in nature. In short, in these studies, Saskatchewan's agrarian protest movements and the electoral success and innovative public policies of the Saskatchewan CCF-NDP provide the evidence necessary to declare Saskatchewan social democratic. Unfortunately, no academic public opinion surveys were taken during these time periods. As such, while it may be possible to classify the public policies of Saskatchewan governments and the ideas of Saskatchewan political parties as social democratic, it is difficult to know if public opinion during these time periods followed suit.

The problem is not that research on Canadian provinces using quantitative data is scarce. In particular, researchers have examined provincial electoral returns, budgetary data, and economic indictors (e.g., Dunn 2006). Research using a particular type of quantitative data (survey data) relating to individual provinces (particularly the smaller provinces) is quite rare, however. Two recent exceptions to this paucity of provincial survey data have suggested that Saskatchewan public opinion is not that different from public opinion in Alberta and Manitoba (McGrane and Berdahl 2013, 9; Cochrane and Perrella 2013). Following up on these findings, our survey data, presented here, help to shed light on the extent to which Saskatchewan public opinion is social democratic in the early twenty-first century.

Prototypical Social Democratic Attitudes in Saskatchewan

In both academic and private sector national surveys, sample sizes for Saskatchewan are typically quite small and the province is usually merged into a larger region such as Western Canada, the Prairies, or Manitoba/Saskatchewan.[2] This essay seeks to understand the contours of contemporary Saskatchewan public opinion by taking advantage of a rare opportunity offered by three large academic surveys administered in the province at the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012: the Saskatchewan Election Study (SKES), the Comparative Provincial Election Project (CPEP) survey, and the Taking the Pulse (TTP) survey. Details of these surveys are contained in Appendix A. The main benefit of using three different surveys is that the number of questions included in our resulting model is consequently quite large. Indeed, any one of these surveys alone would not provide adequate coverage of the large number of subjects contained in our model of prototypical social democratic attitudes.

It should be noted that our model combines Internet-based survey data (CPEP) with traditional telephone survey data (SKES and TTP). Valid concerns exist about the representativeness of Internet-based surveys compared to telephone-based surveys. Internet-based surveys generally display an element of self-selection on the part of respondents, which means that they do not strictly conform to the rules of random sampling; however, recent research suggests that estimates derived from well-designed Internet-based surveys are comparable with those derived from telephone surveys (Ansolabehere and Schaffner 2014). As such, with reasonable caution, we have combined the three surveys into a single model.

Following the writings of the political theorists and historians of Saskatchewan discussed above, our model of social democratic ideology in Saskatchewan revolves around the concepts of wealth redistribution and post-materialism. Using the three surveys, we can measure prototypical Saskatchewan social democratic attitudes as of 2011-12. While inspired by political theory and existing Canadian literature on left–right ideology, our model is an original construction that encompasses contemporary Saskatchewan issues salient before and during the 2011 provincial election, taking into account the particularities of the Saskatchewan social democratic tradition. Its ability to quantify and define social democracy in other jurisdictions may be limited.

The model is based on political issues that have traditionally divided the Saskatchewan CCF-NDP from its political opponents, such as the monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board, labour legislation, natural resource royalties, and the privatization of crown corporations. Additionally, the model contains questions about the issues that defined the 2011 Saskatchewan election such as rent control, caps on childcare fees, and revenue sharing with First Nations bands. A key limitation of our model is the

absence of data on issues of deficit and debt, as unfortunately none of the three surveys asked respondents their views on these issues. While increased spending leading to deficits may be considered a part of social democratic ideology in some jurisdictions, Saskatchewan social democrats have traditionally shown an aversion to running deficits dating back to E.A. Partridge and the No Party League in 1913 (McGrane 2014, 122, 147). Given the unique role that ideas around deficit reduction have played in the history of social democracy in Saskatchewan, it would be interesting to examine current public opinion in the province on this issue.

Canadian public opinion researchers make a sharp distinction between *values* (i.e., the respondent's underlying beliefs) and *policy positions* (i.e., how a respondent feels about a specific public policy), and argue that the two concepts should not be conflated (Simeon and Blake 1980, 77-78; Anderson 2011, 448). Our analysis respects this distinction. In total, the model includes 18 different indicators of prototypical social democratic attitudes that encompass responses to 50 survey questions (see Appendix A). For ease of interpretation, responses are ordered so that lower-numbered responses represent more left-wing positions and higher-numbered responses represent more right-wing positions, recoded on a 0.0 to 1.0 scale. For instance, *strongly disagree* is recoded as 0.0, *somewhat disagree* is recoded as 0.25, *somewhat agree* is recoded as 0.75, and *strongly agree* is recoded as 1.0. Similarly, 0-100 scales are recoded as 0.0, 0.01, 0.02, and so on. Refused responses are excluded from the analysis and *don't know* responses are assigned a mid-point value of 0.5. Overall, then, the reported means can be interpreted as follows: 0.0 = most left-wing position, 0.5 = centre position, and 1.0 = most right-wing position.

