

### 3 Social capital in a multicultural society

#### The case of Canada

Richard Johnston and Stuart N. Soroka\*

#### The argument

Is diversity the enemy of civil society? Some formulations of the notion of social capital imply an affirmative answer to this question, an answer that shows the dark side of social integration and trust. By our reading, diversity can be argued to undermine the delicate fabric of civil society in two ways.

The first is *compositional*. Some groups are more 'civic' than others, more prone to participate in social life, more trusting of each other and, perhaps, of strangers. These group differences endure transoceanic migration and the passage of time and generations. If groups that are less 'civic' by this standard move into turf formerly dominated by more civic groups, the overall balance in social capital account may shrink. This claim is rooted in history, of course, so we can well imagine a low civil-society place being enriched by the influx of new, more mobilized groups. A strong form of the argument, however, says that getting a settler society off the ground requires high levels of civic commitment. We might then find a relationship between civic commitment and order of arrival.

The second argument is *contextual*. This says that rendering a place more heterogeneous makes hitherto dominant groups themselves less civic, whatever their earlier degree of civic commitment. If heterogeneity inhibits older groups' identification with the evolving community, they may withdraw, behaviourally and psychologically, from its institutions.

Both arguments are relevant to Canada, and Canada is arguably the prime site for testing them. For several years, Canada has maintained a relatively open-door immigration policy. Moreover, the country has become ethnically more diverse and has done so in waves. The country also harbours long-standing struggles among ethnically distinct 'founding peoples', *national minorities* in Kymlicka's (1995) terminology.

Both arguments assume that social capital's social psychological components – trust and other civic orientations – generalize, that learning, positive or negative, in one domain transfers to others. Interpersonal trust can be cashed in on support for the political system or the nationality. Conversely, policies that keep groups apart locally – confessional schools anciently, multi-

culturalism currently – may undermine the cohesion of the nationality or the political community. If this is true, Canadians may exhibit a limited and conditional sense of community, and certain groups may do so more than others. But claims for generalization across civic domains are mostly supposition. As this generalization is a vital step in both the compositional and the contextual arguments, we begin by examining the matter directly.

#### The argument expanded

##### *Social capital*

Social capital means two different things and we consider both. The first reading emphasizes connections, or networks. These can be primary ties of kin or neighbours, but the political science literature seems to place special emphasis on formal memberships in secondary groups. Connections can obviously be important resources for individual or family welfare, and this seems to be the social-capital emphasis among sociologists (Coleman 1990). For political scientists and economists, connections betoken the frequency of interaction, which in turn affects the likelihood that collective action problems will be solved. Second, social capital is a psychological property. Here it appears as trust, first in other private citizens, then in institutions, and finally in communities, possibly including the nationality. This chapter, then, considers *membership* and *civic orientations*.

Most of the time, social capital is treated as essentially homogeneous. Each specific element – civic engagement, interpersonal trust, political trust, love of country – bears the same functional relationship to causal factors as each other one. Orientations generalize, presumably from the most particular, trust in other individuals, on up. The interpersonal trust that greases the wheels of economic transactions is highly similar to the trust in political institutions that might be a precondition for supporting the welfare state.<sup>1</sup>

Between any pair of elements, generalization can proceed in either direction. For example, trust in other individuals may be a precondition for trust in more remote institutions. But interpersonal trust may itself be contingent on attributes of the larger society. Brehm and Rahn (1997), for instance, find with US data that confidence in government is powerfully implicated in interpersonal trust, not the opposite. Muller and Seligson (1994) find that a country's years of experience with democracy is a powerful predictor of its average score on the interpersonal trust measure.<sup>2</sup> Rothstein (1998) argues that the very universality of the universal welfare state creates its own support. All these arguments echo Levi (1996), who argues that justice in overarching institutions helps unlock cooperative possibilities in local settings.

If generalization across the social capital domain seems ubiquitous in theory, reflection on the Canadian experience makes us ask if each object of orientation also attracts its own functional relationships, such that causal

connections are actually rather slack. Where the political community is divided, groups or subcommunities which are internally cohesive may none the less see the state as an instrument of other groups and so reject its claims. Then again, the claims of the state and the claims of political nationality may be quite distinct. Johnston (1986) found, for instance, that Quebeckers expressed more confidence than others in the national government even as they identified less with Canada as a national community. This discussion takes us to group differences and the compositional argument.

