

## The Political Foundations of Support for Same-Sex Marriage in Canada

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***Abstract***

Public support for legal recognition of same-sex marriage increased markedly in Canada over the course of the 1990s. While changes in fundamental values likely account for part of the increase, the speed and magnitude of aggregate opinion change in this domain casts some doubt on strictly sociological explanations for the shift. The argument of this paper is that a sequence of high-profile Supreme Court decisions in the realm of same-sex relationship recognition—and the legislative activity that followed as a result—played a pivotal role in shaping public opinion on the issue of gay marriage. It is argued that the impact of these institutions was twofold. First, by framing the issue as one of equal rights, the courts and legislatures induced many Canadians to weigh equality-related considerations more heavily in the formation of opinions on same-sex marriage. Second, legal recognition of same-sex relationships directly persuaded many Canadians that such recognition was legitimate. The aggregate impact of these two processes, it is argued, accounts for much of the shift in support for legal recognition of same-sex marriage over the nineties. The paper uses data from the Canadian Election Studies for 1993, 1997 and 2000.

## ***Introduction***

Across the period bounded by the first and third majority governments of Jean Chrétien, Canadian public opinion moved markedly on the issue of same-sex marriage.<sup>1</sup> In 1993, roughly 37 percent of Canadians were in favour of extending the rights and entitlements associated with marriage to gay and lesbian couples. Just seven years later in 2000, a bare majority of Canadians—just over 50 percent—backed the idea of gay marriage. And, in June 2003, as Canadian courts began to make same-sex marriage a legal reality, a majority of 54 percent of Canadians were behind them.<sup>2</sup>

What accounts for this striking shift in public opinion on gay marriage? How is it that, in the span of just ten years, majority opposition can turn to majority support? Shifts in fundamental values are undoubtedly part of the story. The key argument in this domain is offered by Inglehart (1997) and developed for the Canadian case by Nevitte (1996). Value change in advanced industrial democracies, in this view, turns on a generational shift away from orientation to material concerns and toward emphasis on so-called post-material values, such as a sense of belonging, intellectual development and aesthetic satisfaction. The experience of economic security during childhood, according to this argument, has led those cohorts reared during the affluence of the post-war boom to eschew the politics of class, economic growth and national security in favour of more ‘abstract’ concerns, such as the politics of cultural recognition, self-determination and environmentalism.<sup>3</sup> As regards opinion on gay marriage, the link is straightforward: liberally-minded post-materialists are steadily replacing the members of more materialist, more conservative cohorts and, in the process, reshaping the attitudinal foundations of politics across the advanced industrialized world, including the bases of opinion on same-sex marriage. Put simply, the Canadian mass public is becoming generally more tolerant and accepting of ‘alternate’ lifestyles and recognition claims, and so opinion on the specific issue of gay marriage has become more favourable as a result.

Kitschelt (1995) makes a similar case for generational value change but with a key difference. Here, generational value differences are rooted not in socialization in the home, but in socialization in the workplace. The post-industrial economic order, Kitschelt contends, has altered the distribution of working environments such that ever increasing proportions of the workforce in advanced industrial democracies are engaged in new “symbol and client processing” occupations. The experience of relative job autonomy and the intensified use of communicative skills characteristic of such ‘post-industrial’ pursuits, he argues, tends to promote a participatory, democratic libertarianism—an ideology of “creative self-fulfillment” and “self-determination.” As with rising numbers of post-materialists, rising numbers of symbol and client processors

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, the terms ‘same-sex marriage’ and ‘gay marriage’ are used interchangeably to refer to legal marriage of gay and lesbian couples.

<sup>2</sup> Table 1, below, reports the distribution of support for same-sex marriage from 1993 to 2000. The figure for 2003 comes from an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted in June of that year (Ipsos-Reid, ‘Slim Majority (54%) Support Same-Sex Marriages,’ June 13, 2003; [www.ipsos-reid.com](http://www.ipsos-reid.com)).

<sup>3</sup> A critique of the post-materialist thesis is beyond the scope of this paper, but it bears noting that the argument has been much maligned of late. For a succinct review of the literature, see Warwick (1998). See also Clarke et al. (1999), Clarke (2001), and Davis and Davenport (1999).

lead to fairly clear and salutary expectations regarding support for gay marriage: in general, support should go up.

Inglehart and Kitschelt do not exhaust the possible links between sociological change and support for same-sex marriage. One might, for instance, imagine a positive relationship between contact with homosexuals and affective orientations toward homosexuals as a group, along the lines of so-called “contact theory” (Allport 1954; see also Blake 2003). Insofar as affect toward groups is typically linked to policy attitudes implicating their interests (Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1991), and to the extent that homosexuals have increasingly ‘come out’ in Canadian society, rising support for gay marriage seems a plausible expectation.

All these claims seem to have some face validity, and this paper does not aim to challenge the sociological account of attitude change concerning same-sex marriage. The principal aim of the present paper, however, is to emphasize the pivotal importance of the political, rather than the social, foundations of support for gay marriage in Canada. The magnitude and speed of the shift in attitudes on same-sex marriage implicitly makes this point. If sociological change were the most important force in the system, we would expect support to rise at a glacial pace, as the steady operation of the mechanism of generational replacement—the “selective politics of death” in Butler and Stokes (1971) evocative phrasing—slowly added gay marriage supporters to the body politic at the same time as it slowly removed gay marriage opponents. But as alluded to in the opening lines of the paper, the change in support for same-sex marriage in Canada appears more a sudden spike than a gradual, epochal shift.<sup>4</sup> A full account of opinion change on gay marriage will, thus, have to look beyond sociological change.

The argument of this paper is that such a ‘full account’ must place special emphasis on the role of courts and legislatures in the formation of public opinion. Discussion below treats the details of recent judicial and legislative action in the general realm of same-sex relationship rights and recognition. Here, it will suffice to note that, over the course of the late nineties, Canadian courts, in a series of highly visible and politically influential decisions, presented the mass public with a—then novel—interpretation of the same-sex marriage issue. In short, the court framed the issue as one of equal rights. In deciding that gay and lesbian couples were entitled to equivalent regulatory treatment to that enjoyed by heterosexual couples, the court argued that the legal entailments of the value of equality demanded the same treatment for each kind of relationship. In other words, gays and lesbians are entitled to the same treatment as heterosexuals because that is what the principle of equality demands. Insofar as the court’s interpretation informed a torrent of legislative activity at both the federal and provincial levels in response, this

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<sup>4</sup> In fact, a more ‘high-resolution’ time-series of opinion on same-sex marriage would likely show a series of spikes in support, commencing sometime in the early 1990s. An Angus-Reid poll taken in 1996, for example, found support for gay marriage at 49 percent (*The Vancouver Sun*, ‘Gay marriages gain acceptance,’ June 7, 1996), roughly 10 points higher than support levels in 1997 (see Table 1, below). This spike is readily explicable, however, given that the poll was taken just three weeks after sexual orientation was added as a protected category under the Canada Human Rights Act following a lively parliamentary debate. Mass responses of this sort to short-term changes in elite discourse fit nicely with the general argument of this paper (see below).