Figure 1 depicts the mean values of the nine wealth redistribution indicators in our model: economic conservative values (three-question index); pro-union values (three-question index); anti-business values (three-question index); free market policy (six-question index); social policy (nine-question index); labour policy (single question); taxes/spending policy (single question); corporate taxation policy (single question); and personal taxation policy (single question).

As figure 1 demonstrates, Saskatchewan residents are quite centrist regarding wealth redistribution. On all three wealth-redistribution values indicators, Saskatchewan residents hover very close to the middle point of the scale. The only exception to this trend is a slight lean in Saskatchewan public opinion towards the social democratic value of government intervention in the economy. Greater variation appears, however, in attitudes towards wealth redistribution policies. Despite their centrist values, Saskatchewan residents lean towards left-of-centre positions when it comes to social policy and corporate taxation policy. In line with Fabian thinking on wealth redistribution, Saskatchewanians appear willing to increase corporate taxes to build
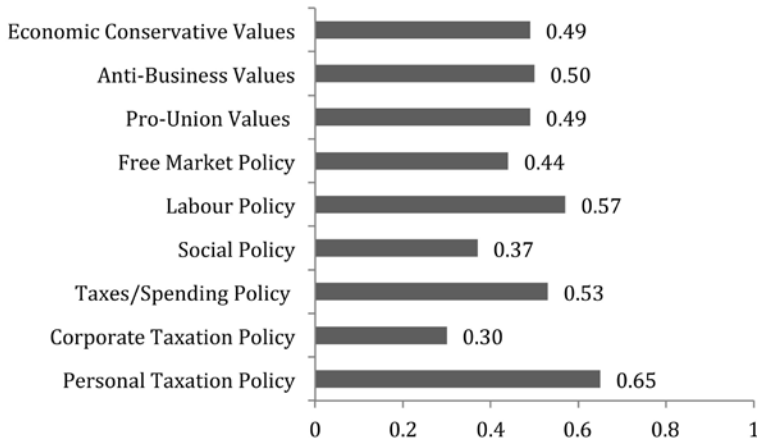
Fig. 1. Attitudes concerning wealth redistribution in Saskatchewan, 2011-12. Sources: Saskatchewan Election Study, Comparative Provincial Elections Project, and Taking the Pulse.

the provincial welfare state; however, public opinion on wealth redistribution policy is not consistently social democratic. Saskatchewan residents have very neutral values towards unions (0.49), and lean to the right when asked about controversial essential services legislation limiting the right of the public sector to strike (0.57). Attitudes towards taxation vary based on whether the respondent is asked to consider the consequences of tax reductions or types of taxes. Saskatchewan residents desire higher corporate taxation and lower personal taxes, but when asked if they would raise taxes to increase public services or cut public services in order to reduce taxes, they take a middle position (0.53).

Figure 2 reflects levels of post-materialism in Saskatchewan public opinion, measured according to nine indicators: social conservative values (five-question index); Aboriginal racial resentment values (two-question index); immigrant racial resentment values (single question); environmental values (two-question index); moral policy (five-question index); environmental spending policy (single question); crime policy (three-question index); immigration policy (single question); and Aboriginal policy (three-question index).

Figure 2 suggests that Saskatchewan residents are centrist with respect to post-materialist values. While values concerning Aboriginal peoples and social conservatism are slightly to the right-of-centre, at 0.56 and 0.57, these positions cannot be considered solidly right wing. As in the case of wealth redistribution, more variation
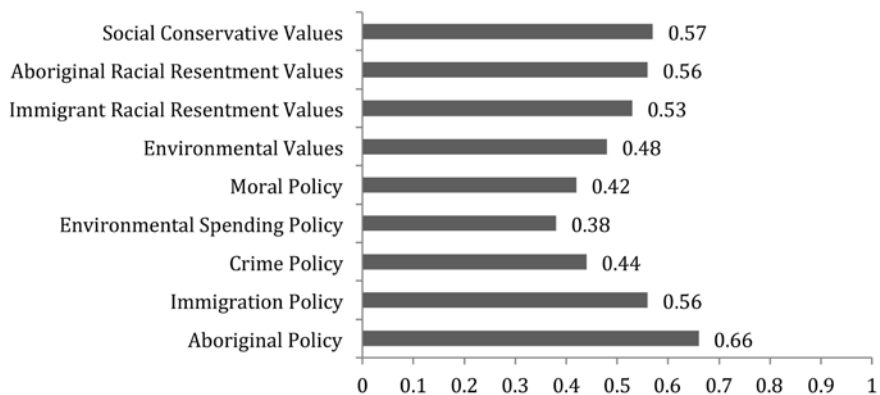
Fig. 2. Attitudes concerning post-materialism in Saskatchewan, 2011-12. Sources: Saskatchewan Election Study, Comparative Provincial Elections Project, and Taking the Pulse.

appears when we move from values to policy positions. Saskatchewan residents support more social democratic positions on environmental spending, moral policy, and crime policy, but are generally more right wing on policy positions concerning Aboriginal peoples and immigration.