### ***The compositional argument***

The compositional argument sees all kinds of social capital as cultural attributes, not necessarily difficult to shed but certainly hard to acquire. This is the view in Putnam's celebrated *Making Democracy Work* (1993). According to Putnam, the performance of Italian regional governments reflects more the density of social capital than the level of economic development in the region. And present-day inter-regional differences in social capital echo old patterns: 'One could have predicted the success or failure of regional government in Italy in the 1980s with extraordinary accuracy from patterns of civic engagement nearly a century earlier' (150).

Putnam's argument is reminiscent of Banfield's (1958) work on the relationship between economic/political performance and culture. Banfield characterized the southern Italian culture as 'amoral familism', and went on to speculate that 'there is some reason to doubt that the non-Western cultures of the world will prove capable of creating and maintaining the high degree of organization without which a modern economy and democratic political order are impossible' (8). Drawing such a conclusion at the start of the 1960s, the 'development decade' was unwelcome, but for Italy at least Putnam seems to bear Banfield out.

And the idea is spreading. This congenital view of social capital exists explicitly or implicitly in much recent work linking social capital with either political or economic performance. Inglehart's (1988, 1997) work on the relationship between civic culture and countries' years of democracy stands as one well-known example.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Helliwell's (1996b) proposal that different growth rates in Asian economies may be linked to variations in social capital is implicitly premised on this model. According to Fukuyama (1995), the centrality of the family in Chinese culture explains why that country has, on one hand, a mercantile history but, on the other, has been unable to develop large, economically successful corporations. The Japanese, conversely, have typically developed close ties beyond the family, and this helps build the social capital required for industrial capitalism. Fukuyama's cultural explanation is only loosely tied to evidence, and his disregard for the impact of the countries' laws on economic development has drawn criticism (Fellmeth 1996). Nevertheless, his argument exemplifies a compositional model.<sup>4</sup>

The compositional argument takes a special form for societies built by large-scale immigration. For example, Verba *et al.* (1995) find abiding ethno-religious differences in civic engagement. In comparison with Anglo-Whites, African Americans are slightly less active and Latinos are significantly less active in both political and non-political organizations (with the exception of religious groups and church attendance). That these patterns reflect abiding differences in 'old-country' patterns is strongly suggested by Rice and Feldman (1997), who find that US respondents' scores across a number of civic culture variables are strongly correlated with the scores of respondents from their country of origin. Living in the US has only a mild homogenizing effect on respondents' civic culture, as significant origin-related differences remain, even controlling other demographic variables. Rice and Feldman's findings correspond to Helliwell's (1996a) identification of Canadian and American inter-regional differences in social capital. Helliwell suggests that the increase in social capital from the south to north-central US, and from east to west in Canada, may be a product of the inhabitants' countries of origin. The high civic scores in the north-central US, for instance, may largely be due to the sizeable Scandinavian population. In a specifically Canadian study, Black (1987) found in a four-group immigrant-native matched-sample design that group differences in civic engagement overwhelmed immigrant-native ones, a classic compositional pattern.

It is a harsh story that group and regional differences in social capital persist indefinitely. An even harder story in a multicultural setting might be that *order of arrival* matters, with earlier groups more civic than later ones. This could result from either of two processes. Earlier groups may exclude later ones from civil society, and the exclusion could be more effective the more 'civil' earlier groups are. Alternatively, the civic commitment of earlier groups may be a practical requirement to launch a settler society. Only later can that society, as it were, indulge groups that are less participant, less civic. An argument like this appears in Wilson and Banfield (1971).<sup>5</sup>

### ***The contextual argument***

The contextual model of social capital is more shadowy, and requires identification by triangulation. An elegant statement can be found in Miller (1995). Miller is concerned to salvage the idea of nationality for liberal theory, which is normally hostile to particularistic and history-based claims. He argues that liberals, especially on the left, should accept that for many people identification with fellow citizens facilitates solutions to the aforementioned collective-action problems. Love of country helps underpin the welfare state, for example. But ethnically homogeneous countries are, he argues, easier to love, and so he is sceptical of the prospects for a place like Canada. Miller's empirical referents are thin, however.<sup>6</sup>

But then, the total body of evidence directly on the question is also thin. Rather than addressing the claim directly, the literature brackets it, so to speak. On the one hand is evidence on contact and ethnic prejudice. On the other is work on the relationship between diversity and the size of the state, particularly the welfare state.

On contact and ethnic prejudice, Forbes (1997) seems to be the definitive review of the relevant evidence. Although in any setting individuals who regularly come in contact with members of other ethnic groups are less prejudiced than those who keep apart, the relationship is the opposite in the aggregate. The more likely such contact is, the greater the average level of prejudice. As contact threatens groups' distinctiveness, greater investments are made in maintaining that distinctiveness.<sup>7</sup> And the likelihood of inter-group contact is greater the more ethnically diverse is the setting. Forbes review appears to substantiate Lehning's (1998) contention that, 'the greater the number and diversity of persons in a group, the more that universalistic norms require altruism, and yet – at the same time – the weaker the force of altruism' (238).