interpretation of the stakes involved in the recognition of same-sex relationships quickly became politically hegemonic. Thus, the court, in concert with the legislatures, provided Canadians with a ‘frame’ that permitted the typically ill-informed and inattentive citizen to arrive at a principled judgement on a somewhat alien matter of public policy. As a result, public opinion on gay marriage shifted dramatically, as attitudes became increasingly anchored in a value with deep roots in the Canadian polity—the liberal value of equality.<sup>5</sup>

Framing effects emanating from the courts and legislatures are only part of the political account of public opinion on gay marriage. The judicial and legislative activity also appears to have had a direct, persuasive impact on Canadians. We have both empirical (Sniderman et al. 1991; Druckman 2001a) and theoretical (Lupia and McCubbins 1998) reasons for suspecting that many citizens will accept the views of the courts and, to a lesser extent, legislatures on matters of public policy and incorporate these in the formation of their opinions. And so it appears to have been in the realm of same-sex marriage. Thus, the impact of the courts and legislatures on public opinion concerning gay marriage in the late nineties was double-barrelled. The courts and legislatures argued that the value of equality demands equivalent treatment for same-sex and opposite-sex couples, and many Canadians accepted this argument—both its premise *and* its conclusion.

The paper is organized as follows. First, the existing—and admittedly paltry—literature on public opinion and gay rights<sup>6</sup> is reviewed. Second, theoretical background on framing and persuasive effects in public opinion is provided, with emphasis on putative limits to such effects and their implications for the present inquiry. Next, the legal adventures of same-sex relationship recognition are chronicled, if briefly. The aim here is to depict the nature, emergence and rise to prominence of the equal rights frame of the same-sex marriage issue. In the fourth section the paper turns to the empirical heart of the matter, first by developing specific hypotheses, and second by constructing appropriate variables and models with which to evaluate them. The data for this investigation come from the Canadian Election Studies for 1993, 1997 and 2000.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> This paper does not engage with the debate over the historical ‘liberalness’ of the Canadian polity (for a recent discussion, see Ajzenstat and Smith 1995; the classic statements are Horowitz 1971 and Lipset 1989). Suffice it to note that the empirical record shows high and consistent support for the liberal value of equality across the 1990s.

<sup>6</sup> It is an emerging convention in the literature to abandon the term ‘gay rights’ in favour of the more inclusive term ‘LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered) rights.’ The terms are used interchangeably in the present paper.

<sup>7</sup> Data from the 1993 Canadian Election Study were provided by the ISR. The survey was funded by the SSHRC and was completed for the 1992/93 Canadian Election Team of Richard Johnston, André Blais, Henry Brady, Elisabeth Gidengil and Neil Nevitte. Data for the 1997 Canadian Election Study were provided by the ISR. The survey was funded by the SSHRC and was completed for the 1997 Canadian Election Team of André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte. Data from the 2000 Canadian Election Study were collected by the ISR and the Jolicoeur & Associates for André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte. The survey was funded by the SSHRC, Elections Canada and the Institute for Research on Public Policy. Neither the organizations that collected and distributed the data, the agencies that funded the data collection, nor the election teams that supervised the data collection are responsible for the analyses and interpretations presented here.

Finally, the paper closes with summary remarks and an effort to draw out the broader political and theoretical implications of the paper, both for gay rights politics and for the study of public opinion in Canada.

### ***Public Opinion and Gay Rights in Canada***

The literature on public opinion and gay rights in Canada is modest, to say the least. Interestingly, however, what significant literature as exists tends to highlight—either implicitly or explicitly—the importance of framing and persuasive effects in gay rights opinion. Three contributions stand out. Rayside and Bowler (1988) apparently present the first explicit investigation of public opinion and gay rights, however, their effort is limited to re-analysis of aggregate polling results already in the public domain. Still, their analysis bears noting, especially insofar as it implicitly counsels an emphasis on framing and persuasive effects in gay rights opinion. In short, Rayside and Bowler argue that Canadian opinion on gay rights is peculiarly volatile and that citizens seem to hold contradictory sentiments depending on the nature of the issue attitude probed. In particular, they note that Canadians evince strong support for gay rights when the issue explicitly concerns an equality claim. Rayside and Bowler also observe that increased support for gay rights in the 1970s seems to have been linked to legal changes in the regulation of homosexuality. Insofar as the former claim is suggestive of framing effects, and the latter suggests the operation of persuasion, the conclusions of this early work in public opinion on gay rights are in broad agreement with the perspective of the present paper.

Also notable is Sniderman et al.'s work in *The Clash of Rights* (1996). Here, attitudes on three dimensions of gay rights—rights to housing, child custody, and employment as teachers—are probed. Although framing effects are not explicitly addressed, the pattern of responses makes clear that when an equality frame dominates—as in the case of Sniderman et al.'s housing query—Canadians are strong supporters of gay rights. Indeed, as far back as 1987 some 63 percent of Canadians, according to this analysis, felt that “equal rights to homosexuals in such matters as jobs and housing” was the embodiment of “the Canadian idea of human rights for all” (Sniderman et al. 1996: 104-5). Where the query did not offer an explicit equal rights frame, however, as in the case of Sniderman et al.'s question probing approval of homosexual teachers, Canadian support for gay rights appeared markedly less—only 51 percent of Canadians supported equal treatment for gays and lesbians in this context (Sniderman et al. 1996: 107).

Fletcher and Howe's (2000) work on public opinion concerning the Supreme Court, and several high profile cases with which it has recently dealt, also is suggestive of the importance of framing and persuasive effects in gay rights opinion, although the authors do not treat the matter explicitly. The relevant research concerns changing opinion on the Supreme Court's decision in the *Vriend* case. At stake in this case was the right of a homosexual teacher to teach in a religious school in Alberta. Using the same data reported in Sniderman et al., Fletcher and Howe report that roughly 50 percent of Canadians approved of “allowing homosexuals to teach in school” in 1987. By 1999,

that figure had jumped to almost 72 percent. Of significance here, however, is Fletcher and Howe's claim that roughly three quarters of the overall increase in support for gay teachers is attributable to individual-level attitude change, with roughly a quarter of the increase attributable to generational replacement (Fletcher and Howe 2000: 40-1). Although Fletcher and Howe do not propose the claim that framing or persuasive effects are behind the individual-level opinion change they uncover, these seem the most plausible causal suspects, insofar as we assume individual level stability in fundamental values over time. Framing and persuasion, thus, may be phenomena of general importance in the domain of gay rights opinion.