Overall, the evidence contained in these three surveys suggests that Saskatchewan public opinion is not uniformly social democratic. When taken as a whole, Saskatchewan public opinion on values is centrist, but swings from social democratic to centrist to conservative on policy positions. Saskatchewan residents lean to the left on questions of social policy, corporate taxation, and environmental spending, and to the right on questions of personal taxation and Aboriginal policy. On other policies, scores do not stray far from the middle point of the scale.

The evidence suggests, then, that Saskatchewan citizens hold mixed ideologies. When we look at Saskatchewan public opinion as a whole, however, no apparent pattern emerges of how citizens mix old and new ideological categories across the left–right spectrum. On some new ideology measurements, such as environmental spending, moral policy, and crime policy, Saskatchewan public opinion leans left, but on other new ideology measurements, such as Aboriginal policy and levels of immigration, it leans right. Similarly, Saskatchewan public opinion falls to the left of some old ideology measurements, including social policy, corporate taxation, and state intervention in the economy, but to the right of other old ideology measurements, including

Table 1. OLS regression of Saskatchewan election study (2011)

	Aboriginal Policy b (SE)	Aboriginal Racial Resentment Values b (SE)	Immigrant Racial Resentment Values b (SE)	Labour Policy b (SE)	Feelings towards Unions' Values b (SE)	Free Market Policy b (SE)
Age	-0.0003 (0.0007)	0.0004 (0.0007)	0.0006 (0.0008)	-0.0007 (0.001)	-0.0002 (0.0005)	-.001 (0.0004)c
Income	0.02 (0.004)a	0.07 (0.004)	0.04 (0.04)	0.009 (0.006)	0.005 (0.003)	0.009 (0.003)b
Education	-0.02 (0.006)b	-0.03 (0.006)a	-0.04 (0.007)a	-0.02 (0.009)b	-0.01 (0.005)b	-0.009 (0.004)c
Female	0.02 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.02)	0.03 (0.03)	-0.03 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)
Rural	0.08 (0.02)a	0.08 (0.02)a	0.03 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)
Constant	0.62 (0.07)a	0.71 (0.07)a	0.74 (0.79)a	0.71 (0.10)a	0.59 (0.05)a	0.50 (0.46)a
R²	0.08	0.09	0.06	0.02	0.03	0.04
N	863	863	856	859	863	863

Note: a: p ≤ .001, b: p ≤ .01, c: p ≤ .05

Table 2. OLS regression of Comparative Provincial Elections Project (Saskatchewan only, 2011)

	Anti-business b (SE)	Economic Conservatism Values b (SE)	Personal Taxation b (SE)	Corporate Taxation b (SE)	Taxes Versus Spending b (SE)	Environmental Values b (SE)	Environmental Spending b (SE)	Social Conservatism Values b (SE)	Social Policy b (SE)
Age	0.0002 (0.0006)	0.0002 (0.0007)	-0.0007 (0.001)	-0.002 (0.001)	0.0002 (0.0008)	0.001 (0.0007)	0.002 (0.001)	0.0006 (0.0005)	0.0001 (0.0006)
Income	0.01 (0.003)b	0.01 (0.003)a	0.004 (0.005)	0.02 (0.005)b	0.007 (0.004)	0.01 (0.004)b	0.01 (0.004)b	0.003 (0.002)	0.02 (0.003)a
Education	-0.015 (0.005)b	-0.03 (0.006)a	-0.02 (0.008)a	-0.03 (0.01)b	-0.02 (0.007)c	-0.018 (0.006)b	-0.03 (0.007)a	-0.03 (0.004)a	-0.01 (0.005)
Female	0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.02)c	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.05 (0.01)a	-0.04 (0.02)c
Rural	0.03 (0.03)	0.07 (0.02)a	0.04 (0.03)	-0.001 (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)	0.04 (0.02)c	0.10 (0.03)a	0.08 (0.01)a	0.03 (0.02)
Constant	0.47 (0.48)a	0.46 (0.05)a	0.72 (0.07)a	-0.39 (0.09)a	0.55 (0.06)	0.43 (0.06)a	0.26 (0.069)a	0.62 (0.03)a	0.31 (0.05)a
Adjusted R²	0.04	0.09	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.07	0.08	0.21	0.09
N	674	677	672	668	612	676	668	676	677