At the other end of the chain of evidence is research on the relationship between ethnic diversity and public spending. McCarty (1993), for instance, finds that countries with higher levels of ethnic diversity tend to spend a lower proportion of their GDP on social security and welfare programmes. Alesina *et al.* (1997) also find an inverse relationship between ethnic fragmentation and public spending on both welfare and public goods among US states.<sup>8</sup>

Is the density of social capital the key intervening variable, as Miller argues? Putnam (1995b), for one, resists such suggestions. He rejects the idea that the US civil rights revolution precipitated a 'white flight' from group life. Group memberships have declined evenly for blacks, pro-segregationist whites, and anti-segregationist whites, suggesting to Putnam that racial explanations cannot account for the decline in American social capital (672-3). It is not clear that this pattern goes to the issue raised by logic of a contextual model. And Helliwell (1996a) could be marshalled for the other side. He finds that respondents who identify themselves as belonging to a particular ethnic group – as opposed to simply 'American' or 'Canadian' – score lower on social capital measures, suggesting that, 'trust levels are lower where perceived cultural cleavages are stronger' (11). Neither reference is clearly on the question, however, so we shall have to look for ourselves.

### Data and measures

What orientations? What groups? What contexts? We use data from the Canadian World Values Survey (WVS), 1991.<sup>9</sup> The WVS has strong representation for civic orientations and for memberships, and for this reason has

already performed yeoman service in social-capital analyses.<sup>10</sup> Its weakness is in identification of groups.

### Social capital

*Memberships* are measured here by WVS questions about sixteen different types of organizations, from political parties to social welfare groups to professional associations. Unfortunately, the number of memberships in any given category was not recorded – only whether a respondent was or was not a member in any number of organizations of a given type. The *total memberships* variable used here, then, is a sum total of the number of different *types* of memberships to which a respondent belongs.<sup>11</sup> It ranges from 0 to 16.

Six items correspond to the civic orientations of obvious interest: (1) interpersonal trust; (2) trust in government; (3) confidence in parliament; (4) confidence in the Canadian political system; (5) national pride; and (6) willingness to fight in a war.<sup>12</sup> Do the items hang together, or are there clearly distinguishable subtypes? The simplest way to answer this is to enter the six indicators into a factor analysis, whose results appear in Table 3.1.

Three distinct dimensions are required to account for civic orientation:<sup>13</sup>

- *Interpersonal trust* – 'Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?' – stands by itself. This is very hard to square with the notion that people reason from personal relationships to more distant ones.
- The second factor makes sense logically and empirically, as it includes the item on 'trust' in government and the items gauging 'confidence' in

Table 3.1 The structure of civic orientations in Canada

|  | Components  |             |
|--|-------------|-------------|
|  | 1           | 2           |
| Interpersonal trust                    | 0.12        | 0.23        |
| Trust in government                    | <b>0.76</b> | 0.06        |
| Confidence – parliament                | <b>0.81</b> | 0.08        |
| Confidence – Canadian political system | <b>0.79</b> | 0.14        |
| National pride                         | 0.14        | <b>0.74</b> |
| Willing to fight in war                | -0.11       | <b>0.80</b> |

Note  
 Entries are factor loadings (Principle Components Analysis; Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization).

Parliament and the Canadian political system. These are combined as an indicator of *political trust*.

- The third factor includes the two indicators of commitment to Canada as a country, pride in being Canadian and willingness to fight in the event of war. These two items form an index of *national pride*.

Each civic orientation measure is rescaled to the 0,1 interval.

### Groups

The compositional hypothesis requires grouping by ethnicity, ideally by ethnic origin of the earliest North American ancestors, the standard census item. Unfortunately, the WVS employs a very simple code, apparently with cross-national comparison in mind. We start with a base question which asks respondents to designate themselves as French or English Canadian, as an 'ethnic' Canadian, Canadian first and then some other group, or Canadian first and only. We then combine this question with a racial imputation by interviewers and language of interview to create four categories:

