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Right-wing populism in a metropolis: Personal financial stress, conservative attitudes, and Rob Ford's Toronto

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ABSTRACT

Elections such as the UK “Brexit” referendum, Donald Trump’s ascendancy to the presidency, and the growth of the Alternative for Germany party in Germany have led to concerns about the viability of liberal democratic institutions. Voters appear increasingly drawn to populists. However, before Brexit, and before Trump, there was Toronto Mayor Rob Ford. Known equally for bizarre personal antics and outsider status, Ford is a classic case of a right-wing populist politician. We examine this relatively early manifestation of a populist by taking into account various factors. One dominant theoretical explanation is based on economic anxieties amidst increasing inequality and polarizing labor markets. A second, and perhaps more dominant theory, emphasizes working class xenophobia and racism. Results from an analysis of a 2014 survey suggest support can be explained by many factors, such as ideology, partisanship, social conservatism, education, financial stress, suburban residency, among others. Sometimes, factors show a direct link to support for Ford. In other cases, particularly as it relates to financial stress, the relationship is more complex. Also, analysis shows that visible minorities were more likely than non-visible minorities to support Ford, contrary to the general anti-immigrant and sometimes racist appeals of populists elsewhere.

Introduction

Rob Ford’s four years as mayor of Toronto created political and administrative chaos in Canada’s largest city, attracting global headlines as the world looked on in disbelief. He nonetheless enjoyed high levels of support among many residents of the city. Ford ascended to mayor in 2010 by an appeal to “ordinary” people, and by empathizing with their apparent plight of being ignored by “downtown elites.” In effect, he was an early incarnation of a wider global trend to support for populist politicians. While it is not overly surprising for populist leaders to emerge in advanced industrial democracies such as Canada, it was a surprise to many that such a figure would succeed in Canada’s largest, most cosmopolitan and most ethnically diverse city, especially given that in Canada populism typically has been a rural and Western phenomenon (Laycock, 1990; Lipset, 1950; Morton, 1960; Pinard, 1971). How populism was able to take hold in Toronto is the focus of our inquiry. Relatively little is known about the nature of Ford’s electoral coalition, but there certainly is an animated discussion about what drives populists elsewhere. Our goal is to take the case of Toronto in order to contribute to that global discussion.

Our analysis also contributes to another lesser known subject. Voter behavior at the municipal level has not generally drawn the attention of researchers in Canada. Cutler and Matthews (2005) once described municipal elections as “the poor cousins in the study of elections and voting behaviour” within Canada (p. 359). Unfortunately, this assertion still holds true. Only a handful of

studies in Canadian political science had made meaningful efforts at understanding the dynamics of local elections (see, for example: Kushner & Siegel, 2006; Kushner, Siegel, & Stanwick, 1997; McGregor & Spicer, 2016; Milner, 1997; Stanwick, 2000; Winn & McMenemy, 1973). Most of these studies relied upon aggregate data, with Cutler and Matthews (2005) being the first to use individual-level data to reach conclusions about voting behavior in municipal settings.

Since Cutler and Matthew's 2005 article, interest in Canadian municipal elections has increased, with the Toronto Election Study providing a wealth of knowledge about accountability and vote choice in the city (Stephenson, McGregor, & Moore, 2018), strategic voting (Caruana, McGregor, Moore, & Stephenson, 2017), incumbency and affinity voting (McGregor, Moore, Jackson, Bird, & Stephenson, 2017; Moore, McGregor, & Stephenson, 2017), and economic voting (Anderson, McGregor, Moore, & Stephenson, 2017).¹ However, even with a renewed interest in municipal voting behavior, no one has, to date, used individual-level survey data to understand the Rob Ford phenomenon.

There have been some aggregate-level studies that offer some important clues. For example, Taylor's (2011) analysis of the 2010 municipal election results found that low-income and suburban areas as well as neighborhoods with high rates of car ownership and car use were the best predictors of Ford's support. Walks (2015) similarly examined the underpinnings of Ford's support, finding that car dependency was only one part of the equation. Support for Ford, Walks argues, is tied to the politics of de-industrialization where Ford's victory can be partially attributed as "revenge" of the de-industrializing suburbs, where the fortunes of many are linked to the declining manufacturing sector. The promotion of the automobile was therefore not only a lifestyle based upon the low density of the neighborhoods of Ford supporters, but also their livelihoods (Walks, 2015). However, both of these analyses rely on aggregate voting and demographic data and thus are subject to the problem of ecological inference. That is to say, aggregate analysis cannot tell us what drove individual voters to support Ford.

Our contribution presents results of the only individual-level survey of Rob Ford's electoral base while he was still in office.² Our data looks at Ford's support during the summer of 2014, just as his re-election campaign was beginning, and before he fell ill and withdrew from the race. We test various possible factors, such as economic decline (particularly among the working class), car dependency, suburban residency, income, among others. We also examine the extent to which Ford's support in Toronto can be explained by variables drawn from theories of populism, such as those that look at ideological factors, whether someone is an immigrant, and racial background. We find Ford's support is not singular; many factors underpin his electoral base. All of the above-mentioned factors (among others) matter, but not all impose the same weight, and not all point to a direct path. The manner in which economic, attitudinal, geographic and other factors explain Ford's support are complex and often intertwined. Our objective here is to provide some clarity on how these factors relate to Ford's base, and perhaps how they relate to similar populist movements elsewhere.

Before we explore the complexity of Ford's support, we review his rise in Toronto and identify some characteristic populist elements. The paper then explores Ford's electoral appeal in light of contemporary accounts of populism, particularly at the local level.

Rob Ford and right-wing populism

Ford's mayoralty is one particular instance of a trend toward populism around the world (Brubaker, 2017; Kriesi, 2014; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017).³ Whether it is Donald Trump's presidential win in 2016, the surprising result in the UK "Brexit" referendum on European Union membership or the increased support for the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party in the 2017 German elections, there are concerns many voters seem prepared to support candidates and political parties that offer naively simple solutions to complex problems, or engage in scapegoating of minorities to assuage the base concerns of voters.

Populism appears to be finding a growing audience among those who favor a generally consistent bundle of views: restricting immigration, cynicism toward judges and the rule of law, debasing institutional norms, skepticism of journalism, and suspicion of "others" (e.g., Albertazzi &

McDonnell, 2007). These are all elements of contemporary populism, as defined by Müller (2017). He characterizes populism as a way people understand politics via “a particular moralistic imagination of politics that sets a morally pure and fully unified ... people against elites who are deemed corrupt or in some other way morally inferior” (Müller, 2017, pp. 19–20). However, in Müller’s view, populists are not just anti-elite; they are also anti-pluralists. That is to say, populists are hostile to the notion that one’s political opponents have a legitimate standing in the policy process and that debate, dissent and opposition are perfectly legitimate.