Rayside and Bowler, Sniderman et al. and Fletcher and Howe, then, are apt points of departure for the present inquiry. Yet none of these is a sustained empirical investigation of public opinion and gay rights in Canada. In particular, none of these works presents a statistical model of public opinion on gay rights. Before proceeding with the task of developing such a model, however, it is important to define more precisely the concepts of framing and persuasion.

### ***Framing, Persuasion and Public Opinion***

Definitions of 'frame' and 'framing' abound in political behaviour and political communication. Druckman (2001b), for instance, lists no fewer than seven different treatments of the concept. It is not the aim of this paper to resolve theoretical ambiguities surrounding the theory of framing, nor to explore in any depth the lineage of the concept.<sup>8</sup> A simple, applied definition of a frame should suffice for present purposes: A frame is an interpretation of a political issue that establishes logical connections between opinion on that issue and an individual's beliefs and values.<sup>9</sup> In other words, a frame establishes what an issue is 'about.' It says what considerations are relevant or important to opinion-making on an issue. Exposure to a frame, it is argued, should alter the balance of considerations individuals call to mind as they make up their minds on specific issues.<sup>10</sup> As a result, those exposed to different framings of an issue should differ systematically in the opinions they express on that issue—or, at least, differ systematically in the psychological roots of their opinions. Such differences are typically termed "framing effects" (Druckman 2001a).

If framing effects operate by altering the relative importance of the beliefs that go into opinionation, then persuasive effects operate by altering the content of those same beliefs

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<sup>8</sup> Excellent recent treatments of the concept are in Druckman (2001a; 2001b) and Nelson and Oxley (1999). A classic statement is Iyengar and Kinder (1987).

<sup>9</sup> Druckman (2001b) draws a distinction between "frames in communication" and "frames in thought." My definition emphasizes the former.

<sup>10</sup> The original conception of framing effects, popularized in Zaller (1992) and Iyengar and Kinder (1987), held that framing operated by altering the relative accessibility of different considerations during the opinion formation process, in the manner of a priming effect. More recent work has emphasized that frames function by altering the relative *importance* of different beliefs in the opinionation process, and have little or no impact on accessibility. The foundational works in this vein are Nelson and Kinder 1996; Nelson, Clawson and Oxley 1997; and Nelson and Oxley 1999.

(Nelson and Oxley 1999). For instance, exposure to what Zaller (1992, 1996) terms a one-sided information flow—a stream of information on an issue that is biased in one (ideological, partisan) direction—can, given certain conditions, induce individual-level opinion change. In the ideal persuasion scenario, the information flow introduces new beliefs that become salient considerations during the opinion formation process. If these new beliefs truly are ‘new’ to the individual—that is, if they differ in direction from pre-existing beliefs—the balance of considerations an individual holds on a given issue is altered, and opinion change is a likely result.

On their face, then, framing and persuasion processes would appear to possess almost unlimited potential to shape public opinion. And, indeed, their effects can be great (Zaller 1996). An important emphasis in recent work on political cognition, however, concerns the limits to framing and persuasive effects. Two such limits are important here. The clearest theoretical statement of the first such limit is offered by Lupia and McCubbins (1998). They emphasize the importance of what Druckman (2001a) terms “source credibility” to individual-level acceptance of incoming information. To be persuasive or to successfully frame an issue, so the argument goes, a would-be framer or persuader<sup>11</sup> must be perceived as knowledgeable and trustworthy. If the source of a given piece of information is seen as wanting on either of these dimensions, then, individuals are likely to reject it.

Within the set of possible framers/persuaders, we have strong reasons to suspect the courts, and to a lesser extent, legislatures to be perceived as particularly credible. First, courts typically satisfy Lupia and McCubbins’ (1998) theoretical conditions for credibility,<sup>12</sup> and the empirical record includes compelling evidence of the persuasive power of the court and the law (Sniderman et al. 1991). Furthermore, Canadians consistently hold the Supreme Court in high esteem, routinely evaluating it more favourably than Parliament (Fletcher and Howe 2000). Regarding legislatures, it is likely that evaluations of a legislature’s constituent parties are an important determinant of its credibility as a ‘cue-giver.’ Still, it may be that the legislature itself possesses some token of credibility, especially for the most likely ‘cue-takers’—i.e. those with weak or no partisanship. Thus, on theoretical and empirical grounds, there are strong reasons for suspecting the operation of framing and persuasive effects in opinion change on gay marriage, a domain in which both the courts and the legislatures have been active purveyors of frames and persuasive claims.

The second relevant limit to framing and persuasive effects concerns the implications for political cognition of competition between frames and persuasive claims relating to a given issue. As regards persuasion, the classic position is Zaller’s (1992), who contends that the likely result of competition between persuasive claims—say, in an informational environment divided evenly between claims for and against an issue—is attitudinal

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<sup>11</sup> A ‘would-be framer or persuader’ in this sense is simply the “speaker” in Lupia and McCubbins’ principal-agent models of information-taking.

<sup>12</sup> That is, courts are, in general, likely to be perceived as both knowledgeable and trustworthy.

ambivalence.<sup>13</sup> With respect to framing, a relevant argument is developed in Brewer's (2003a) recent work concerning public opinion and gay rights in the United States. Building on Kinder and Sanders' (1996) findings in the domain of race politics, Brewer argues that frames in competition, especially over the issue relevance of the same value, tend to cancel out. Thus, with regard to both framing and persuasion, there are strong reasons for suspecting that when the courts and legislatures send divergent signals, the impact on public opinion should be effectively neutral.

What does this theoretical apparatus imply in the case of public opinion on gay marriage? The first order of business is to investigate the recent discursive history of same-sex relationships in Canadian politics. The optimal research strategy in this regard would involve extensive content analysis and coding of media material over the period of interest. Such a project, alas, is beyond the scope of the present paper. Fortunately, a quite viable second-best approach to this problem is readily available. As a political fact of great interest in its own right, the legal and political history of same-sex relationship recognition has been carefully probed (e.g. Smith 2002; Hiebert 2002). Judicious use of this work permits plausible inferences to be made about the dominant political construction of these issues over the nineties. For simplicity's sake, a key (perhaps contestable) assumption of the present paper is that the courts' and legislatures' framing and persuasive messages reach the mass public without politically significant alteration by the media.

Once the recent discursive territory in the realm of gay marriage has been charted, the paper moves on to develop specific hypotheses for empirical examination.

### ***The Courts and Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships***

The nineties marked a high point in judicial action on the recognition of same-sex relationships. In a series of challenges to federal and provincial statutes, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) activists and individuals induced the courts to articulate a new legal doctrine concerning same-sex relationships that, in the end, roughly amounted to formally equivalent recognition of homosexual and heterosexual relationships (Smith 2002: 14-5). The timeline of the legal decisions stretched across the nineties—from roughly 1993 to 1999—but the most important judicial statements and the bulk of the legislative activity did not appear until 1999 or later. As this paper aims to show, the rhythms of this legal-political timeline were reflected in the nature of public opinion across the period.