- *French* are either self-designated as such, or were interviewed in that language. The language of interview was included because many Francophones did not identify themselves as French Canadians.<sup>14</sup> Of these respondents, 97 per cent were Canadian-born, and 82 per cent were interviewed in Quebec.
- *Non-white* is based strictly on interviewer coding. Of the respondents, 5.5 per cent were coded as something other than 'white'. Slightly more than 70 per cent of 'non-white' respondents were born outside Canada – by far the highest proportion of the four ethnic groups – and these foreign-born respondents tend also to be relatively recent immigrants. The majority of these respondents are either East or South Asian, with Blacks and Latinos as other small minorities. They, along with 'white ethnic' (see next paragraph) respondents, tend to be slightly better educated than average.
- Respondents coded as *white ethnic* were coded 'white' by interviewers, but designated themselves as either 'ethnic Canadian' or 'Canadian first and then a member of an ethnic group'. This category includes slightly over 15 per cent of the respondents. Immigrants constitute 37 per cent of this group, although most immigrants arrived more than 15 years before the survey was conducted.
- *White non-ethnic* is the residual category. These respondents were coded 'white' by interviewers, identified themselves as either 'English Canadian' or 'Canadian first and only', and answered surveys in English. About 88 per cent were born in Canada, and the majority of the foreign-born immigrated over 15 years before the study.

### Context

The best we can do for ethnic *context* in the WVS is a combination of province of residence and an urban/rural dichotomy. For provinces, we employ the standard five-region setup: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies, and British Columbia. If contextual arguments hold any water in Canada, Ontario and BC should stand out. Whatever the ethnic-group differences on social capital, the social diversity of these two provinces should give them lower readings than in a straight adding-up based on their ethnic composition. Differences should be even more apparent when respondents from these provinces are divided into urban and rural groups – higher ethnic diversity in urban areas should, according to the contextual hypothesis, curtail investment in social capital.

### Results

We look at the data using a simple two-way comparison of membership and civic-orientation means, simultaneously by ethnicity and region. This establishes basic patterns, to see if there is anything to either compositional or contextual claims. The comparison of means for memberships is presented in Table 3.2; Table 3.3 offers a similar presentation for civic orientations. Memberships are displayed separately partly for conceptual distinction but also because only group membership exhibits any distinct urban-rural pattern. As the urban-rural distinction made almost no difference to civic orientations, Table 3.3 can be arranged more simply.

For memberships, rural respondents rate consistently higher than urban ones. This applies across all ethnic and regional groups. The question, then, is as follows: is this contrast in memberships a function purely of city versus country lifestyle differences, or is it reflective of urban areas being more ethnically diverse than rural areas? If the latter is true, these results are evidence of a contextual argument.

Our evidence suggests the opposite. If urban-rural differences are related to ethnic diversity, we should find that differences in memberships are small in regions where the difference in ethnic diversity between urban and rural areas is also small. This is not the case. Atlantic Canada and the Prairies show the same degree of urban-rural difference as do the other three regions, whose metropolitan centres (Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver) are by far the most ethnically diverse places in Canada. Urban-rural differences, then, are exactly that – city life tends to reduce memberships, independent of other compositional and contextual claims.

We turn now to group differences across all our social capital measures (Tables 3.2 and 3.3). Group and regional differences appear in each domain, but differences among domains are as striking as differences within each. Membership and interpersonal trust appear to form a syndrome, much as discussed in the social capital literature. But for neither does the

Table 3.2 Membership by region and ethnicity in Canada

| Region                  | Ethnicity  |                        |                |                    | All groups  |
|-------------------------|------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------|
|                         | French     | 'Non-white ethnic'     | 'White ethnic' | 'White non-ethnic' |             |
| Atlantic                | b          | b                      | b              | 1.30 (109)         | 1.38 (143)  |
| Rural                   | b          | b                      | b              | 1.71 (63)          | 1.77 (90)   |
| Urban                   | b          | b                      | b              | 0.74 (46)          | 0.74 (53)   |
| Quebec                  | 1.54 (375) | b                      | b              | b                  | 1.57 (415)  |
| Rural                   | 1.81 (110) | b                      | b              | b                  | 1.83 (111)  |
| Urban                   | 1.43 (265) | b                      | b              | b                  | 1.48 (304)  |
| Ontario                 | b          | 1.67 (46)              | 2.19 (142)     | 1.64 (413)         | 1.76 (634)  |
| Rural                   | b          | b                      | 3.21 (24)      | 1.84 (99)          | 2.14 (132)  |
| Urban                   | b          | b                      | 1.98 (118)     | 1.58 (314)         | 1.66 (502)  |
| Prairies                | b          | 1.39 (28) <sup>a</sup> | 2.11 (56)      | 1.79 (220)         | 1.84 (313)  |
| Rural                   | b          | b                      | b              | 2.14 (51)          | 2.03 (73)   |
| Urban                   | b          | b                      | b              | 1.69 (169)         | 1.78 (240)  |
| British Columbia        | b          | 1.39 (28) <sup>a</sup> | 2.41 (32)      | 1.66 (145)         | 1.78 (189)  |
| Rural                   | b          | b                      | b              | 1.76 (21)          | 2.17 (24)   |
| Urban                   | b          | b                      | b              | 1.65 (124)         | 1.72 (165)  |
| Non-Quebec <sup>c</sup> | 1.62 (81)  |                        |                |                    |             |
| Rural                   | 1.59 (37)  |                        |                |                    |             |
| Urban                   | 1.64 (44)  |                        |                |                    |             |
| All regions             | 1.56 (456) | 1.44 (85)              | 2.25 (249)     | 1.64 (904)         | 1.70 (1694) |
| Rural                   | 1.76 (147) | b                      | 3.00 (46)      | 1.86 (234)         | 1.97 (430)  |
| Urban                   | 1.46 (309) | b                      | 2.08 (203)     | 1.57 (670)         | 1.61 (1264) |