This conception of populism is a “thin” ideology that cannot transcend left-right cleavages (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). One consequence is that populism is as much a style of politics as it is an ideology. In order to communicate hostility toward elites, one has to act in non-elite ways. This accounts for much of the boorish behavior populists exhibit (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007).

Accordingly, Rob Ford was the quintessential right-wing populist. That is to say, he merged populist arguments and populist styles about elites and an alienated, pure people with right-wing concerns associated with smaller government and lower taxes. This is evidenced from the beginning of his career. He was first elected as a Toronto city councilor in 2000 and never wasted an opportunity to rail against the city’s “elites,” a political charge rooted in the urban/suburban divide (Doolittle, 2014). Within this context, the elites that Ford referred to belonged to the downtown Toronto political class and, in his mind, contrasted with his own more humble, working-class suburban constituency (Filion, 2011). When he was first elected mayor in 2010, Ford handily won the surrounding suburbs of Etobicoke, Scarborough and North York, beating out former provincial politician George Smitherman, a noted progressive who won the “old city” of Toronto, namely the downtown core (Robson, 2010).⁴

Ford’s campaign in 2010, as Walks (2015) describes, appealed directly to the suburbs: “Conservative Rob Ford’s approach centered on austerity, populism and appealing to suburban interests in preventing the shifting of resources from roads to public transit” (p. 412). In this, Ford privileged the suburban lifestyle over urban interests, favoring road construction over transit expansion and austerity over investments in public services. Where Ford did address transit funding, he focused on subway expansion so as to not interfere with surface road access for suburban drivers (Walks, 2015).

In addition to emphasizing the importance of small and efficient government, Ford demonstrated a classically populist trait by claiming to have a unique and direct relationship with voters. In his ward, Ford remained popular, winning re-election as councilor in 2003 with 80% of the vote and in 2006 with 66% support (Doolittle, 2014). He earned a reputation for prioritizing constituent problems, often giving out his personal cellular phone number to residents and encouraging them to call him directly as opposed to contacting the municipality with service requests or concerns (Keenan, 2013).

After serving three terms on council, Ford ran for mayor in 2010. His platform emphasized a full suite of classically conservative issues combined with populist issues unique to the urban context. He ran on a slogan of “stopping the gravy train,” actively opposed the construction of new bike lanes, vowed to end what he called the “war on the car” and focused on subways as opposed to surface transit (Doolittle, 2014; Keenan, 2013). In addition, his personal behavior featured public intoxication, foul language and illegal behavior. While puzzling and maddening to educated voters, Ford exhibited the communication styles associated with other populists. Far from alienating voters, these episodes defined him as a politician opposed to the “elites” and became a reason to support him.

This political platform shares some commonality with other right-wing populists in other municipalities. Generally, right-wing populist parties find more success in suburban municipalities than in the urban core (see Decker, de Kesteloot, de Maesschalck, & Vranken, 2005; Maesschalck, 2011). Such parties often create a discourse that paints urban leaders as out-of-touch leftist elites (Rydgren, 2008). While consistent with the messaging from Ford’s 2010 campaign, the anti-urban discourse from traditional right-wing populist parties is built around the idea that city centers are home to a disproportionate amount of crime and moral deviance (Van Gent, Jansen, & Smits, 2014).

Thus, there may be a moral dimension to the urban-suburban cleavage as it pertains to populism. Support for right-wing populist parties and politicians, then, can be partially explained by tapping into middle-class support concentrated in suburban and low-density neighborhoods with a message aimed at reclaiming urban space for daily use and a defensive strategy in view of metropolitan change (Van Gent et al., 2014).⁵

One feature of Rob Ford's electoral career stands in contrast to other right-wing populists. Populism in many places, and even in Canada as a whole, often contains an anti-immigrant or anti-refugee narrative. And this narrative often draws a link between immigration and crime (Dinas & Van Spanje, 2011). But it is important to understand that Ford rarely catered to overt racist sentiments to win support, as other right-wing populist politicians usually do. Rob and his brother Doug, who in 2010 was elected in his brother's former Ward 2 council seat, represented lower-income, diverse neighborhoods with high concentrations of immigrants. Instead, the Ford brothers' brand of populism was built around work ethic, which has broad appeal among many immigrant communities, and an opposition to out-of-touch elites in the urban core (Doolittle, 2014). Perhaps for this reason, Rob Ford was unlike most other right-wing populists elsewhere in the United States and Europe, in that he did not articulate racist or anti-immigrant positions. It is not to say he was perfect on this score, either. At times, he may have relied on racial stereotypes to make a point, which sound racist to educated ears, but these likely did not come across as such in the broader public. Perhaps the most infamous case of Ford using racially charged language was in a city council speech where he complained about Asian-Canadians "taking over," saying: "those Oriental people work like dogs ... they sleep besides their machines. The Oriental people, they're slowly taking over ... they're hard, hard workers" (Vincent, 2008). Without disputing that as essentially racist for its reliance on gross stereotypes, it is important to emphasize that in the mass public, this probably may very well have come across as a simplistic compliment. There were also clear incidents of Ford uttering racist slurs that were brought to the attention of Toronto's integrity commissioner (Rider, 2015). However, such incidents contrast starkly against the opening speech of Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, in which he characterized Mexican migrants as rapists and drug dealers. Later, in his campaign, Trump escalated a public controversy attacking the family of a decorated Muslim war veteran, insinuating the mother was not speaking out because her religion would not allow it. Rob Ford's popularity, however, was not built on these explicit appeals to race or religion.

Thus, the case of Rob Ford can be instructive for several reasons. First, is geographical unit. Populism is usually studied at the national and sub-national level, whereas the Rob Ford phenomenon occurred at the municipal level. Second, whereas populism in Canada has historically manifested itself in agrarian communities and the west (Laycock, 1990; Lipset, 1950; Morton, 1960; Pinard, 1971), Rob Ford's populism grew in the Canadian urban heartland. Toronto is, of course, the capital of the province of Ontario and the largest city in Canada. Toronto also has a reputation as a progressive, forward-thinking city, meaning few expected a populist right-wing politician could succeed easily in becoming the city's mayor (Spurr, 2014). Third, while his career occurred roughly contemporaneously as populists such as Donald Trump and Viktor Orban and the AfD in Germany, Ford was unique in that he never overtly catered to racist and xenophobic tensions. Fourth, and lastly, no one has, to date, used individual-level survey data to analyze the base of support for Rob Ford during his time as mayor.