Note: a: p ≤ .001, b: p ≤ .01, c: p ≤ .05

Table 3. OLS regression of Taking the Pulse (2012)

	Crime Policy b (SE)	Immigration Policy b (SE)	Moral Policy b (SE)
Age	-0.006 (.0006)	**-0.001 (0.0004)b**	0.0001 (0.0004)
Income	**0.01 (0.03)a**	**-0.005 (0.002)b**	-0.0006 (0.002)
Education	**-0.05 (0.005)a**	**-0.02 (0.003)a**	**-0.009 (0.004)c**
Female	-0.01 (0.02)	**0.07 (0.01)a**	-0.02 (0.01)
Rural	**0.09 (0.02)a**	**0.03 (0.01)b**	**0.10 (0.01)a**
Constant	**0.66 (0.05)a**	**0.72 (0.32)a**	**0.42 (0.04)a**
Adjusted R^2	0.09	0.09	0.05
N	1311	1304	1310

Note: a: $p \le .001$, b: $p \le .01$, c: $p \le .05$

essential services legislation and personal taxation. On still other indicators, both old and new, Saskatchewan public opinion falls close to the centre.

To what extent does this ideological mixing depend on socio-demographic characteristics like income and education? Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis of the 18 dependent variables in figures 1 and 2 provides some initial answers. The regression controlled for the following socio-demographic categories: age, income, education, sex, and urban/rural.[3] Results are presented in tables 1-3. For all variables, significant coefficients are in bold.

Our findings do not confirm research illustrating that high-income people and highly educated people are more left wing when it comes to new ideology measurements and more right wing when it comes to old ideology measurements. Indeed, our results suggest that citizens with higher education in Saskatchewan are more left wing on all of the indicators we examined except for social policy, while a higher income correlated to right-of-centre positions on both new ideology measurements (Aboriginal policy, environmental values, environmental spending, and crime policy) and old ideology measurements (free market policy, anti-business values, economic conservatism, corporate taxation, social policy). Only on immigration policy did a higher income correlate to a left-of-centre position (i.e., the province's annual immigrant intake). Importantly, then, income does not correlate to specific ideological positions on moral policy or social conservative values. Compared to education and income, other variables in the model had less impact on the ideological views of Saskatchewan residents. Age displayed statistical significance on only 2 of the 18 indicators; sex on 6 of the 18 indicators; and living in a rural area outside of Saskatoon and Regina on 8 of the 18 indicators.

How Social Democratic Is Saskatchewan Compared to Other Provinces?

To what extent are Saskatchewanians' attitudes similar to those of people from other provinces? To consider this question, we turn to a closer examination of the CPEP data. One limitation of relying on CPEP data for this exercise, however, is that the dataset does not yet include surveys from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Using data from Saskatchewan and the other seven provinces, then, we combined five values indicators (anti-business, economic conservatism, social conservatism, environmental values, and Aboriginal racial resentment[4]) and five policy indicators (social policy,[5] environmental spending, personal taxation, corporate taxation, and taxes versus spending) into a single scale. Within this scale, we weighted all indicators equally and assigned respondents a score from 0.0 to 10.0 with 0.0 being very left and 10.0 being very right. We then grouped respondents into five categories: left (those scoring 0.0-1.99 on the scale), left-of-centre (2.00-3.99), centre (4.00-5.99), right-of-centre (6.00-7.99), and right (8.00-10.0).
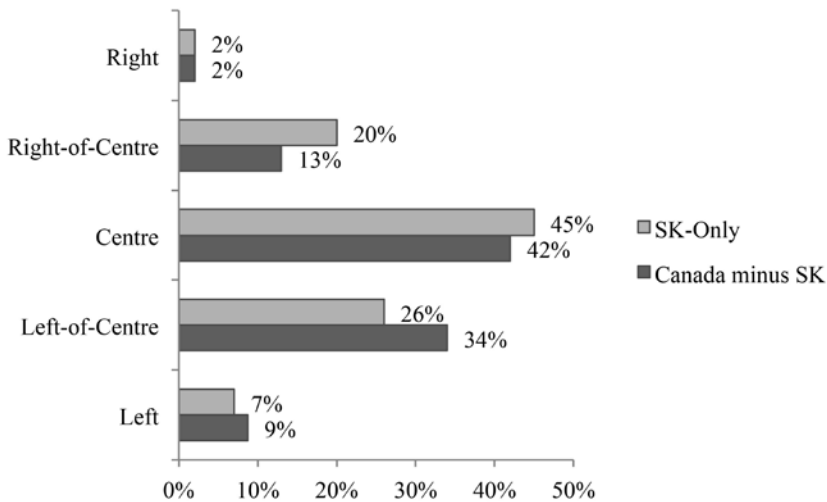

Fig. 3. CPEP Canada minus Saskatchewan (n = 5170) and CPEP Saskatchewan only (n = 720). Source: Comparative Provincial Elections Project.