Notes

Entries are mean values for memberships (and numbers of respondents).

a Prairies and British Columbia respondents were combined.

b Too few cases for analysis.

c Calculated only for French ethnicity.

group-region pattern generalize to political trust, and the political trust pattern is not reflected in national pride. And for none of these domains does the usual contextual prediction find even prima facie support.

For both membership (Table 3.2) and interpersonal trust (Table 3.3A) the sharpest contrast is not between 'old' and 'new' Canadians but between the newest Canadians and the not quite so new. 'Non-white ethnic' respondents (most of whom are immigrants) exhibit the fewest memberships on average, while 'white ethnic' respondents claim the most. Roughly the same is true for interpersonal trust, although here 'non-white ethnic' respondents are not the lowest but the second-lowest group. Just to confuse matters, on both indicators the closest companions to 'non-white ethnic' respondents are Francophones.<sup>15</sup>

Table 3.3 Civic orientations by region and ethnicity in Canada

| Region                         | Ethnicity  |                        |                |                    | All groups  |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------|
|                                | French     | 'Non-white ethnic'     | 'White ethnic' | 'White non-ethnic' |             |
| <b>(A) Interpersonal trust</b> |            |                        |                |                    |             |
| Atlantic                       | b          | b                      | b              | 0.44 (109)         | 0.43 (143)  |
| Quebec                         | 0.35 (375) | b                      | b              | b                  | 0.37 (415)  |
| Ontario                        | b          | 0.42 (46)              | 0.57 (142)     | 0.57 (412)         | 0.55 (633)  |
| Prairies                       | b          | 0.59 (28) <sup>a</sup> | 0.65 (56)      | 0.65 (219)         | 0.64 (312)  |
| British Columbia               | b          | 0.59 (28) <sup>a</sup> | 0.80 (32)      | 0.66 (145)         | 0.68 (189)  |
| Non-Quebec <sup>c</sup>        | 0.43 (81)  |                        |                |                    |             |
| All regions                    | 0.36 (456) | 0.46 (85)              | 0.63 (249)     | 0.59 (902)         | 0.53 (1692) |
| <b>(B) Political trust</b>     |            |                        |                |                    |             |
| Atlantic                       | b          | b                      | b              | 0.37 (105)         | 0.37 (138)  |
| Quebec                         | 0.43 (371) | b                      | b              | b                  | 0.44 (410)  |
| Ontario                        | b          | 0.45 (44)              | 0.43 (135)     | 0.39 (401)         | 0.40 (609)  |
| Prairies                       | b          | 0.42 (26) <sup>a</sup> | 0.38 (55)      | 0.34 (214)         | 0.35 (303)  |
| British Columbia               | b          | 0.42 (26) <sup>a</sup> | 0.38 (31)      | 0.40 (143)         | 0.40 (186)  |
| Non-Quebec <sup>c</sup>        | 0.36 (75)  |                        |                |                    |             |
| All regions                    | 0.42 (446) | 0.47 (80)              | 0.40 (240)     | 0.38 (880)         | 0.40 (1646) |
| <b>(C) National pride</b>      |            |                        |                |                    |             |
| Atlantic                       | b          | b                      | b              | 0.83 (107)         | 0.83 (141)  |
| Quebec                         | 0.57 (369) | b                      | b              | b                  | 0.59 (400)  |
| Ontario                        | b          | 0.84 (38)              | 0.83 (134)     | 0.82 (393)         | 0.82 (597)  |
| Prairies                       | b          | 0.82 (28) <sup>a</sup> | 0.81 (54)      | 0.77 (211)         | 0.78 (302)  |
| British Columbia               | b          | 0.82 (28) <sup>a</sup> | 0.75 (31)      | 0.77 (142)         | 0.77 (185)  |
| Non-Quebec <sup>c</sup>        | 0.80 (80)  |                        |                |                    |             |
| All regions                    | 0.61 (449) | 0.82 (74)              | 0.81 (236)     | 0.80 (866)         | 0.75 (1625) |

Notes

Entries are mean values for interpersonal trust, political trust and national pride (and numbers of respondents).

a Prairies and British Columbia respondents were combined.

b Too few cases for analysis.

c Calculated only for French ethnicity.