The first important such Supreme Court decision, *Canada (AG) v. Mossop*, involved a federal public servant's right to bereavement leave following the death of his same-sex

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<sup>13</sup> This excludes the case where predispositions, such as partisanship and values, provide a guide to the acceptance of persuasive claims. In such cases, rather than ambivalence, aggregate attitude polarization is the theoretically expected result (Zaller 1992). As regards the present case, while there are no doubt complexities, the assumption here is that predispositions are a rather poor mediator of persuasive messages from the court and, to lesser extent, the legislatures.

partner's father. Although the court ruled against the complaint in this case on the specific grounds presented in the claim, the decision was a significant step forward for same-sex relationship recognition. The complaint had been based on a challenge to federal human rights legislation, a challenge the court rejected. Still, in the process of rejecting the claim, the court indicated that its decision might have been different had the claim been made on the basis of the equality provisions of the Charter (Hiebert 2002: 171-3).

Two decisions in 1995 confirmed the emergence of a new legal doctrine concerning same-sex relationships. The first decision, *Miron v. Trudel*, concerned spousal benefits for common law partners in the context of provincial automobile insurance regulations. The second decision, *Egan and Nesbit v. Canada*, concerned spousal benefits for same-sex partners under the federal Old Age Security Act. Both decisions, especially *Egan*, affirmed clearly that the equal rights provisions contained in the Charter demand that gay and lesbian couples be treated the same as opposite-sex couples. However, although a significant victory for LGBT rights at the doctrinal level, the practical import of the decisions was more modest. In particular, *Egan* did not compel immediate legislative redress. Although five members of the court affirmed that equality rights were violated by the Old Age Security provisions, one of those five, Justice Sopinka, accepted the violation as a 'reasonable limit' under section 1 of the Charter. As Hiebert writes,

Justice Sopinka accepted the argument of government lawyers that flexibility should be afforded Parliament in the extension of social benefits within a context that recognized new social relationships. Parliament must contend with fiscal constraints and the implications of these for the scope of social programs. He characterized the recognition of same-sex spouses as a "novel concept" and so concluded that inaction on this front did not amount to an unreasonable restriction on equality (Hiebert 2002: 177-8).

In concert with the four remaining members of the court, who rejected the equality claim, Sopinka upheld the Old Age Security Act. *Egan*, thus, was a rather equivocal ruling from the perspective of LGBT rights.

A key impact of *Egan* from the perspective of this paper is that it had a cooling effect on legislative efforts to reform human rights and other legislation in the realm of same-sex relationship recognition. Hiebert writes that *Egan* was "interpreted by federal departments and ministers as removing pressure for immediate legislative reforms, and it had a similar effect for provincial jurisdictions" (Hiebert 2002: 178). The political logic here is easy to understand. At the federal level and in most provincial jurisdictions—save perhaps British Columbia and Quebec—reform in the direction of same-sex relationship recognition posed potentially serious political risks. In 1994, for instance, the Ontario New Democratic Party (NDP) government failed to secure large-scale reforms in the interest of LGBT rights in the face of strong opposition both inside and outside the government. Thus, insofar as the courts indicated in *Egan* that legislative changes were not urgent, risk-averse politicians were keen to avoid gay rights reform.

Legislative dithering on LGBT rights in the early and mid-nineties is significant here insofar as this meant that the message of the Supreme Court on same-sex relationships—

the court's framing of and position on the issue—did not reach the Canadian public in unmediated, uncontested form. To put it (too) crudely, the courts were saying one thing and the legislatures were saying another. In the mid-nineties, it seems fair to conclude, the equal rights frame was not hegemonic in the realm of same-sex relationship recognition.

The court's 1999 decision in *M. v. H.* was, thus, a crucial turning point, both for gay rights and for public opinion on gay rights. Indeed, Smith writes that *M. v. H.* “was the most important lesbian- and gay-rights case to date” (2002: 7). The case concerned post-breakup support in same-sex relationships. In this case, M. sought support from H., her erstwhile lesbian partner. Two features of the court's ruling are important. First, the court affirmed its position that the principle of equality demands that same-sex and opposite-sex couples receive the same legal treatment. Secondly, and most importantly for the present paper, the court set aside the precedent in *Egan* that violation of gay and lesbian equality rights was justified as a reasonable limit under section 1 of the Charter (Smith 2002: 7-8).

At a stroke, the courts had made compulsory what most Canadian legislatures had hitherto understood as voluntary. A frenzy of legislative activity to implement the decision quickly followed federally and in Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec, and Nova Scotia in the lead up to the federal election in November 2000, with changes in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta not far behind. Here then, we have an important contrast. Before *M. v. H.*, the courts and the legislatures offered discordant messages about the legal recognition of same-sex relationships. After *M. v. H.*, the courts and the legislatures generally transmitted a common message on gay rights. It seems fair to conclude, then, that by 2000 a dominant, equality rights framing of same-sex relationship recognition had been diffused to the Canadian public. Furthermore, necessarily, the court's position in favour of same-sex relationship recognition also likely had been diffused throughout Canada.

While the court had not yet ruled explicitly on gay marriage, the issue was bound up routinely in discussions of same-sex relationship recognition—especially insofar as the federal Liberal government was keen to emphasize that its legislative changes did not imply anything about the nature of the institution of marriage (Smith 2002: 14). Moreover, it seems plausible that the fine distinction between legally recognizing ‘same-sex relationships’ and recognizing same-sex marriage is not a common one to Canadians. Efforts by Reform/Alliance and Liberal MPs to clarify the difference legislatively is powerful testimony to this fact (Smith 2002: 13-4). Thus, it is likely that the dominant framing and message on same-sex relationship recognition, developed by the court and implemented by the legislatures, informed public opinion on same-sex marriage by the end of the nineties. This, of course, is the general claim of this paper. Specific hypotheses arising out of this claim are presented in the next section.

### ***Hypotheses, Data, Variables***

The major hypotheses examined in this paper are as follows:

1. The relationship between support for gay marriage and support for equal rights strengthens, *ceteris paribus*, in 1999 relative to the pre-1999 period.
2. The average individual in 1999 is, *ceteris paribus*, more supportive of gay marriage than the average individual during the pre-1999 period.