Although our model is based on the experiences and history of social democracy in Saskatchewan, and so it is not directly transferable to other provinces or countries, the evidence in figure 3 nevertheless suggests that Saskatchewan residents do not have values or hold policy positions that are drastically different from those of Canadians living in other provinces. Canadians both inside and outside of Saskatchewan tend not to fall on the extremes of the spectrum, but closer to the middle. Indeed, a full 45% of Saskatchewan residents and 42% of residents of other Canadian provinces are centrists. Further, Saskatchewan seems to have slightly fewer left-of-centre citizens than the rest of Canada. While more research would have to be done to break down the CPEP dataset by province and to add data from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, our preliminary findings show that Saskatchewan residents are not distinguished as either particularly to the left or the right of Canadian norms.

Conclusion: Does Ideology Still Matter in Saskatchewan Politics?

Our analysis confirms the emerging body of research that suggests that Saskatchewan public opinion does not currently possess a unique and uniform social democratic character. Our modelling clearly shows that Saskatchewan public opinion expresses centrist political values and positions that can veer to the right or left. Looking specifically at the CPEP data, our analysis did not find any evidence that Saskatchewan public opinion is noticeably more left wing than that of other provinces in Canada.

Recent research has claimed that politics in Saskatchewan has become less "ideological" (Wishlow 2001; Leeson 2008; Rayner and Beaudry-Mellor 2009). This research portrays Saskatchewan political parties and voters as hovering around a mushy and ill-defined centre of the political spectrum and depicts ideology as increasingly unimportant. Does the fact that there is a strong centrism to Saskatchewan residents' values mean that ideology is unimportant in the province? We would suggest that this is not the case. The CPEP survey finds that 33% of Saskatchewan residents hold left or left-of-centre political beliefs / policy positions, and 22% of Saskatchewan residents hold right or right-of-centre political beliefs / policy positions. As such, both the NDP and the Saskatchewan Party have a natural base of voters whose ideology falls outside of the centre of the political spectrum. In an era of declining voter turnout in Saskatchewan, it is imperative that successful political parties identify and motivate their respective bases, and also reach out to voters in the centre.

Further, our results suggest that Saskatchewan residents have strong ideological positions on certain issues. A sense of social democracy endures in Saskatchewan public opinion regarding social policy, corporate taxation, state intervention in the economy, environmental spending, moral policy, and crime policy. At the same

time, however, Saskatchewan public opinion veers towards more conservative stances regarding Aboriginal policy, levels of immigration, essential services legislation, and personal taxation. Saskatchewan citizens are able to hold mixed ideologies, although we can identify no readily discernable pattern in how they combine new and old ideologies. Overall, then, our findings illustrate an ideological complexity in the Saskatchewan public rather than a declining importance of ideology in the province's politics. Indeed, ideology is not disappearing from Saskatchewan politics. The public opinion data gleaned from the three academic surveys analyzed here gives an appreciation of the current complexity of ideology in a province once thought to be uniformly social democratic.

Appendix A

The University of Saskatchewan Social Sciences Research Laboratory administered the Saskatchewan Election Study and contacted approximately 5,200 Saskatchewan residents between 8 November 2011 and 21 November 2011, resulting in 1,099 completed surveys. Results of the survey are generalizable to the Saskatchewan population (18 years of age and older) +/- 2.95% at the 95% confidence interval (19 times out of 20). Data are weighted according to age, gender, and region of residence according to the Canadian census. The Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy funded the survey, with additional support from LEAD Saskatoon, St. Thomas More College, and the University of Saskatchewan College of Arts and Science.

Abacus Data Research administered the Comparative Provincial Election Project (CPEP) in the weeks immediately after each province's provincial election: Newfoundland and Labrador on 12-30 October 2011 (n = 851); Prince Edward Island on 4-25 October 2011 (n = 509); Ontario on 7-31 October 2011 (n = 1,044); Manitoba on 5-31 October 2011 (n = 775); Saskatchewan on 8-21 November 2011 (n = 821); Alberta 25 on April-15 May 2012 (n = 897); Quebec on 5-29 September 2012 (n = 1,009); and British Columbia on 15-29 May 2013 (n = 803). Probability-based sampling techniques using comparable sample sizes would typically yield margins of errors of well below 5% for each provincial survey. Respondents were randomly selected from a randomly recruited hybrid Internet-phone panel that supports confidence intervals and error testing. In smaller provinces, where an Internet panel was unable to complete the required interviews, IVR-to-Web methodology (using interactive voice response and based on a random digit dial sample [RDD] that is drawn from a dual land-mobile frame) was used to complete the required numbers of interviews. The data for each province were weighted by gender, age, education, and region according to census data. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, offices of the Dean of

Arts and VP Research at the University of Prince Edward Island, and the Killam Trust at the University of Alberta funded the survey.