If the structural correspondence between memberships and interpersonal trust should reassure social capital theorists,<sup>16</sup> for neither indicator is diversity of context obviously problematic, at least at the provincial level. The low-end provinces are Quebec and the Atlantic region. Quebec's position simply reflects the province's majority-Francophone composition. The low score for the Atlantic provinces is clearly not the result of the region's ethnic makeup, as attested by the patterns in the 'All groups' column. If there is something intrinsic to the Atlantic-provinces context, it cannot be backlash against diversity.

The pattern for political trust is much simpler (Table 3.3B). Only one group and one province stand out. 'Non-white ethnic' respondents trust the political system the most; other groups are essentially indistinguishable. Among provinces, Quebec has the highest score.<sup>17</sup> Bear in mind what the political trust items refer to: *parliament*, the *Canadian* political system, and politicians in *Ottawa*. Respondents are not invited to assess some abstract decontextualized entity, but the government of *Canada*. That Quebecers should be the most supportive is striking but hardly novel, as the 1991 WVS pattern essentially reproduces the finding in Johnston (1986: 29-33).

National pride evokes yet another structure (Table 3.3C). 'Non-white ethnic' respondents again seem the most proud to be Canadian, but only marginally so. What really stands out is that francophone Québécois are the least committed to the Canadian nationality. This is not surprising in itself, given sovereigntist sentiment in Quebec. It is jarring, though, when juxtaposed to the pattern for political trust. Again, however, the WVS pattern only confirms Johnston's (1986: 44-6) finding.

For neither political trust nor national pride does the contextual model hold water. On the first orientation, the two most diverse provinces are the most trusting, apart from Quebec. On the second orientation, no interpretable pattern appears, again Quebec aside.

## Discussion

The answer to the opening question, at least for Canada, must be 'No: diversity is *not* obviously the enemy of social capital.' Diversity of the provincial context does not seem to induce backlash among older groups. Ethnic differences in social capital do exist, but recency of arrival and cultural distance from the traditional 'core' Canadian ethnicities do not track linearly into weak associational involvement or into uncivic attitudes.

The contextual argument – the more diverse a place, the smaller its stock of social capital – is simply not borne out. The most diverse provinces are never the most uncivic places. Indeed the reverse is more nearly true, and associational participation and interpersonal trust tend to go up as one goes west.<sup>18</sup> It is conceivable that an analysis that captures individuals' ethnicity more precisely than is possible with the WVS will also allow a more precise

estimation of contextual effects, and change the picture. But the refutation in these data is so resounding that we doubt it.

The compositional argument hardly fares better. Within our crude ethnic categorization, differences do stand out.<sup>19</sup> Most patterns resist ready interpretation, however, and those that are interpretable also answer the opening question in the negative. It is true that the group with the largest percentage of immigrants, and thus collectively the most recent to arrive, is the least involved and the least interpersonally trusting. The group with the next largest immigrant component sits at the other extreme, is the *most* participant and trusting.<sup>20</sup> This group, 'white ethnic', is not dominated by archetypal Scandinavian cooperative-movement activists. In fact, the group is disproportionately Catholic, and so exhibits the relevant traits arguably in spite of its makeup.

The issue is even more controverted when we get beyond the core universals of the social capital model. Neither political trust nor national pride is clearly related to interpersonal trust, nor are they much linked to each other. New Canadians are the one group that stands out positively for both political trust and for national pride. This finding takes us back to propositions first articulated by Richmond (1967). He argued, and our findings confirm, that the greater the difference between objective conditions in Canada and in the origin country and the greater the cultural distance traversed to get here, the more committed to Canada individuals tend to be.

The context that matters in the Canadian case is not the ethnic diversity of a province so much as the history of the whole country. To the extent that the Canadian WVS data exhibit any reflection of general arguments about social capital, it is in the microcosmic world of interpersonal relations. Once outside that world, patterns make sense only when we bring Canadian history back in. It is very relevant that one Canadian in four belongs to a national minority with a deeply equivocal relationship to the overarching political nationality. And it matters that Canada's multicultural policy seems to have facilitated, not inhibited participation in the country's political life.

