

Electoral Participation of Aboriginals in Canada

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Note to the Reader

This study has been commissioned by Elections Canada to look at Aboriginal electoral participation in Canada and to be presented at the Elections Canada workshop at the 2009 Aboriginal Policy Research Conference, March 9–12, 2009. The observations and conclusions are those of the authors.

“The vote of every person in every community can make a difference – it is up to you to make yours count.”¹

Phil Fontaine
National Chief
Assembly of First Nations

Introduction

In the weeks leading up to the October 2008 federal election the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) undertook a campaign to address the issue of the low voter turnout among First Nations. Expanding on initiatives begun in 2006, the AFN has committed itself to increasing the number of its members who vote in federal and provincial elections. Some gains have been made. Voter turnout among on-reserve Aboriginals for the 2006 federal election increased by 8% over the previous election, “due, in part, to the fact that the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and Elections Canada jointly implemented a First Nations voter awareness and education campaign in 2005–2006” under the leadership of Phil Fontaine.²

These initiatives mark an important change in direction for the AFN. Previous National Chiefs, notably George Erasmus and Ovide Mercredi, focussed more on pursuing nation-to-nation negotiations, trying to establish modalities for greater autonomy for First Nations communities in the context of treaties. As Alan Cairns pointed out, “[s]elf-government has a higher priority for the AFN than participation in elections... [T]he heady wine of Aboriginal nationalism and the inherent right to self-government” is more exciting than the “more humdrum business of elections for minority Aboriginal populations” (2003, 7). Indeed, Cairns went on to argue that issues of self-government as an inherent right of all sovereign indigenous nations and of the electoral participation of Aboriginal persons may be in contradiction (2003, 6). At the very least there is a tension between the integrating function of electoral participation, and the separation between Aboriginal communities and the rest of Canada that is implied in the self-government initiatives. In the end Cairns does not think the two irreconcilable, if for no other than the prudent reason that “[e]ven the most generous self-government arrangement will leave hugely important policy areas beyond their grasp,” (2003, 7) and, hence, presumably open to greater influence and input as the voter participation rate among Aboriginal persons increases.³

With this increased recognition of the importance of Aboriginal electoral participation, researchers have started to study the topic more closely in the past decade. Empirical studies produced to date have certain limitations, however, tend to rely on either administrative data

¹ afn.ca/elections08/EAHB.pdf

² afn.ca/elections08/EAHB.pdf. See also AFN *ECHO*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 2005 “In December 2004, the chiefs passed Resolution 89/2004 and called on the Assembly of First Nations to pursue a dialogue with the appropriate parties regarding an education or awareness campaign for First Nations people about the significance of Voting” (p. 6), <http://www.afn.ca/cmslib/general/EchoVol2No5.pdf>.

³ It is generally accepted in the literature that greater voter participation by a group means that they will have greater influence on subsequent government decisions (Lijphart 1997). See also Silver et al 2005, which summarizes some key literature.

(to measure Aboriginal turnout levels) or qualitative methods with small samples (to assess factors that influence Aboriginal participation). This paper utilizes a different methodology, drawing on a large national survey from 2003 which included a wide range of questions relevant to electoral participation and drew upon a total sample size of 25,000, including more than 700 Aboriginal respondents. The analysis we present below addresses important gaps in our current understanding of Aboriginal voter participation and allows us to assess some of the prevailing assumptions in the existing literature.

Literature Review

A number of studies carried out in the 1950s and 1960s argued that apathy and low voter turnout were symptomatic of a widely shared acceptance of the regime. American politics, in particular, was seen as less charged than that of European states which were divided on class lines (Morris-Jones 1954; Lipset 1963, chapter 6). More recently, academics, politicians and Elections Canada, in addition to the AFN, have evinced concern that the low and decreasing rates of participation, especially among specific groups such as youth and Aboriginals, indicates a disengagement from the democratic process that is not healthy for the body politic.