Taking the Pulse (n = 1,750) was administered by the University of Saskatchewan Social Sciences Research Laboratory between 5 March 2012 and 19 March 2012. Approximately 5,100 Saskatchewan residents were contacted, and 1,750 surveys were completed. Results of the survey are generalizable to the Saskatchewan population (18 years of age and older) +/- 2.34% at the 95% confidence interval (19 times out of 20). The University of Saskatchewan College of Arts and Science (Division of Social Sciences) funded the survey, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council funded research dissemination.

Taking the Pulse Survey

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Crime Policy (Alpha: 0.71)	Crime: Which of the following do you think would be the most effective way to reduce crime in Saskatchewan? Youth crime: Which of the following do you think would be the most effective way to reduce youth crime in Saskatchewan?	Crime and Youth crime: Increase rehabilitation, preventive programs, and restorative justice (such as sentencing circles) = 0 Increase policing and punishment (such as prison sentence) = 1
	Capital punishment: Canada should reintroduce capital punishment for people convicted of first-degree murder. Do you…?	Capital punishment: Strongly disagree = 0 Somewhat disagree = .33 Somewhat agree = .66 Strongly agree = 1
Immigration Policy	Immigration intake: In 2010, Saskatchewan took in approximately 7,500 immigrants. In your opinion, is the annual level of immigration in Saskatchewan?	Immigration Intake: Much too low = 0 Too low = .25 About right = .5 Too high = .75 Much too high = 1

Taking the Pulse Survey *continued*

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Moral Policy (Alpha: 0.72)	Same-sex: The federal government should continue to recognize same-sex marriages, giving them equal legal standing with traditional marriages. Do you...? Medical marijuana: Marijuana should be legal for medical purposes. Do you...? Recreational marijuana: Marijuana should be decriminalized for recreational purposes. Do you...? Euthanasia: People with terminal illnesses should be allowed to legally access doctor-assisted suicides. Do you...? Abortion: Abortion is a matter of choice that should be decided between a woman and her doctor. Do you...?	Same-sex, Medical marijuana, Recreational marijuana, Euthanasia, and Abortion: Strongly agree = 0 Somewhat agree = .33 Somewhat disagree = .66 Strongly disagree = 1

Saskatchewan Election Study

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Aboriginal Policy (Alpha: 0.75)	Aboriginal universities: Aboriginal peoples should have their own publicly-funded universities and colleges. Do you...? Do more for Aboriginals: Governments should do more for Saskatchewan's Aboriginal peoples. Do you...? Resource revenue sharing: Aboriginal people should receive their own separate share of Saskatchewan's natural resource royalties. Do you...?	Aboriginal universities, Do more for Aboriginals, and Resource revenue sharing: Strongly agree = 0 Somewhat agree = .33 Somewhat disagree = .66 Strongly disagree = 1

Saskatchewan Election Study *continued*

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Aboriginal Racial Resentment (Alpha: 0.59)	Prejudice: German, Ukrainian, and other immigrants to Saskatchewan overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Aboriginals should do the same without any special favours. Do you...?	Prejudice: Strongly disagree = 0 Somewhat disagree = .33 Somewhat agree = .66 Strongly agree = 1
	Discrimination: Generations of discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Aboriginals to work their way out of the lower class. Do you...?	Discrimination: Strongly agree = 0 Somewhat agree = .33 Somewhat disagree = .66 Strongly disagree = 1
Immigrant Racial Resentment	Too many immigrants: Too many recent immigrants just don't want to fit into Canadian society. Do you...?	Too many immigrants: Strongly disagree = 0 Somewhat disagree = .33 Somewhat agree = .66 Strongly agree = 1
Labour Policy	Essential services: The provincial government recently passed a law allowing public sector employers, such as hospitals and universities, to declare all or most of their staff to be essential and not allowed to strike. From what you have heard, do you favour, oppose?	Essential services: Oppose = 0 Neither favour or oppose = .5 Favour = 1
Feelings towards Unions (Alpha: 0.77)	Unions too much: All things considered, unions in Saskatchewan generally ask for too much. Do you...?	Unions too much: Strongly disagree = 0 Somewhat disagree = .33 Somewhat agree = .66 Strongly agree = 1
	Strong unions: Strong unions are needed to protect employees' working conditions and wages. Do you...?	Strong unions: Strongly agree = 0 Somewhat agree = .33 Somewhat disagree = .66 Strongly disagree = 1
	Strike sympathies: When you hear of a strike, are your sympathies typically always for the union, usually for the union, usually against the union, or always against the union?	Strike sympathies: Always for the union = 0 Usually for the union = .33 Usually against the union = .66 Always against the union = 1