## Notes

- \* Data analysed in this paper are from the Canadian World Values Survey, Neil Nevitte and Ronald Inglehart, Principal Investigators, data collection by Gallup Canada. Our analysis was supported by the Equality, Security, Community Project at the University of British Columbia, Jon Kesselman, Principal Investigator, under Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Major Collaborative Research Initiative 412-97-0003. Comments by Jerome Black, Avigail Eisenberg, Krishna Pendakur, Eric Uslaner and Paul Dekker were especially helpful. None of these institutions or individuals bears any responsibility for errors or omissions in the final product.

- 1 Trust in individuals is also likely to be critical to welfare state support, of course, to the extent that it reduces subjective estimates of cheating. See Rothstein (1998).
- 2 Brehm and Rahn analyse the 1972-94 General Social Survey Cumulative File. Muller and Seligson use World Values Survey data, augmented by Central American surveys and non-survey data sets with political and economic variables, to mount a pointed critique of Inglehart (1988).
- 3 For recent work on the relationship between social capital and democracy, see Boix and Posner (1998), Booth and Richard (1998), Muller and Seligson (1994), Newton (1997), Nichols (1996), and Rice and Sumberg (1997).
- 4 For recent work on the relationship between economic performance and social capital, see Helliwell and Putnam (1995), Kenworthy (1997), Knack and Keefer (1997), and Temple and Johnston (1998).
- 5 Wilson and Banfield make the argument carefully and do not find all its implications reflected in their data. Footnote 1 to their 1971 article is a useful summary of the empirical literature to that date on compositional approaches.
- 6 Miller actually makes much of the Canadian case, for the most part with considerable sensitivity. His sense of the relative time paths of cultural fragmentation and welfare-state consolidation is not quite right, however.
- 7 This is not to deny that protracted contact does break down differences. It is precisely foreknowledge of this fact that motivates attempts to keep groups separate.
- 8 On a related but different tack, Easterly and Levine (1997) find a significant relationship between ethnic diversity and negative economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa. Ethnic diversity, they suggest, '(a) encourages the adoption of growth-retarding policies that foster rent-seeking behaviour and (b) makes it more difficult to form a consensus for growth-promoting public goods' (1207).
- 9 The WVS questionnaire is published in Inglehart (1997, Appendix 5). For more detailed information on the particular questions used here, please contact the authors.
- 10 Helliwell (1996a) is a case in point.
- 11 In preliminary analyses we tried to develop a classification of associations, to see whether ethnic groups or regions were particularly participant in certain types of association. Results were weak, partly, we suspect, because the WVS categories are internally heterogeneous.
- 12 Our inclusion of patriotism measures points to a moral blinker in the social capital literature. It is true, after all, that the effects of patriotism can be positive or perverse. Regardless, empirical conceptions do not distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' social capital; trust is trust, engagement is engagement, even if the effects may be negative from a moral standpoint. Furthermore, patriotism may be an especially important element of social capital in Canada, where the existence of the state is an ongoing issue.
- 13 While Table 3.1 presents factor analysis results using a Varimax rotation, exactly the same components emerge with an oblique rotation.
- 14 This measurement difficulty illustrates both the pitfalls of comparative survey research even as it foreshadows a substantive argument below: offering francophone Québécois 'French Canadian' as the primary mode of differentiation is a bad idea.
- 15 On memberships, 'non-white ethnic' respondents are significantly lower than all other groups, 'white ethnic' are significantly higher than all others, and French and 'All groups' are statistically indistinguishable. On interpersonal trust, francophone and non-white ethnic respondents are indistinguishable from each other. 'All groups' are significantly different from both groups, but are also significantly different from white ethnic respondents, the high-end outlier. Contrasts are

extracted from a general factorial analysis of variance; confidence intervals are not adjusted for multiple comparisons. Such adjustment (e.g. a Bonferroni or Scheffé correction) tends to mute differences.

- 16 Putnam's (1993, 1995a, 1995b) discussions of memberships as a component of social capital, for instance, are premised on the notion that there are strong links between memberships and trust.
- 17 Pairwise comparisons, on the model described in note 15, confirm that these are the only significantly distinct categories.
- 18 This, of course, is the pattern in Helliwell (1996a).
- 19 And, as far as we can see, these differences deserve to be called cultural. In an earlier, longer version of this chapter, we subjected the group and regional differences to extensive controls, specifically to see if structural controls could make the differences go away. For the most part, they could not.
- 20 A big fraction of this difference is attributable to age. The WVS subsample of 'non-white ethnic' is disproportionately young, and the low social capital that does exist for this group is more a reflection of the subsample's relative youth than of any purely ethnic difference. The 1996 Census shows that just under 22 per cent of 'non-white' are between the ages of 15 and 24; the corresponding share in our sample - which excludes respondents under 18 years of age, and so understates the bias - is almost 38 per cent.