Theoretical accounts of right-wing populism

Multiple theoretical accounts of right-wing populism can be brought to bear to understand Rob Ford's appeal. Our approach is to take into account various possible factors. As a starting point, we begin with a common heuristic in the literature that distinguishes economic from "cultural" explanations. Currently, the bulk of the political science literature that relies on individual-level survey data emphasizes cultural explanations. Some believe populism stems from a cultural countermovement of individuals who oppose "liberal" values (e.g., Ignazi, 1992, 2003; Inglehart, 1990, 1997, 2008; Kaufmann, 2017). Surveying international developments,

Tyler Cowen (2017) notes strong economic growth in countries, such as in China and the Philippines, has not stopped the rise of nationalism and populist governments. “It’s time to admit that the nationalist turn in global politics isn’t mainly about economics or economic failures. ... One obvious explanation for populism and nationalism is that many countries are globalizing with more immigration, trade and foreign investment. It’s a cultural crisis more than an economic one, as citizens see their national identities shifting” (Cowen, 2017, p. 4). More systematically, Inglehart and Norris (2016) find measures of economic insecurity only tenuously and inconsistently linked to support for populist parties. By contrast, measures that tap cultural values, including anti-immigrant attitudes, support for authoritarian values, mistrust of government and left-right self-placement were much more strongly and consistently related to support for populist parties. Kaufmann (2017) notes a strong correlation between opposition to immigration and a nostalgic belief that things were better in the past. Using European Social Survey data, Davis and Deole (2015) find cultural concerns about immigration more influential than economic concerns in shaping ideology and the probability of voting for a right-wing party.

In contrast, there are those who see an economic driver behind the rise of populist movements. The theoretical argument of this connection has a long tradition. Lipset (1960) notes one key condition of a stable liberal democracy is generalized affluence, whereby a society may not necessarily have complete equality of condition, but at the very least, there should not be a demographic group that consistently struggles. When this happens, the struggling group begins to question the legitimacy of the political system. Such sentiments, Lipset describes, can take different forms. Economic concerns can lead working- middle-, and even upper-class voters to embrace populist parties. This can be driven by fear and anxiety at the prospect of looming status loss, or it might be driven by anger and resentment at the growing inequality.

Contemporary research bears out Lipset’s hypothesis. Macroeconomic trends in the distribution of income and wealth provide more than enough material to activate mechanisms. Decline in wages, or stagnant growth, has eroded the middle class, leaving few unscathed. In both Canada and the United States, people who describe themselves as “middle class” has declined from 60% to 70% in 2002 to 47% in 2015 (Graves, 2016). In a revealing *Atlantic* article, Gabler (2016) summarized economic research on the phenomenon of financial fragility, confessing that despite high levels of consumption and income, he and his family would not be able to cover a \$400 emergency cost without borrowing money or selling something. Lusardi, Schneider, and Tufano (2011) found nearly one-quarter of Americans earning between \$100,000 and \$150,000 would have difficulty coming up with \$2,000 in 30 days for an emergency because of high costs of living in urban areas, housing, child care and, in particular, debt servicing. Walks (2013) linked the problem of growing household indebtedness in Canada and found that the highest rates of household debt were found in fringe suburban areas, where people are dependent on cars. Gabler (2016) summarizes the psychological effects of this stress: “Financial impotence casts a pall of misery. It keeps you up at night and makes you not want to get up in the morning. It forces you to recede from the world. It eats at your sense of self-worth, your confidence, your energy, and, worst of all, your hope.” Such sentiments may drive support for populism. Famously, Piketty (2014) has shown that when wages do not keep up with profits, conditions become favorable to populist candidates. Other contemporary research shows long-term economic distress can contribute to measurable political consequences (Jacobs, 2007; Wroe, 2014, 2016). The economic discontent perspective on populism has drawn the attention of high-profile individuals, such as the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, who noted: “With lower growth, more inequality and much more transparency, I think you have the good ingredients of what is defined now as a crisis of the middle class in the advanced economies” (Clinch, 2017).

An analysis of populism through the lens of economics must also attend to questions of methodology. On this, we raise three points. First, economic voting research typically uses two measures, those pertaining to the national economy (sociotropic), and those focusing on personal

finances (egocentric). While it seems logical to assume voters are responsive to changes in personal conditions (Downs, 1957), research suggests it rarely matters as a significant vote consideration. The consensus is that voters are more responsive to sociotropic conditions (Duch, Palmer, & Anderson, 2000; Lewis-Beck, 1988; Lewis-Beck & Paldam, 2000; Markus, 1988; Nadeau, Blais, Nevitte, & Gidengil, 2000). Income, too, has failed to connect clearly to vote choice (Blais & Nadeau, 1984). However, it should be noted such measures take into account a short period of time, typically a year. When changes to economic conditions are considered over a longer time span, economic strain is more clearly associated with lower levels of efficacy, lower support for mainstream parties, and lower levels of confidence toward institutions (Perrella, 2005, 2009; Perrella, Bélanger, Nadeau, & Foucault, 2016).

Second, much of the political research that does emphasize the role of economics in generating support for right-wing populism does not derive from individual-level surveys of voter attitudes, but from macroeconomic patterns and correlations with political variables. For example, Hernández and Kriesi (2016) find voters in Western Europe were more likely to punish mainstream incumbent parties and drift to radical left-wing or populist right-wing parties in the wake of the 2008 economic crisis. Similarly, Swank and Betz (2003) show universal welfare states depress support for far-right parties. More recently, Rodrik (2017) has shown the importance of economic forces in explaining populism. Echoing Lipset (1960), he emphasizes populism can take different ideological forms, noting that European populist parties tend to be anti-immigrant and right-wing in large part because those countries experience globalization as a phenomenon associated with immigration. Latin American countries, however, experience populism as class- and economic-based in large part because they experience globalization as a phenomenon of capital mobility. This also lends some credence to an economic theory of contemporary populism.

Of course, it would be foolish to think a political phenomenon such as right-wing populism could be only explained by one or the other set of explanations. Instead, it is much more likely they work together. For example, Gidron and Hall (2017) identify the anxiety associated with status decline as a proximate cause of support for right-wing populist parties over the past 30 years. Crucially, however, they argue that “subjective social status is likely to be conditioned both by material circumstances and by prevailing cultural beliefs about what is most valued in society” (p. 58). As a consequence, explaining right-wing populism requires attending to possible ways economics and cultural considerations work together. One possibility is for economic strains and more cultural, attitudinal, factors work independently, each contributing some influence on the appeal of populism. Alternatively, there may be a more complex dynamic. Plausibly, economic constraints may shape one’s views, or, if people lack any deep-rooted values or attitudes, concerns borne by economic decline may predispose them to a cultural narrative, whether the narrative points to bureaucratic elites, journalists, or immigrants as the enemy.