Hypothesis 1 is an observable implication of the framing argument pursued throughout this paper. If the concerted framing efforts of the courts and legislatures did indeed succeed in changing the attitudinal basis of opinion on same-sex marriage as theoretically expected, the net impact of that value on individual level support for gay marriage should increase. In a similar way, hypothesis 2 is an observable implication of the persuasion argument. If the concerted persuasion efforts of the courts and legislatures moved substantial numbers of Canadians on the issue of same-sex marriage, then the typical Canadian should be more supportive after 1999. Note that hypothesis 2 does not state simply that the average Canadian should be more supportive of gay marriage in 1999 than earlier in the decade (this much is already made clear in the first paragraph of this paper). Rather, hypothesis 2 states that, *all other things being equal*, the average Canadian is likely to be more supportive in 1999 than in the pre-1999 period. This is important because the aim is to isolate persuasive effects from the effects of changes in the sociodemographic composition of the Canadian population—in other words, sociological change and value shift. With these effects controlled, the remaining shift in average opinion can plausibly be attributed to persuasion.

As noted at the outset of the paper, the data for the present analysis are from the Canadian Election Studies for 1993, 1997, and 2000. These data sets contain a full battery of items addressing political values, issue attitudes, and sociodemographic characteristics suitable for evaluating the paper's hypotheses. One feature of these data sets is a great boon to this inquiry: many questions relevant to the paper's hypotheses are duplicated across all three survey years. Pooling these data, thus, permits the construction of a single model of gay marriage support covering the entire period of interest. Furthermore, this methodological approach permits explicit modelling of year-over-year changes in the magnitude of effects of important variables<sup>14</sup>—strength of attachment to equality values, in this case. The technical details of the model are offered in the next section as prelude to the presentation of results. The remainder of this section describes the construction of the relevant variables.

A suitable measure of the dependent variable, support for gay marriage, is key. The relevant item was asked in highly similar ways in all three survey years, and the various items are treated as conceptually equivalent here. Still, given the variable's central importance in this study, one variation in question wording bears discussion. The questions are as follows:

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<sup>14</sup> This approach parallels Brewer's (2003b) in his recent analysis of changes in public opinion on gay rights in the United States using NES data for the 1992, 1996, and 2000 Presidential elections.

[1993] Homosexual couples should be allowed to get legally married. (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree) [cpsg7b]

[1997] Homosexual couples should be allowed to be legally married. (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree, not sure) [mbsg3]

[2000] Gays and lesbians should be allowed to get married. (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree) [cpsf18]

The only significant change occurs in 2000. In 1993 and 1997, respondents are asked about ‘homosexuals,’ whereas in 2000 the focus shifts to ‘gays and lesbians.’ It is possible that these words connote a slightly different set of concepts subjectively for some respondents. Nevertheless, the words logically denote the same group of people. Furthermore, changes in the social construction of homosexuality may in fact demand the wording change in order to sustain over-time conceptual equivalence.<sup>15</sup> Finally, and most importantly, there is no obvious reason to expect these various wordings to introduce systematic bias into the assessment of the specific hypotheses examined here. Lacking direct evidence on this matter, then, the present paper sides with the balance of the theoretical arguments and concludes that the wording change is practically inconsequential.<sup>16</sup> The over-time distribution of this variable is presented in Table 1.

The other major variable in the analysis is the measure of support for equal rights values. Here, the question wording is invariant across the three surveys. Respondents are asked to express their agreement with the following statement: “We have gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country.”<sup>17</sup> In order to retain the maximum number of cases for analysis, middle values are imputed to those who offered “not sure” in response to this query—a practice repeated for all values items. Descriptives for this variable—and all those included in the models—are in Table A1 in the appendix.

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<sup>15</sup> Przeworski and Teune (1970) make a classic argument along these lines with respect to cross-national conceptual equivalence. It seems sound to generalize their claims to the temporal dimension.

<sup>16</sup> One other wording change bears noting. In 1997, respondents are explicitly offered a middle category, ‘not sure,’ that is not explicitly offered respondents in 1993 and 2000. Experimental research shows that some respondents will favour a middle category if present, even if they might express a directional opinion when a middle category is absent—a phenomenon termed “contraction bias” (Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski 2000). At the same time, respondents who are truly ‘in the middle’ may express an essentially random directional opinion when the middle category is absent. Thus, this change in question wording troubles the present inquiry in two ways. First, the potential for false ‘middle’ and false ‘directional’ opinions may introduce error into estimates of aggregate support for gay marriage in 1997. However, error in one direction is likely partially offset by error in the other, and so this concern need not detain us. Second, and potentially more seriously, to the extent that the middle category introduces error into the measurement of the dependent variable, all estimates of relationships between independent and dependent variables will be attenuated. In 1997, this works (perilously) in the favour of the paper’s hypothesis, insofar as the present argument turns on increased equality effects on gay marriage opinion emerging only after 1999—that is, in the data for 2000. Such bias as this might introduce is likely very small, but it bears noting.

<sup>17</sup> Variable names: mbsa1 (1993), mbsa1 (1997), mbsa1 (2000).

Two other values variables are included as controls. First, a variable tapping attachment to the rights of minorities in general. Respondents in each year were asked: “Which is more important in a democratic society: Letting the majority decide?/ Protecting the needs and rights of minorities?/ Undecided.”<sup>18</sup> Second, a variable tapping support for traditional values. This item was asked in two ways across the surveys. In 1993, respondents were asked to agree with this statement: “People today don’t have enough respect for traditional values.” In 1997 and 2000, the statement changed to the following: “This country would have many fewer problems if there were more emphasis on traditional family values.”<sup>19</sup> Common sense suggests that the emphasis on “family values” in the latter question makes it substantively different from the earlier query, especially in regards to opinions in the domain of marriage.<sup>20</sup> Yet, it is important to control for traditional values when evaluating the effect of equal rights values on gay marriage support, as the two values are negatively correlated with each other and, in turn, strongly correlated with gay marriage support, especially in 1997 and 2000. To isolate the impact of this variation in question wording while retaining this important control, the traditional values item is interacted with survey year in the pooled models.

The remaining control variables are standard fare in research on voting and opinion in Canada, and can be described briefly. A set of dummy variables captures differences in support for same-sex marriage attaching to federal partisanship.<sup>21</sup> Sociodemographic effects are captured with variables measuring age, gender, education (degree-holders vs. others), income,<sup>22</sup> religiosity (non-religious vs. others), ethnicity (non-Europeans vs. others), and region (West, Quebec, and Atlantic vs. Ontario).

## **Results**

Four models are presented in this section—one model for each survey year and one model for the pooled data set. Estimation is by OLS regression.<sup>23</sup> Note that all data are

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<sup>18</sup> Variable names: mbse3 (1993), mbse3 (1997), mbsb3 (2000).

<sup>19</sup> Variable names: mbsa17 (1993), mbsa9 (1997), mbsa9 (2000).

<sup>20</sup> A more formal analysis confirms this suspicion. Regressing the traditional values variable on a suite of sociodemographics and interactions between these sociodemographics and the survey year shows that the structure of response to this item varies over the question wordings (results unreported).