Saskatchewan Election Study *continued*

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Free Market Policy (Alpha: 0.60)	Privatize crowns: Saskatchewan should privatize some of its crown corporations. Do you...?	Privatize Crowns: Strongly disagree = 0, Somewhat disagree = .33 Somewhat agree = .66 Strongly agree = 1
	Royalties: In your opinion, should natural resource royalties be increased, decreased, or kept about the same as now?	Royalties: Increased = 0, Kept same = .5, Decreased = 1
	Wheat Board: Do you Favour or Oppose the Canadian Wheat Board's monopoly on selling prairie wheat, durum, and barley, or do you have no opinion on this matter?	Wheat Board: Favour = 0, No opinion = .5, Oppose = 1
	Labour standards: People often have different ideas about labour standards. Which of the following two statements comes closest to your own opinion?	Labour Standards: We should maintain our own labour standards = 0 We should make it easier for qualified workers from other provinces to work in Saskatchewan = 1
	Business regulations: People also have different ideas about business regulations. Which of the following two statements comes closest to your own opinion?	Business Regulations: We should maintain our current business regulations = 0 We should make it easier for business from other provinces to operate in Saskatchewan = 1
	Hospitals: Do you favour or oppose having some private hospitals in Saskatchewan?	Hospitals: Oppose = 0 Favour = 1

Comparative Provincial Elections Project

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Anti-Business (Alpha: 0.77)	Banks: Using a 100-point scale, where zero means that you really dislike the country, province, or group and 100 means that you really like it, how do you feel about the following? Banks...	Banks and Corporations: Left = 0 Right = 1
	Corporations: Using a 100-point scale, where zero means that you really dislike the country, province or group and 100 means that you really like it, how do you feel about the following? Corporations...	
	Big business: Please indicate how much confidence you have in the following institutions. Big business...	Big business: A lot of confidence: 1 Some confidence: .66 Not a lot of confidence: .33 No confidence at all: 0
Economic Conservatism (Alpha: 0.62)	Regulations: Government regulation stifles personal drive.	Regulation and Blame themselves: Strongly agree: 1 Somewhat agree: .66 Somewhat disagree: .33 Strongly disagree: 0
	Blame themselves: People who don't get ahead should blame themselves, not the system.	
	Standard of living: Government should see that everyone has a decent standard of living.	Standard of living: Strongly agree: 0 Somewhat agree: .33 Somewhat disagree: .66 Strongly disagree: 1
Personal Taxation	Personal tax: Should personal income taxes be increased, decreased, or kept about the same as now?	Personal tax: 0 = Increased .5 = Kept the same 1 = Decreased
Corporate Taxation	Corporate tax: And corporate taxes should they be increased, decreased, or kept about the same as now?	Corporate Tax: 0 = Increased .5 = Kept the same 1 = Decreased
Taxes versus Spending	Tax/Spend: Please indicate where on this scale you would place yourself: 0 = Favours raising taxes to increase public services. 10 = Favours cutting public services to cut taxes.	Tax/Spend: Left = 0 Right = 1

Comparative Provincial Elections Project *continued*

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Environmental Values (Alpha: 0.63)	Environmentalists: Using a 100-point scale, where zero means that you really dislike the country, province, or group and 100 means that you really like it, how do you feel about the following? Environmentalists...	Environmentalists: Left = 0 Right = 1
	Environment versus jobs: Protecting the environment is more important than creating jobs.	Environment versus Jobs: Strongly agree: 0 Somewhat agree: .33 Somewhat disagree: .66 Strongly disagree: 1
Environmental Spending	Green spending: Should YOUR PROVINCIAL government spend more, less, or about the same as now the following areas? The environment...	Green spending: Spend more = 0 Spend the same = .5 Spend less = 1
Aboriginal Racial Resentment (Used only in Figure 3)	Not trying: It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Aboriginals would only try harder they could be just as well off as everyone else.	Not trying: Strongly agree: 1 Somewhat agree: .66 Somewhat disagree: .33 Strongly disagree: 0

Comparative Provincial Elections Project *continued*

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Social Conservatism (Alpha: 0.66)	Gays and lesbians: Using a 100-point scale, where zero means that you really dislike the country, province, or group and 100 means that you really like it, how do you feel about the following? Gays and lesbians...	Gays and lesbians, the Military, and Feminists: Left = 0 Right = 1
	Military: Using a 100-point scale, where zero means that you really dislike the country, province, or group and 100 means that you really like it, how do you feel about the following? The military...	
	Feminists: Using a 100-point scale, where zero means that you really dislike the country, province, or group and 100 means that you really like it, how do you feel about the following? Feminists...	
	Equal opportunities: Society has reached the point where women and men have equal opportunities for achievement.	Equal Opportunities: Strongly agree: 1 Somewhat agree: .66 Somewhat disagree: .33 Strongly disagree: 0
	Moral behaviour: The world is always changing and we should adapt our view of moral behaviour to these changes.	Moral Behaviour: Strongly agree: 0 Somewhat agree: .33 Somewhat disagree: .66 Strongly disagree: 1