In addition to the very broad categories of economics and culture, we also investigate the spatial nature of support for Rob Ford’s mayoralty. Specifically, it is possible Ford’s success was mainly, if not entirely, a reflection of the urban/suburban divide. As noted, some evidence suggests contemporary right-wing populism does better in suburban areas than urban areas. However, there is no consensus on what the source of that link is. On the one hand, people in suburbs are known to vote more conservatively than those from urban areas (Roy, Perrella, & Borden, 2015). There are some reasons for this. Some literature suggests individuals who live in suburban areas are conservative because they tend to be married, own a home, have children, all factors normally associated with conservative preferences (Greer & Greer, 1976; Taylor, 1969). However, other research suggests community characteristics actually have an important role in shaping political preferences (Walks, 2008). In other words, it is possible that the municipal dimension is independent of socio-demographics. Others argue that since large cities tend to attract high-wage jobs and accrue high-status as a result, residents of suburban areas who face the prospects of deindustrialization might experience status decline and respond to right-wing populist appeals against cosmopolitan elites (Gidron & Hall, 2017). Yet, others argue that right-wing populist support in suburbs might be

a product of automobile dependency (Filion, 2011). Needless to say, it is important to examine how suburban-specific issues play in shaping support for a right-wing populist mayor.

Next, we look directly at the question of xenophobia, a common driver of populist movements elsewhere. As noted, Ford did not overtly appeal to racist sentiments, nor did he target immigrants as a cause of Toronto's social ills. Additionally, a journalistic examination of the geography of the "Ford Nation" coalition, built on examining poll-level demographic and voting data from the 2010 campaign, show neighborhoods densely populated with immigrants tended to favor Ford (Cain, 2014). Because of the overwhelming tendency of right-wing populist politicians to appeal to voters' anger by targeting ethnic minorities, the possibility that Ford's support may have been built primarily of immigrant voters would be surprising and noteworthy. On the other hand, right-wing populist rhetoric appeals to many sources: economic grievances, status decline, nostalgia. Some of these may appeal to immigrant communities; they may feel like outsiders and desire an uncorrupted champion. For this reason, we also examine the role of ethnicity in Ford's electoral coalition.

Data and methods

Rob Ford's base of support was examined through data from an Ipsos online "exit poll" for the June 12, 2014, Ontario provincial election.⁶ Ipsos regularly administers an online election-day survey for federal and most provincial elections. The 2014 Ontario election-day survey provided an opportunity to include additional questions. One asked: "Thinking now of Toronto politics, would you say you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove, or strongly disapprove of the job that Mayor Rob Ford is doing as mayor of Toronto?" This question serves as the dependent variable.

The Ipsos survey is purposely kept short to encourage high levels of participation, with some items considered standard. Most obvious are socio-demographic and self-reported vote questions.⁷ The availability of a nearly complete set of social-demographic profile of respondents is useful as the starting point to explore the origins of support for a political actor, particularly one that is so polarizing. Political attitudes and preferences do not form in a vacuum. They can trace their roots to a person's gender, ethnicity, occupation, income, and other background factors. The manner such social-demographic items contribute to the development of political orientations and preferences is outlined by the multi-step vote model (Blais, Gidengil, Nadeau, & Nevitte, 2002; Gidengil, Nevitte, Blais, Everitt, & Fournier, 2012), which is based on the "funnel of causality" made famous by the Michigan school of voter behavior (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960; Miller & Shanks, 1996). In this framework, variables are entered in stages from the most remote (and distant in time) to the most proximate. Factors at an early stage can influence factors at a later stage, and all can influence a person's ultimate vote decision. But it is a complex model, involving far more factors than we can account for given the data at hand. Nonetheless, it offers a useful and logical guide.

As noted, the first stage comprises the most remote variables, namely socio-demographic background. These include age, gender, race, immigrant status, religion, occupation, education, income and suburban residency. We are especially interested in immigrant status and race, given the ethnocentricity characteristic of other populist movements elsewhere. As noted above, Ford did not directly appeal to racial tensions, but it is worthy to look at whether his appeal resonated more with Canadian-born voters, or those who are not visible minorities, or whether there is any distinction, at all, between the two groups.

We track respondents' religions to determine if Ford's support can be explained, even partly. It has been noted that some religions are more likely aligned to conservatism than others (Kay, Perrella, & Brown, 2009). To account for this possibility, we include religious affiliation as a set of three dummies: (1) Catholic; (2) Protestant; (3) other religions. Those who indicated "no religion" was set as the reference category.

Another question we were able to include in the Ipsos survey asked respondents if they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "Having an extra \$50 at the end of the month would really make a difference to me."⁸ It is important to note what, precisely, this question measures. Sears and

Funk (1990) note survey questions that test the rational voter and economic voting hypotheses differ on two dimensions. First, respondents can be asked prospective or retrospective questions (i.e., what they expect to happen in the future versus what they perceived has happened). Second, questions can assess objective or subjective assessments (i.e., relying on real-world measures, such as unemployment rates, versus what respondents' perceive as their financial situation). Often, in both cases, questions include a time dimension, as in this example from the Canadian Election Study of 2015: "Over the past year, has your financial situation gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?" The key factor we are testing here measures respondents' subjective sense of their *current* financial situation, with no reference to any confined period. Their current financial situation could have remained unchanged over a number of years, but still be either comfortable or strained. For this reason, our measure of economic stress does not equate with "economic evaluations," which the Michigan and multi-step models situate *after* ideological and partisan considerations. Our measure of financial stress serves as a summary of one's overall condition, arguably a more long-term consideration, and thus, something closer to socio-demographic factors. The argument here is that a person's condition in life is more likely shaped by socio-demographic background, such as education, occupation, income, and age, rather than by one's ideological predisposition or partisan identification. In any case, we test both scenarios; we consider financial stress as a proxy of economic evaluation, and we also test whether it is more suitably placed immediately following socio-demographic factors.

The importance of distinguishing between a subjective sense of being financially stressed from an objective assessment of a household's wealth and income is laid bare in Figure 1. Our data suggest the two are related; the higher one's income, the less likely one agrees that an extra \$50 would make a difference. And yet, astonishingly, 36% of people reporting household income more than \$100,000 per year agreed that an extra \$50 per month would make a difference.

We do not have data to determine why that is. Income is one factor that can explain one's feeling of financial stress, but cash flow considerations are also affected by expenses and debt, about which we do not know. How one responds to this question provides a summary assessment of their current financial situation, regardless of its source, and regardless of how long they have been in that state. In any case, we hypothesize that those who feel financial stress are more likely to respond favorably to populist appeals.