<sup>21</sup> Dummies are entered for Liberals, Tories, Reform/Alliance supporters, Bloc Québécois supporters, and New Democrats. The reference category for this variable includes those who responded ‘none’ or ‘don’t know’ to partisanship queries.

<sup>22</sup> This variable consists of a ten level scale, where the bottommost category includes all those earning less than \$20k/yr., the topmost category includes all those earning \$100k/yr. or more, and in between categories are bounded at \$10k intervals.

<sup>23</sup> For the pooled estimation, one might prefer to estimate a multi-level (or hierarchical) model along the lines of those described in Steenbergen and Jones (2003). Yet, with only three level-2 units, as are available in the present analysis, and no proper level-2 predictors, such an estimation is both technically difficult (see Raudenbusch and Bryk 2002) and substantively similar to the OLS model. Thus, OLS is the optimal approach for present purposes. This is also the approach of the relevant precedent in the American literature on public opinion and gay rights (Brewer 2003b) and in a recent pooled cross-sectional analysis in the Canadian literature on racial attitudes (Blake 2003).

weighted in the analysis to take account of provincial and small household over-sampling.

The within-year models in Table 2 are presented primarily for their intrinsic interest; year-over-year differences in coefficient magnitudes are only properly assessed in the context of the model with pooled data. However, the novelty of these models in Canadian political science scholarship—they are (apparently) the first such models presented—suggests that they deserve at least passing notice. Careful inspection of these models also provides interesting (if indirect) corroboration for the paper’s major hypotheses.

Note first the pattern of sociodemographic effects. Predictably, age is negatively related to same-sex marriage support—a pattern that appears essentially undisturbed across the years. If generational shifts in values are linked to gay marriage attitudes, and in a way not captured by the values terms already in the model, they are undoubtedly captured here to a great extent. The non-religious and women are, as we might expect, consistently stronger supporters of same-sex marriage than their reference groups, net of partisanship and value effects. Degree-holders do not appear to be more supportive than non-degree holders in these models, but much of the story here concerns the mediation of education effects through values.<sup>24</sup> Increments of income also have salutary effects on gay marriage support, and in a manner roughly constant across the years.

The pattern of regional effects is interesting from the theoretical perspective developed in this paper. Note that in 1993 and 1997 the only significant regional difference is between Quebec and all others. The coefficients indicate that, *ceteris paribus*, the average Quebecker was more supportive of gay marriage than those in the rest of Canada. This likely reflects the fact that Quebec has been a long-time leader on LGBT rights in Canada and, indeed, was the first jurisdiction in Canada to include sexual orientation in its human rights legislation (Hiebert 2002: 186-7). Whatever the merits of this interpretation of public opinion in Quebec, the important point is that these regional differences effectively disappeared in 2000. This would seem to suggest a nationalization in 2000 of whatever force—persuasive discourse, for example—that undergirded Quebec opinion on gay marriage in 1993 and 1997. The favoured interpretation of the present paper is as follows: before 1999, those in the ROC received dissonant messages from the courts and legislatures with regards to same-sex marriage recognition, whereas in Quebec the courts and legislatures delivered congruent messages in this regard; after 1999, the dissonance in the ROC effectively disappeared—and took regional differences in gay marriage support with it. A more rigorous test of the over-time differences in the pattern of regional effects appears in the pooled analysis (below).

Net partisan differences are insignificant until 1997, when New Democrats and Reformers move to opposite extremes of opinion on gay marriage. Then, in 2000, the only significant partisan difference attaches to Alliance (erstwhile Reform) supporters. As we might expect, New Democrats are the most supportive of the lot, Reform/Alliance

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<sup>24</sup> And, indeed, with the values terms dropped from the models, education effects are substantial indeed (regressions unreported).

supporters the least supportive. How might we interpret these over-time differences in partisan effects? A simple interpretation, and one that, again, highlights the role of persuasion processes in opinion-making on same-sex marriage, is as follows: In the wake of early nineties judicial activity on same-sex relationship recognition (*Mossop, Miron, Egan*), parties were moved to offer their supporters explicit cues on the gay marriage issue, especially at election time. In 1997, voters found the parties spread across a continuum of support—bound at one end by the NDP and at the other by the Reform Party, with the remaining parties arrayed in between. By 2000, all partisans saw the parties as about the same, save for the Alliance Party, whose supporters saw their party as to the right of the partisan mainstream.<sup>25</sup> This interpretation buttresses the general perspective presented in this paper insofar as it, once again, underlines the persuasive ‘room to move’ for Canadians on the issue of same-sex marriage.

The effects of the values items are roughly as one might expect. First, support for traditional values is powerfully—and negatively—linked to gay marriage support across the years. Note that this link is stronger in 1997 and 2000, as one should expect given the question wording changes noted above. Second, the effect of support for minority rights varies some across the years, but is roughly similar and always positive. Finally, the effect of support for equality rights is strong, positive, and endures across the decade and, crucially, strengthens markedly in 2000. Thus, hypothesis 1—the framing hypothesis—survives the first empirical cut. The decisive test, however, is in the pooled analysis.

Before departing the within-year models, one final set of statistics merits attention. Note that the model fit improves substantially over the analysis years. The improvement in R-squared is roughly 50 percent between 1993 and 1997, a boost that is sustained in 2000. Note that it is not just the confounding presence of ‘family values’ in the traditional values measure in 1997 and 2000 doing the work; the general pattern remains even with the traditional values measure dropped from the model (regressions unreported). Thus, it seems fair to conclude that opinionation on same-sex marriage became more structured by long-term values, partisanship, and sociodemographic factors as the nineties progressed. This likely reflects the politicization of same-sex relationship recognition attending the issue’s course through Canada’s justice and legislative systems. This finding is a rather blunt demonstration of the notably political foundations of gay marriage support.

The most decisive test of the major hypotheses of this paper, and of the regional and partisan differences alluded to in this section, is found in the pooled model—reported in Table 3. To put the matter succinctly: the hypotheses survive this test. First, some preliminaries. Consider Table 3, Model I. This model includes all the variables found in the within-year models, dummy variables indicating respondents’ year of interview (1997, 2000 vs. others) and a suite of interactive terms to test for the dynamic effects suggested in the foregoing analysis. Thus, interactions appear between (i) Quebec and

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<sup>25</sup> Note that this interpretation need not imply that any objective differences between the parties were precisely as the voters saw them. A pivotal element in the process may be the parties’ varying electoral interests in presenting explicit positions on gay marriage. Doubtlessly taking a stand on this issue is uniquely important to NDP and Reform/Alliance interests.

2000, (ii) NDP partisanship and 1997, (iii) Reform/Alliance partisanship and both 1997 and 2000, (iv) traditional values support and both 1997 and 2000, and finally (v) equal rights support and both 1997 and 2000.