## References

- Alesina, A., Reza B., and Easterly, W. (1997) 'Public goods and ethnic divisions'. Working Paper 6009, Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Banfield, E.C. (1958) *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, Chicago: The Free Press.
- Black, J.H. (1987) 'The practice of politics in two settings: political transferability among recent immigrants to Canada', *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 20: 731-53.
- Boix, C. and Posner, D.N. (1998) 'Social capital - explaining its origins and effects on government performance', *British Journal of Political Science* 28: 686-93.
- Booth, J.A. and Richard, P.B. (1998) 'Civil-society, political capital, and democratization in Central-America', *Journal of Politics* 60, 3: 780-800.
- Brehm, J. and Rahn, W. (1997) 'Individual-level evidence for the causes and consequences of social capital', *American Journal of Political Science* 41: 999-1023.
- Coleman, J.S. (1990) *Foundations of Social Theory*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Easterly, W. and Levine, R. (1997) 'Africa's growth tragedy: policies and ethnic divisions', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112: 1203-50.
- Fellmeth, A.X. (1996) 'Social capital in the United States and Taiwan: trust or rule of law?', *Development Policy Review* 14, 2: 151-71.
- Forbes, H.D. (1997) *Ethnic conflict: commerce, culture, and the contact hypothesis*, London: Yale University Press.
- Fukuyama, F. (1995) 'Social capital and the global economy', *Foreign Affairs* 74, 5: 89-103.
- Helliwell, J.F. (1996a) 'Do borders matter for social capital? Economic growth and civic culture in U.S. states and Canadian provinces', Working Paper 5863, Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- (1996b) 'Economic growth and social capital in Asia', Working Paper 5470, Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

- Helliwell, J.F. and Putnam, R.D. (1995) 'Economic growth and social capital in Italy', *Eastern Economic Journal* 21, 3: 295-307.
- Inglehart, R. (1988) 'The renaissance of political culture', *American Political Science Review* 82: 1203-30.
- (1997) *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Johnston, R. (1986) *Public Opinion and Public Policy in Canada: Questions of Confidence*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Kenworthy, L. (1997) 'Civic engagement, social capital, and economic cooperation', *American Behavioral Scientist* 40, 5: 645-57.
- Knack, S. and Keefer, P. (1997) 'Does social capital have an economic payoff? A cross-country investigation', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112, 4: 1251-88.
- Kymlicka, W. (1995) *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Lehning, P. B. (1998) 'Towards a multicultural civil society: the role of social capital and democratic citizenship', *Government and Opposition* 33, 2: 221.
- Levi, M. (1996) 'Social and unsocial capital: a review essay of Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work*', *Politics and Society* 24, 1: 45-55.
- McCarty, T.A. (1993) 'Demographic diversity and the size of the public sector', *Kyklos* 46: 225-40.
- Miller, D. (1995) *On Nationality*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Muller, E.N. and Seligson, M.A. (1994) 'Civic culture and democracy: the question of causal relationships', *American Political Science Review* 88, 3: 635-53.
- Newton, K. (1997) 'Social capital and democracy', *American Behavioral Scientist* 40, 5: 575-87.
- Nichols, T.M. (1996) 'Russian democracy and social capital', *Social Science Information* 35, 4: 629-42.
- Putnam, R.D. (with R. Leonardi and R.Y. Nanetti) (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Putnam, R.D. (1995a) 'Bowling alone: America's declining social capital', *Journal of Democracy*, 6: 65-78.
- (1995b) 'Tuning in, tuning out: the strange disappearance of social capital in America', *PS: Political Science and Politics* 28, 4: 664-83.
- Rice, T.W. and Feldman, J.L. (1997) 'Civic culture and democracy from Europe to America', *Journal of Politics* 59: 1143-72.
- Rice, T.W. and Sumberg, A.F. (1997) 'Civic culture and government performance in the American States', *Publius* 27, 1: 99-114.
- Richmond, A.H. (1967) *Post-war Immigrants in Canada*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Rothstein, B. (1998) *Just Institutions Matter: The Moral and Political Logic of the Universal Welfare State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Temple, J. and Johnston, P.A. (1998) 'Social capability and economic growth', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 113, 3: 965-91.
- Verba, S., Schlozman, K.L. and Brady, H.E. (1995) *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wilson, J.Q. and Banfield, E.C. (1971) 'Political ethos revisited', *American Political Science Review* 65, 4: 1048-62.