Related to financial constraints are the characteristics of certain occupations, particularly those that qualify as "working class." As Walks (2015) noted, membership to declining struggling sectors is a likely contributor to Ford's electoral support. We track occupation through a survey item that

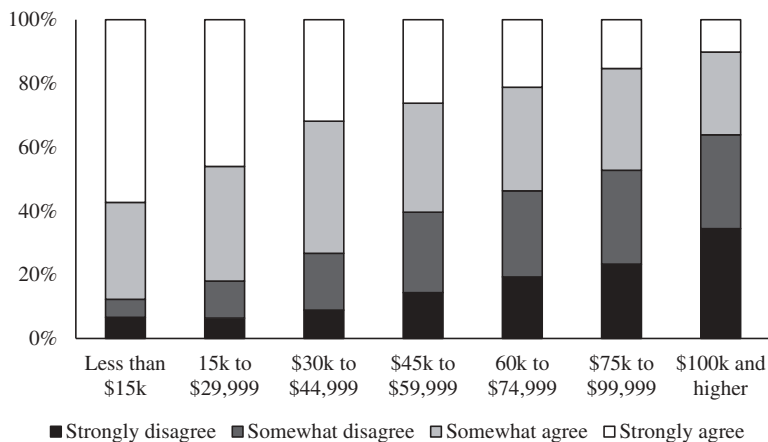


Figure 1. Financial stress and household income.

asked respondents to identify their occupation from a list of 40. We converted this list into a dummy variable where a score of 1 identifies occupational categories regarded as “working class,” such as miner, construction worker, assembly line worker, mechanic, etc. (see [Appendix A](#) for a complete list). This working-class variable serves to test Walks’ (2015) assertion that it is this group and the declining importance of manufacturing that has driven them toward Ford.

Because of the specific nature of municipal issues and given the findings from Taylor (2011) that suburban neighborhoods and those with high rates of automobile use were strongly related to support for Ford, we included a series of related measures. We generated a measure of automobile dependency based on two items: (1) car ownership; and (2) how respondents travel to work each day. Respondents who owned a car and those who commuted by car were each given a score of 1. The items were combined into a 0-to-1 index; the higher the score, the higher the automobile dependency.

Given the general propensity of suburban voters to lean right (Roy et al., 2015), respondents’ postal forward sortation area codes (which were tracked by Ipsos) were used to determine if a respondent resided in suburban or urban area. Most of these suburban areas correspond to the outlying municipalities of pre-amalgamation Toronto, such as Etobicoke (where the Fords live), Scarborough, and North York.

The ideological argument is potentially very useful in understanding Rob Ford’s appeal. His general support of conservative policies may explain his appeal among voters of similar ideological views. We test this with a scale composed of four separate questions that ask about the role of government and the economy, government budgets and the size of the civil service. These items were combined into a measure that scores from a low of 0 (not conservative) to 1 (very conservative). Respondents who score high support smaller government budgets, reductions to the civil service and oppose government intervention in the economy. These items form, admittedly, a thin measure of ideology, and perhaps more accurately capture ephemeral opinions that reflect salient narratives rather than deep-rooted values and orientations. Nonetheless, if an anti-elite populist narrative, such as Ford’s, has had any sway with conservative voters, it should be reflected in responses to these questions.

Perhaps a more deep-rooted measure of values concerns religiosity. Religiosity’s association with Ford support is not obvious, as he was not a strong representative of socially conservative views, although he did make a clear and visible point to not march in Toronto’s Gay Pride parade, a move that was possibly seen by social conservatives as a signal of his opposition to same-sex marriage.⁹ We constructed a scale of religiosity from four items that ask a range of questions about religious practice. Similar to ideology, a score of 0 reflects a complete absence of religious convictions, while a 1 indicates a highly religious respondent. The role of religion here serves to measure the anti-liberalism backlash associated with populism. As noted, social conservatives may view contemporary regimes as catering too much to a liberal agenda. While the survey does not contain suitable measures of social conservatism, this religiosity index serves as a proxy.

The next stage of factors to consider is partisanship. Rob Ford was a supporter of the Ontario Progressive Conservative party, and his brother, Doug, later became its leader. Soon after, he won the general election in June, 2018, and was made premier of Ontario. While there is no doubt Rob Ford was partisan to the PCs, it is a worthwhile question as to whether he drew his followers from the same partisan camp. Unfortunately, the Ipsos survey does not contain an item that measures party identification. In its absence, we use as a proxy a set of questions that ask how respondents had voted in the 2014 and in the previous Ontario general election in 2011. On each item, respondents were scored a 1 if they had indicated a vote for the PCs. Both items were then combined and rescaled 0 to 1, where 1 indicates a vote for the PC in both elections, .5 indicates a vote for PC once, and 0 indicates a vote for some other party in both elections. Any of Ford’s appeal attributable to his support of conservative policies and parties will be reflected by this partisan proxy measure.

Two observations must be made about the data. First, the survey took place in June 2014, years after Rob Ford’s election and after a litany of jaw-dropping scandals, including videotapes of Ford being intoxicated after ingesting narcotics, and 3 months before his re-election campaign ended on

September 12. As such, these data do not necessarily tell us anything about who *elected* Mayor Ford. But they do shed light on who *supported* Rob Ford, frankly, at his lowest level of support and darkest hours. The data offer a glimpse into the hard coalition that supported Toronto's right-wing populist mayor.

Second, as our questions about support for Ford were part of a broader Ontario-wide survey,¹⁰ we did not have full control over the final questionnaire. As such, some important measures were not included. For example, the survey did not contain questions that probes respondents' views toward immigration, or measures of political knowledge. While these limitations make this dataset less than ideal, the survey nonetheless provides a sufficient basis upon which to draw some important insights.

Results

The key dependent variable that measures Rob Ford's approval provides four categories, from strongly approve to strongly disapprove. As shown in Figure 2, the distribution is highly asymmetrical. This reflects the tumultuous nature of Ford's mayoralty and his resulting unpopularity. But it bears emphasizing again, even after dozens of allegations of wrongdoing, outlandish and embarrassing behavior and criminal activity, roughly one third of respondents either strongly or somewhat approved of the job Rob Ford was doing. As stated above, this variable reflects Ford's most strident supporters. Nonetheless, the highly skewed nature of this support is treated by collapsing the variable into a simple approve/disapprove dichotomy. Consequently, analysis of Ford's support is conducted with logistic regression.

Table 1 presents three models, each with additional variables, following the logic of the multi-step model. Model 1 contains only socio-demographic items; Model 2 includes ideology and religiosity; Model 3 includes partisanship.¹¹ A few notable observations can be made.