Model I confirms the existence of substantively important dynamics in regional and partisan effects, although only the 1997 spike in the impact of NDP partisanship enters at conventional levels of statistical significance. Dynamics in the impact of Reform/Alliance partisanship are harder for the model to sort out, likely owing to multicollinearity. Indeed, with eight overlapping interactive terms in the model, it is surprising that multicollinearity is not more of a problem. In any case, the survey year-Reform/Alliance interactions are correctly signed and, bearing in mind the pattern of coefficients across the within-year models, reasonably close to significance (for 1997,  $p = .180$ ; for 2000,  $p = .186$ ). The 2000 decline in the impact of Quebec residence is much closer to significance ( $p = .071$ ). The model suggests that the difference between Quebec and the ROC on this issue was cut by more than half in 2000, a substantively important finding. Thus, Model I reaffirms the pattern of regional and partisan differences uncovered in the within-year models, lending some support to the theoretical hunches emerging from that analysis.

Now to the paper's major hypotheses. Hypothesis 1—the framing hypothesis—can not be rejected on the basis of Model I. Note the three terms of interest here—the main effect of 'equality rights' and its two interactions with the survey years. Hypothesis 1 implies that respondents' views on equality rights should become more important to opinionation on same-sex marriage after 1999. The model suggests that this was indeed the case. In 2000, the impact of equality rights support on support for gay marriage increases by roughly 50 percent. The effect is just on the cusp of statistical significance in this model ( $p = .051$ ), but recall that this is a model saturated with correlated terms. In a less saturated context—Model II—the effect is clearly significant ( $p = .034$ ). Note also that the interaction for 1997 is not significant, suggesting that the impact of equality rights values was roughly constant before 2000 (or 1999, as the case may be). This lends further support to the view that it was the concerted voices of the courts and legislatures on this issue that made the difference to public opinion.

What of hypothesis 2, the persuasion hypothesis? Here again the model provides support, though not quite as convincingly as one might hope. The terms of interest here are the main effects of the survey years, 1997 and 2000. If persuasive effects hinge entirely on the existence of complimentary messages from the courts and legislatures, then the only significant main effect should appear in 2000. However, Model I uncovers significant effects in both 1997 and 2000. The latter effect is the larger of the two—the coefficient is larger by about one-half—and implies a substantively significant jump in gay marriage support. Still, given the inferential leap between hypothesis 2 and interpretation of these coefficients, a more striking contrast would be preferred. The persuasion hypothesis should not be rejected, but it should not be embraced without qualification.

In summary, the data analysis provides strong support for the framing hypothesis, moderate support for the persuasion hypothesis, and, in the pattern of regional and

partisan dynamics, much indirect support for the general view that political persuasion is an important determinant of Canadian public opinion on same-sex marriage.

***Conclusion: The Political Implications of the Political Foundations of Same-Sex Marriage Support***

Support for legal recognition of same-sex marriage moved swiftly upwards over the 1990s. There is little doubt that generational shifts in fundamental values contributed to this shift. The aim of the present paper, however, is not to probe the social foundations of gay marriage support. Rather, the aim here is to lay emphasis upon the political foundations of public opinion on this often controversial policy question. The particulars of the paper's interpretation are roughly as follows. A novel legal doctrine in relation to same-sex relationship recognition emanated from the courts in a series of important decisions across the nineties. At bottom, the doctrine held that gay and lesbian couples were entitled to equivalent legal treatment to that enjoyed by heterosexual couples on the grounds that the principle of equality enshrined in the Charter demands non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. In the early part of the decade, the courts were essentially alone as an institutional agent propounding this conception of the rights of gay and lesbian couples—the legislatures either were silent on or, at least in some degree, hostile to this view. After the court's landmark decision in *M. v. H.*, however, the legislatures had little choice but to act on the court's direction. In so doing, the courts and legislatures presented the typically ill-informed and inattentive Canadian citizen with useful cues regarding the appropriate framing of and position to take on the implicitly related same-sex marriage issue. By the end of the decade, most Canadians had received and variously acted upon these framing and persuasive cues, resulting in an increase in support for gay marriage far more sudden and striking than could be predicted on the basis of sociological change alone.

This much finds reasonably strong support in the present paper. What are the broader implications of this argument? Clearly, the psychological basis of opinion on gay marriage has political significance for LGBT activists. One might conclude on the basis of the present analysis that support for gay marriage is, in some sense, soft. Opinion change grounded in fundamental value shifts somehow seems more sturdy, more lasting. Yet two important arguments are counterpoint to this view. First, as framing theory makes clear, even opinions 'grounded' in fundamental values can change as the framing of issues evolves. Thus, the 'hard'-'soft' opinion perspective is something of a false dichotomy. Second, and relatedly, insofar as opinion on all political issues depends on framing, the real question concerns frame stability. It is hard to imagine a major political institution more likely to offer a stable construction of a political issue than the courts. Indeed, insofar as past precedent binds future decision-making, stable constructions are hard-wired into the nature of the institution itself. Thus, in a perhaps ironic way, opinion on gay marriage is not relatively 'soft' or 'ungrounded'—it is strongly grounded in (relatively) stable legal conceptions of the nature of equality as it applies to same-sex relationship recognition.

The psychological basis of opinion on gay marriage has other implications for LGBT activists and for the broader recognition of gay rights. It seems common practice in popular commentary on LGBT politics in Canada to infer that rising support for same-sex marriage in some way indexes attitudes toward LGBT rights and attitudes towards LGBT communities in general. Yet, an important implication of the present paper is that attitudes on gay marriage can shift independently of underlying shifts in fundamental values and dispositions, including affect toward homosexuals. Straightforward inferences from gay marriage support to opinionation on gay rights in other domains, thus, are likely misleading. This is not to suggest that there is no link at all. Legal developments on same-sex marriage undoubtedly have implications for doctrine in related policy areas (adoption by LGBT individuals, for example) and may lead, ultimately, to framing and persuasion processes in these areas similar to those examined in the present paper.

Apart from the implications for LGBT politics, the conclusions of the present paper bear on our understanding of the impact of the courts on public opinion in Canada. In short, it seems fair to conclude that the impact of the courts on public opinion is conditional. Opinion on gay marriage and its underlying structure did not move until the message of the courts was picked up by the legislatures. Two interpretations of this finding seem plausible. The first interpretation is that competing messages from the courts and legislatures tend to be offsetting or neutralizing. And this is as it should be, at least if Canadian citizens process the information stream in a probabilistic fashion, updating their distribution of cues on a given issue and taking the mean of these cues as their issue-position or relevant issue-frame. This interpretation suggests that the impact of the courts on public opinion is limited in sensible ways, the worst fears of ‘court party’ critics (Knopff and Morton 2000; see also Manfredi 2001) notwithstanding.<sup>26</sup> The second interpretation—also plausible—has less sanguine democratic implications. In this view, the important difference between a ‘court-only’ and a ‘court and legislature’ information flow is simply volume. Without the legislature, the signal of the court may not always be loud enough to reach the typical Canadian. This interpretation suggests that, under the right circumstances (i.e. when the court’s message is ‘loud enough’), democratic opinion may indeed move in blind allegiance to the conclusions of appointed judges. But this seems unlikely as an explanation here. On controversial issues, the signal of the Supreme Court always appears to be relatively loud, especially when the message is not contained in a single decision but in a series of decisions in a similar domain, which was certainly the case with regard to same-sex relationship recognition.