Comparative Provincial Elections Project *continued*

Indicator	Question(s)	Coding
Social Policy (Alpha: 0.80)	Welfare: Should YOUR PROVINCIAL government spend more, less, or about the same as now the following areas? Welfare...	Welfare, Health, K-12 education, Post-secondary: Spend more = 0 Spend same = .5 Spend less = 1
	Health: Should YOUR PROVINCIAL government spend more, less, or about the same as now the following areas? Health care...	
	K-12 Education: Should YOUR PROVINCIAL government spend more, less, or about the same as now the following areas? K-12 education...	
	Post-secondary: Should YOUR PROVINCIAL government spend more, less, or about the same as now the following areas? Post-secondary education...	
	Universality: Please indicate where on this scale you would place yourself: 0 = Advocates that government should provide universal free health care. 10 = Advocates that medical expenses should be paid by individuals and private insurance plans.	Universality: 0 = Left 1 = Right
	Childcare: The Saskatchewan government should cap childcare fees.	Childcare, Landlords, Tuition, Utility: Strongly agree: 0 Somewhat agree: .33 Somewhat disagree: .66 Strongly disagree: 1
	Landlords: The Saskatchewan government should control the maximum rents that landlords can charge.	
	Tuition: The Saskatchewan government should freeze university and college tuition fees.	
	Utility: The Saskatchewan government should ensure that residents pay the lowest public utility rates in Canada.	

NOTES

1. For a definition of social conservatism see Farney (2012).

2. One academic survey of note is a 2003 post-election survey of Saskatchewan residents, which did not examine ideology (Cutler 2008). Polling firms have been active in the province performing non-academic analysis for media outlets, governments, and political parties since the 1980s. Analysis of these non-academic, private sector polls to construct an historical account of the evolution of Saskatchewan public opinion is beyond the scope of this essay.

3. For all three surveys, age is provided in years and sex is assigned the values female = 1 and male = 0. For all three surveys, urban is defined as Regina and Saskatoon, and all residents living outside of these two major centres are defined as rural according to the coding 1 = Not a resident of Regina or Saskatoon, 0 = Resident of Regina or Saskatoon. For the Saskatchewan Election Study and the Taking the Pulse survey, income categories are as follows: 1 = Less than $20,000, 2 = $20,000 to less than $30,000, 3 = $30,000 to less than $40,000, 4 = $40,000 to less than $50,000, 5 = $50,000 to less than $60,000, 6 = $60,000 to less than $70,000, 7 = $70,000 to less than $80,000, 8 = $80,000 to less than $90,000, 9 = $90,000 to less than $100,000, 10 = $100,000 or more. In the Comparative Provincial Election Study, income categories are as follows: 1 = less than $20,000, 2 = between $20,000 and $30,000, 3 = between $30,000 and $40,000, 4 = between $40,000 and $50,000, 5 = between $50,000 and $60,000, 6 = between $60,000 and $70,000, 7 = between $70,000 and $80,000, 8 = between $80,000 and $90,000, 9 = between $90,000 and $100,000, 10 = more than $100,000. In the Saskatchewan Election Study and the Taking the Pulse survey, education categories are as follows: 1 = No schooling, 2 = Some elementary school, 3 = Completed elementary school, 4 = Some secondary / high school, 5 = Completed secondary / high school, 6 = Some technical or community college, 7 = Completed technical or community college, 8 = Some university, 9 = Bachelor's degree, 10 = Master's degree, 11 = Professional degree or doctorate. In the Comparative Provincial Election Study, education categories are as follows: 1 = Some elementary school / secondary / high school, 2 = Completed secondary / high school, 3 = Some technical, community college, 4 = Completed technical, community college, 5 = Some university, 6 = Bachelor's degree, 7 = Master's degree, 8 = Professional degree or doctorate. In Taking the Pulse, education categories are as follows: 1 = No Schooling, 2 = Some elementary school, 3 = Completed elementary school, 4 = Some secondary / high school, 5 = Completed secondary / high school, 6 = Some technical or community college, 7 = Completed technical or community college, 8 = Some university, 9 = Bachelor's degree, 10 = Master's degree, 11 = Professional degree (e.g., law degree, medical degree), 12 = Doctorate.

4. The Aboriginal racial resentment indicator rests on a question that asked respondents how much they agreed with the following statement: "It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Aboriginals would only try harder they could be just as well off as everyone else."

5. To allow cross-Canada comparison, the social policy indicator excludes four CPEP questions that were asked only in Saskatchewan regarding caps on tuition, child-care fees, public utilities rates, and rent.

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