First, some socio-demographic variables remain significant in all three models. These include age, gender, race, education and automobile dependency. Occupation (i.e., working class), never appears significant. But this does not necessarily challenge Walks' (2015) findings. Results from a series of regression models (not shown here) show that the variance from the working-class variable is absorbed by other variables, most notably automobile dependency, suburban residence, income and financial stress. This makes sense considering employment in any single occupation may not necessarily lead to political views favorable to a populist appeal. Instead, populism may appeal to the working-class because of generally low incomes, or the fact that such jobs are located in industrial

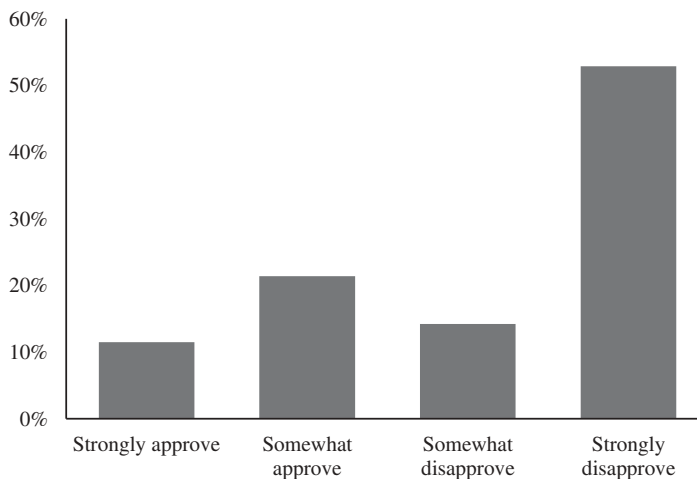


Figure 2. Approval for Rob Ford.

Table 1. Logistic regression estimates for Rob Ford approval.

	1			2			3		
	Coef.	Std. Err.	Sig.	Coef.	Std. Err.	Sig.	Coef.	Std. Err.	Sig.
Age	−1.056	.481	.028	−1.650	.534	.002	−1.830	.543	.001
Gender (male)	.682	.163	.000	.470	.180	.009	.426	.182	.020
Canadian born	−.459	.188	.015	−.360	.209	.085	−.396	.211	.061
Visible minority	.660	.220	.003	.618	.247	.012	.668	.249	.007
Religion									
Catholic	.928	.223	.000	.488	.295	.098	.478	.300	.111
Protestant	.665	.214	.002	.247	.266	.352	.171	.270	.525
Other religion	.780	.258	.002	.529	.303	.081	.507	.305	.097
Post-secondary education	−1.123	.253	.000	−1.143	.275	.000	−1.202	.279	.000
Working class	.467	.458	.308	.186	.508	.715	.263	.521	.613
Income	−.446	.354	.207	−.862	.391	.027	−1.035	.399	.010
Automobile dependency	.785	.228	.001	.683	.252	.007	.682	.256	.008
Suburban residence	.509	.177	.004	.284	.197	.149	.237	.200	.234
Financial stress	.889	.247	.000	.349	.274	.203	.424	.278	.128
Ideology	-	-	-	3.149	.298	.000	2.307	.357	.000
Religiosity	-	-	-	.999	.310	.001	1.075	.315	.001
Partisanship	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.060	.259	.000
Intercept	−1.042	.495	.035	−1.718	.553	.002	−1.325	.565	.019
N	936			936			936		
Pseudo R-sq	.223			.395			.413		
−2 Log likelihood	977.317			832.741			815.572		

zones often ill served by transit, or also perhaps because individuals employed in such jobs may choose to reside in suburban areas where housing is more affordable than in Toronto's core.

Second, two key variables lose their significance in Model 2: suburban residency and financial stress. Regarding suburban residency, recall previous research has shown those who reside in a suburban area tend to support conservative candidates, and results here support that argument. Furthermore, the models suggest ideology functions as a mediating variable; when included, it absorbs the variance of suburban residency.¹² The suburban conservative hypothesis is further confirmed in the OLS regression analysis in Table 2, which shows suburban residency imposes a positive effect on right-wing views. It should be noted suburban residency is also related to religiosity, but various tests do not suggest religiosity confounds the relationship between suburban residency and support for Ford. We also examined models (not shown here) that consider religiosity as more exogenous to political ideology (and even as exogenous as religious affiliation), but generate no result that qualifies our view of ideology as the mediator between suburban residency and support for Ford.

The second variable to lose significance is financial stress. Similar to suburban residency, one's financial stress does not influence views of Ford, directly. Instead, financial stress affects one's ideological views, rendering them to support more right-wing positions. This is further confirmed in Table 2. In addition, the standardized beta score for financial stress is .186, the highest among the list of variables, even higher than suburban residency (.119), and retains this rank even when religiosity is included, making stress the strongest variable. One standard deviation change in financial stress raises one's conservatism by a magnitude of .186 standard deviation points. It should also be noted financial stress does not at all behave like "economic evaluations," a later factor of the multi-step model. Not shown here, but a logit model of Ford's approval that adds financial stress last not only fails to achieve significance, but its inclusion does not change the coefficients of the other variables. Consequently, there is no evidence financial stress functions akin to the more standard economic-vote items.

A third notable observation concerns income. First, income is negatively associated with support for Ford, which itself is not surprising in light of the economic argument of populism, and consistent with the finding for financial stress. However, income is not significant in Model 1, and only emerges significant in Models 2 and 3, when ideology, religiosity and partisanship are included.

Table 2. OLS regression estimates for ideology.

	Coef.	Beta	Std. Err.	Sig.
Age	.084	.047	.061	.170
Gender (male)	.094	.144	.021	.000
Canadian born	−.039	−.054	.025	.112
Visible minority	.027	.030	.031	.381
Religion				
Catholic	.035	.047	.028	.211
Protestant	.048	.070	.026	.065
Other religion	.027	.029	.033	.406
Post-secondary education	−.074	−.068	.035	.037
Working class	.085	.042	.064	.184
Income	.120	.095	.045	.008
Automobile dependency	.076	.090	.029	.009
Suburban residence	.079	.119	.022	.000
Financial stress	.169	.186	.032	.000
Intercept	.187	-	.065	.004
N	936			
Adj. R-sq	.107			
SSE	.307			

Such results suggest a suppressor effect, which can occur if two independent variables have opposite effects on the dependent variable—one yields a positive association, the other a negative association—while the two independent variables, themselves, may be positively related. Here, the suppressor is ideology. Income is positively associated to ideology, whereby individuals with higher incomes tend to be more conservative (also reflected in Table 2). But, as reported, individuals who struggle financially *also* tend to support conservative ideas. This is not entirely a contradiction, as one's income level does not directly translate to comfortable financial circumstances. As noted in our discussion of our measure for financial stress, there are expenses, debts, and even lifestyle expectations to consider that are independent of actual income. Those who suffer financial stress may, therefore, be open to political views that challenge contemporary government as too big, too expensive, too eager to tax and splurge on excessive projects, or too willing to help others (presumably less-deserving others), leaving hard-working financially struggling taxpayers to fend for themselves.