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<sup>26</sup> Of course, in the present case, the message of the legislatures was ultimately traceable to decisions of the court. Thus, the legislative message was not an ‘independent check’ on the influence of the court in any meaningful sense.

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Table 1. Gay Marriage Support, 1993-2000 (CES)

	Homosexual couples (gays and lesbians) should be allowed to be legally married.		
	1993	1997	2000
Strongly disagree	42.47	33.90	31.26
Somewhat disagree	13.69	19.10	11.26
Not sure/don't know	6.46	9.74	7.19
Somewhat agree	25.83	28.67	29.20
Strongly agree	11.55	8.60	21.09
N	3,732	1,838	3,589

Cell entries are percentages.

Table 2. Sociodemographic and Psychological Determinants of Gay Marriage Support, 1993-2000 (OLS Estimates)

	Gay Marriage Support		
	1993	1997	1993
Age	-0.019 (7.37)**	-0.017 (6.49)**	-0.026 (8.94)**
Woman	0.465 (6.02)**	0.329 (4.50)**	0.453 (5.32)**
Non-European	-0.237 (1.57)	0.076 (0.47)	-0.199 (1.59)
Non-religious	0.539 (4.76)**	0.518 (4.49)**	0.330 (2.86)**
University Degree	0.153 (1.62)	0.046 (0.50)	0.176 (1.77)
Income	0.036 (2.45)*	0.021 (1.47)	0.033 (2.10)*
Quebec	0.372 (3.16)**	0.333 (2.82)**	0.202 (1.57)
Atlantic	0.195 (1.36)	0.078 (0.59)	-0.054 (0.34)
West	-0.022 (0.23)	0.169 (1.92)	0.042 (0.39)
Liberal PID	-0.181 (1.80)	-0.028 (0.29)	0.093 (0.84)
Conservative PID	-0.025 (0.22)	-0.055 (0.47)	0.007 (0.05)
NDP PID	0.261 (1.74)	0.596 (4.04)**	0.252 (1.47)
Reform/Alliance PID	-0.120 (0.66)	-0.461 (3.54)**	-0.351 (2.13)*
BQ PID	0.148 (0.93)	0.237 (1.52)	-0.020 (0.12)
Moral Traditionalism	-0.133 (3.37)**	-0.255 (7.17)**	-0.230 (6.13)**
Equality Rights	0.190 (6.26)**	0.170 (5.30)**	0.258 (6.97)**
Minority Rights	0.098 (2.09)*	0.069 (1.48)	0.127 (2.51)*
Constant	1.679 (7.21)**	2.133 (10.01)**	2.663 (10.37)**
N	1817	1486	1264
R-squared	0.19	0.28	0.32

Robust t-statistics in parentheses

\* significant at 5% level; \*\* significant at 1% level

Table 3. Sociodemographic and Psychological Determinants of Gay Marriage Support, 1993-2000, Pooled Analysis (OLS Estimates)

	Gay Marriage Support	
	I	II
Age	-0.020 (13.06)**	-0.020 (13.03)**
Woman	0.414 (9.17)**	0.412 (9.10)**
Non-European	-0.159 (1.92)	-0.173 (2.09)*
Non-religious	0.477 (7.14)**	0.472 (7.09)**
University Degree	0.133 (2.42)*	0.142 (2.61)**
Income	0.031 (3.56)**	0.031 (3.57)**
Quebec	0.359 (4.64)**	0.305 (4.36)**
Quebec x 2000	-0.204 (1.81)	
Atlantic	0.071 (0.84)	0.068 (0.80)
West	0.052 (0.95)	0.047 (0.84)
Liberal PID	-0.048 (0.82)	-0.050 (0.84)
Conservative PID	-0.028 (0.39)	-0.032 (0.45)
NDP PID	0.239 (2.19)*	0.354 (3.90)**
NDP PID x 1997	0.364 (2.17)*	
Reform/Alliance PID	-0.123 (0.70)	-0.313 (3.38)**
Reform/Alliance PID x 1997	-0.271 (1.34)	
Reform/Alliance PID x 2000	-0.289 (1.32)	
BQ PID	0.126 (1.35)	0.116 (1.24)
Equality Rights	0.188 (6.44)**	0.184 (6.30)**
Equality Rights x 1997	-0.025 (0.60)	-0.012 (0.30)
Equality Rights x 2000	0.090 (1.95)	0.097 (2.12)*
Moral Traditionalism	-0.138 (3.58)**	-0.134 (3.47)**
Moral Traditionalism x 1997	-0.102 (2.04)*	-0.112 (2.25)*
Moral Traditionalism x 2000	-0.095 (1.85)	-0.100 (1.97)*
Minority Rights	0.096 (3.46)**	0.096 (3.46)**
1997	0.402 (2.07)*	0.414 (2.15)*
2000	0.643 (3.13)**	0.576 (2.83)**
Constant	1.776 (9.92)**	1.789 (10.00)**
N	4567	4567
R-squared	0.27	0.27

Robust t-statistics in parentheses

\* significant at 5% level; \*\* significant at 1% level

*Appendix*

Table A1. Descriptives

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	11261	44.71788	16.36421	18	101
Woman	11375	.5123516	.4998694	0	1
Non-European	11618	.1067309	.3087841	0	1
Non-religious	11132	.1465146	.3536372	0	1
University Degree	12371	.2026514	.4019911	0	1
Income	10130	4.450444	2.856381	1	10
Quebec	11188	.2942438	.4557225	0	1
Atlantic	11188	.1165535	.3209018	0	1
West	11188	.3311584	.4706509	0	1
Liberal PID	10173	.2937187	.455487	0	1
Conservative PID	10173	.1515777	.3586287	0	1
NDP PID	10173	.0712671	.2572831	0	1
Reform/Alliance PID	10173	.0770667	.2667104	0	1
BQ PID	10173	.0842426	.277765	0	1
Moral Traditionalism	5544	2.810967	1.141124	0	4
Equality Rights	5507	2.112402	1.309069	0	4
Minority Rights	5486	.6791834	.8500483	0	2

Pooled CES estimates (1993-2000); unweighted.