A fourth notable finding is perhaps the most surprising. Visible minorities were *more* likely to approve of Ford. There is even some indication Ford's appeal was greater among immigrants rather than those who were born in Canada; the "Canadian born" variable is always negative, but only marginally significant ($p < .10$) in Models 2 and 3. If Rob Ford is, indeed, a true populist, then his brand of populism certainly does not resemble one that appeals to an ethnocentric base common in Europe and the United States.

Results from Table 1 reveal other findings, some are far less surprising. Men were more likely than women to approve of Ford, which may simply reflect a widely seen pattern of gender's association to ideological views and vote behavior (Gidengil, 1995; Gidengil et al., 2012; Norris, 1988). Finally, education is an important determinant of Ford's support. Table 1 includes a dummy variable for post-secondary education, which consistently yields a high and negative coefficient in all three models. Individuals with high levels of education are less likely to support Ford. In a simulation based on Model 3 of Table 1, the probability of supporting Ford nearly doubles from .34 among those with post-secondary education to .63 among those without.¹³

Conclusion

Rob Ford's single term as Toronto's Mayor proved chaotic for the city's politics, but still informative for those hoping to better understand the nature of populism, especially in urban and peri-urban settings. Ford, however, was not a typical populist, which makes his time in office all the more

intriguing and potentially informative in making sense of this global political movement. Ford's campaign and term in office was intentionally divisive, as populist campaigns and administrations generally are, but his coalition was remarkably broad and diverse, including not just disaffected groups of lower-income voters, but also middle-to-upper income and immigrant communities.

Our approach to understand this diverse coalition began by acknowledging a debate within current scholarship. For many, the origins of populism are attributable either to economics or to culture. Economic accounts of populism tend to focus on inequality, stagnating wages and deindustrialization. Values- and culture-based accounts of populism tend to emphasize anti-immigrant sentiments and xenophobia. Both accounts can be correct, albeit, incomplete. Both accounts also approach the question differently. There are distinctions in data and methodology, to be sure. Most individual-level surveys of support for populist candidates in Europe and North America tend to the cultural interpretation. Whereas, studies that emphasize the importance of economics tend to rely on aggregate macroeconomic patterns and election results.

Our findings are unique in that they rely on an individual-level survey and show support for a right-wing populist candidate is a product of several factors. For certain, ideology and religiosity are important, and quite proximate to the vote. But behind those factors are others. Here, we find evidence for the role of personal financial stress, but not as a direct influence on views of Ford. Instead, financial stress and its effect on support for Ford mainly functions through ideology. Also, this is separate from actual income. While individuals with higher incomes tend to be more conservative, those who struggle financially—regardless of their income level—tend also to believe in conservative ideas.

It is plausible the items that compose our “thin” measure of conservatism are understood differently by different respondents. Those with high incomes may be driven by a desire for a lower-tax climate, simply in order to keep more of their earnings. Hence, they favor smaller governments, and tighter public budgets. However, those who struggle financially—regardless of income—may understand these questions differently. They may be responding to a narrative of striking vengeance against an out-of-touch state that seems more prepared to sap money from hardworking people. In other words, the survey instrument used here to measure ideology may be reflecting different worlds of understanding. Bourdieu (1973), it should be noted, aptly challenged the notion that a survey question is understood equally by all respondents. This may explain why conservative ideas can be equally appealing to those who may materially benefit from it, in contrast to those who may see in conservative ideas a satisfying response to their plight. Whether this interpretation is correct is beyond our data's ability to determine. All we can conclude is that both economic and cultural concerns matter, but for different reasons. Economic conditions likely establish a foundation favorable for an ideological or cultural narrative. Hence, one's views are shaped by one's financial situation, and our analysis supports this conclusion. Our results suggest those who face financial stress may be more conservative, perhaps even more socially conservative, and this leads to a more favorable view of Ford.

Moreover, and in stark contrast with much of what is discussed about populism, our results show Ford's brand of populism drew much support among visible minorities and immigrants, rather than being a product of racism or anti-immigrant sentiments. This further suggests populism may be rooted deeper within economic circumstances rather than ethnic or cultural orientations, and that in some contexts, economic grievances can be articulated in the form of racial tensions or an anti-immigrant narrative. Obviously, not in Toronto, where the majority of the population is foreign-born.

We acknowledge limitations to our results. First, our results are predicated on a particular question about economics that targets respondent's financial anxiety, not how they view macroeconomic performance or what role the government has played in their financial situation. Second, our results do not contain a measure of anti-immigrant sentiment or xenophobia. It is possible these results are unique to one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities, where it would be nearly impossible to win a plurality of votes railing against immigrants. Even if this is not common in other countries, Ford's case shows it is possible.

Notes

1. In addition to the Toronto Election Study, further work is being done through the Canadian Municipal Election Study. For more information see www.cmes-eemc.ca.
2. A team at Western University (McGregor, Moore, & Stephenson, 2014) conducted an individual-level survey during the campaign, covering the months of September and October, but after Rob Ford's withdrawal.
3. While the province of Ontario and the City of Toronto have elected politicians that some might refer to as right-wing populists (e.g. Premier Mitch Hepburn in the 1930s; Mayor Alan Lamport, 1950s; Mayor Mel Lastman, 1990s), the province's politics have been dominated by moderate conservatism, even puritanism. The province's motto on its coat of arms, "loyal she began and loyal she remains," speaks to its identity of loyalty to the British Empire. Moreover, the province's longest-serving premier, Bill Davis, famously noted that, in Ontario, "bland works."
4. The City of Toronto is the result of a 1998 amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto. The City of Toronto Act consolidated the upper-tier Metro level of government with the lower-tier municipalities of East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, Toronto and York (see Spicer, 2014).
5. This is, of course, not to say that such parties are homogenous. Local context can exist. For instance, Netherlands' Partij Voor de Vrijheid is often pointed to as a very typical populist party, built on an anti-immigration base. However, it also has traditionally supported very liberal social policies, such as support for same-sex marriage.
6. The sample was drawn from the Ipsos's online panel, which ranks among Canada's largest, comprising over 200,000 households. Respondents are recruited with a mix of probability and non-probability methods. To remain in the panel, respondents must participate reliably and regularly. Responses are subject to quality control to check for straight-lining and satisficing (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001). Respondents from the panel are drawn with quota sampling to ensure demographic representation.
7. Efforts are made to ensure the online sample reflects the overall population. However, as when compared against data from the 2016 Canada Census, some notable biases are apparent. In particular, respondents in the 2014 survey are older, more likely to be female, and wealthier than the overall population of Toronto. Weights can adjust the sample to render it more reflective of population parameters, but corrective weights had no effect on results. For this reason, analysis is based on unweighted data.
8. We thank Dr. Peter Graefe from McMaster University for suggesting this type of question.
9. Interesting to note that when Rob Ford's brother, Doug, ran for the leadership of the Ontario PC party in 2018, he stated that as premier he might reconsider the policy of not requiring teenage girls to seek parental permission to obtain an abortion (Ferguson, 2018), interpreted as a pro-life stance.
10. While the survey was administered to all respondents throughout Ontario, analysis here focuses only on respondents who reside in the City of Toronto.
11. The multi-step model continues to include evaluations of parties with the final stage being the actual vote choice. We do not construct the complete model as our analysis is limited to evaluations of Ford and not actual vote choice for Toronto mayor.
12. It should be noted that results in the Roy et al. (2015) do not suggest ideology confounds the effect of suburban residency, but that suburban residency, independently, has a positive association to voting conservative. But that study used a subjective measure of suburban residency as the dataset comprised of respondents from all over Canada, imposing challenges on using any objective geographical definitions of an urban-suburban boundary. Here, the focus is on Toronto where urban and suburban neighborhoods are more clearly defined.
13. When estimating probabilities, all variables are assigned a score of .5, with the following exceptions: for religion, Protestant is set to 1, all other religion dummies are set to 0; working class and suburban residency were both set to 0.

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Appendix A

The following is a details description of variable coding. Variable names are in *italics*, followed by the exact wording of the survey question. In all cases, respondents were excluded if they refused to answer or indicated that they “don’t know.” The following list shows all retained responses, followed by their scores as coded for analysis.

Age. Respondent age ranges from 18 to 98. This was transformed to a 0-to-1 range.

Automobile dependency. The following two items were combined to generate a measure of automobile dependency:

- “Currently, do you personally own a motor vehicle such as a car, truck, motorcycle, moped, trailer or off-road vehicle that is registered in your name? If so, how many?” A score of 1 was assigned to those who indicated that they owned a car, regardless of how many vehicles they own; 0 for those who indicated that they did not own a motor vehicle.
- “Thinking about your commute to your place of employment, how do you usually get to work?” Those who traveled by car (single passenger or carpooling) were assigned a 1; 0 to those who walk, cycle or use public transit (including subway, bus, etc.). Individuals who indicated that they are currently not working were also coded as 0.

Canadian born. Respondents born in Canada were scored a 1; those who had moved to Canada from another country were scored a 0.

Financial stress. Survey question: “Having an extra \$50 at the end of the month would really make a difference to me.” Responses were scored accordingly: 1 = Strongly agree; .66 = Somewhat agree; .33 = Somewhat disagree; 0 = Strongly disagree.

Ford approval. Survey question: “Thinking now of Toronto politics, would you say you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove, or strongly disapprove of the job that Mayor Rob Ford is doing as mayor of Toronto?” Answers were coded as follows: 1 = Strongly and somewhat approve; 0 = strongly and somewhat disapprove.

Gender. Male respondents were scored a 1; all others a 0.

Ideology. The following four survey items were used to generate an ideology index ($\alpha = .841$).

- “Regardless of who wins the election, what kind of budget would you like to see from the next government?” Respondents were offered two choices. A score of 0 was assigned to those who selected: “One that spends on services and infrastructure despite running a deficit.” A score of 1 was assigned to those who selected: “One that cuts services and spending, cuts the deficit, and cuts taxes to spur growth.”
- “I think it’s important that the government maintain a balanced budget even if it means cutting current programs and services.” Responses were scored accordingly: 1 = Strongly agree; .66 = Somewhat agree; .33 = Somewhat disagree; 0 = Strongly disagree.
- “I support reducing government by 100,000 employees through attrition and other measures in order to stop the deficit.” Responses were scored accordingly: 1 = Strongly agree; .66 = Somewhat agree; .33 = Somewhat disagree; 0 = Strongly disagree.
- “Drastic action must be taken immediately to stop the growing deficit even if it means serious reductions in current government services, programs and personnel.” Respondents were scored accordingly: 1 = Strongly agree; .66 = Somewhat agree; .33 = Somewhat disagree; 0 = Strongly disagree.

Income. Respondents reported their annual household income before taxes by selecting one of 23 income categories, with the first being “Less than \$5,000” and the highest category being “\$250,000 or more.” This list transformed to a 0-to-1 range.

Partisanship. Responses to the following two items were combined to generate a measure of Conservative partisanship, i.e., the degree to which a respondent identifies with the PC Party.

- [Regarding the 2014 Ontario election] “Which candidate did you vote for? Was it your local ...” Respondents were scored accordingly: 1 = Progressive Conservative Party candidate; 0 = any another party or candidate.
- “And do you remember which party you voted for in the last (2011) provincial election?” Respondents who do recall their 2011 vote were scored accordingly: 1 = The Progressive Conservative Party; 0 = any other party or candidate.

Post-secondary education. Those with a university degree or some post-secondary were assigned a score of 1; 0 for high school or less.

Religious affiliation. Respondents reported their religious identity by selecting from the following list: Roman Catholic; Protestant or other Christian; Muslim; Buddhist; Jewish; Hindu; Sikh; Other; No Religious Identity. Responses were recoded into three dummy variables: Catholic; Protestant; Other religion. Those who indicated “No Religious Identity” were selected as the reference category.

Religiosity. The following four items were used to generate an index of religiosity ($\alpha = .852$).

- “In your life, would you say religion is VERY important, SOMEWHAT important, NOT VERY important, or NOT IMPORTANT at all?” Respondents were scored accordingly: 1 = Very important; .66 = Somewhat important; .33 = Not very important; 0 = Not important at all.
- “How often do you attend church, temple, mosque services at your place of worship?” Respondents were scored accordingly: 1 = More than once a week; .75 = Once a week; .50 = Less than once a week but more than once a month; .25 = Less than once a month; .12 = Once or twice a year; 0 = Never.
- “Do you believe in a God that answers prayer?” Respondents were scored accordingly: 1 = Yes; 0 = No.
- “Do you believe that the holy book of your religion (Bible, Qur’an, or other holy book) is the revealed word of God?” Respondents were scored accordingly: 1 = Yes; 0 = No.

Suburban. The following Forward Sortation Areas were recoded to identify respondents who live in suburban areas of Toronto: M1B; M1C; M1E; M1H; M1J to M1N; M1P; M1R to M1T; M1V to M1X; M2H; M2J to M2N; M2P; M2R; M4A to M4C; M4E; M4G; M4H; M5M; M6A to M6C; M6E; M6L to M6N; M8V to M8Z; M9A to M9C; M9L to M9N; M9P; M9R; M9V; M9W

Visible minority. Respondents who are visible minorities are scored a 1, others a 0.

Working class. Survey question: “Which of the following best describes your current occupation?” Respondents were offered 40 categories. These were recoded so that 1 = construction worker, assembly line worker, other repair/maintenance, truck/bus driver, other trade. Other occupational categories were coded 0.