Until the 1990s little interest was paid to voter participation among Aboriginal persons by students of voting. One of the first such studies was conducted by Bedford and Pobihushchy in 1995. This paper examined on-reserve voter turnout in the Maritime provinces using the now standard method of studying only those polls which were entirely contained within reserve communities (Bedford and Pobihushchy 1995). Data for a sample of reserves across Canada were added to a revision of this paper published in 2003 (Bedford 2003). These studies concluded both that turnout on reserves was markedly lower than that of the rest of Canada and that the rates were decreasing. Daniel Guérin also utilized this method in his study of the 2000 federal election. He concluded that the turnout rate among on-reserve Aboriginals was 47.8% – 16% lower than the overall rate (2003, 12). Jean-Nicholas Bustros' study in 2000 used a similar methodology to conclude that the turnout among Aboriginals on reserve for the federal election of 1993 was 38%, for that of 1997 was 40% and for the Charlottetown Accord Referendum was 41% (cited in Guérin 2003, 11). Jennifer Dalton's recent study looked at on-reserve voting in Ontario for the 1997, 2000, 2004 and 2006 federal elections. She concluded that rates for Aboriginal persons were lower than those for the population as a whole, but unlike the Bedford study which covered the period from 1960 to 1993, her results showed a gradual increase over time (2007, Table 5A).

This method of determining participation rates is generally preferred to that of collecting data using surveys in which people are asked if they have voted. This latter method of self-reporting produces rates that are consistently higher than the actual turnout rates, leading to concern over the accuracy of such results (Dalton 2007, 11; Silver et al 2005, 6). The "polling station within reserves" method produces data that can be trusted to a high degree, but it leaves out important sections of the Aboriginal population: Those who live off-reserve, whether status or not, are not surveyed. This is a significant weakness of the method, as the two populations will not necessarily vote at the same rate. Nor can the polling station approach reveal much about important correlates of voter participation, such as socio-demographic characteristics or psychological and social attitudes. While the discrepancies in the self-reported data are significant and care must be taken in interpreting the data, the information provided by the survey method is a vital addition to what we know through the polling station method.

Despite these methodological difficulties there is broad consensus that Aboriginals are less likely to vote than non-Aboriginals in federal and provincial elections. (Band elections are an exception; see Bedford and Pobihushchy 1995, 263–4.) There is much less consensus, and much less evidence, as to why this is so. The most commonly proposed reason is that of Aboriginal

nationalism, that is, their identification as Maliseet, Mohawk, Blood, etc. rather than as Canadian, leads them to regard Canadian elections as foreign (Bedford and Pobihushchy 1995, 269–70; Cairns 2003, 6–7). Various factors encourage this self-identification: the push for self-government; alienation from the often racist and oppressive Canadian state and people; the rise of identity politics and a global tendency to localisms; attempts at cultural and linguistic preservation; and so on. This account has not gone unchallenged, however. Perhaps most interestingly, the AFN proposes three reasons for low turnout. They argue that, first of all, the “collective traumas” of the residential schools, the history of colonialism and racism discourage participation. Second, the tradition of voting has not been established as part of the political culture, as Status Indians did not receive the right to vote (and keep status) until 1960. Finally, the “crushing burden of poverty” is noted. The “hand-to-mouth” existence of so many Aboriginal persons creates numerous obstacles to voting.⁴

Silver et al explicitly challenge the “nationalist explanation”. Their qualitative study of voting among Aboriginals in Winnipeg’s inner-city indicates that this is not the key factor (2005, 12–13). Instead, three other factors or explanations seem to be supported by this study. They are: the “social exclusion” explanation – where feeling “excluded from, distanced and distrustful of, the Canadian political system” correlates with low turnout (2005, 13–15); the “socio-economic and demographic” explanation – where such factors that influence voting in the general population as income, education and age correlate with turnout (2005, 15–17); and, finally, the “political opportunity and political effort” explanation – where barriers to participation such as the party system, the electoral system, lack of interest by parties in counting Aboriginal voters correlate with turnout (2005, 17–18). The limitation of this approach is that it relies on the explanations for turnout offered by the citizens themselves. Such a method reports what voters take to be the reasons for their having (or not having) voted. There will be, as a result, a bias towards explanations that are experiential or phenomenological. That is, there will be a tendency to emphasize reasons that are most immediately present in one’s experience and to deemphasize reasons that may be, for lack of a better term, structural. Non-voters are not likely to report low income or lack of education as reasons for non-voting, yet we know these to be significant factors. So, while such a methodology produces valuable qualitative information there still remains the need for quantitative data which will permit the evaluation of various hypotheses concerning turnout.

A large-scale national survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 2003 allows us to address some of the important gaps in the existing literature. It provides coverage of Aboriginals in both urban and rural areas, allowing us to evaluate turnout rates among all sections of the Aboriginal population. We are also able to gather more systematic evidence regarding the reasons for non-voting. Factors such as income, level of education, and age are known to be important factors in turnout for the population as a whole. The dataset provides information on the socio-demographic status of the participants, allowing us to evaluate the degree to which such factors can account for the lower participation rates among Aboriginal persons. Additionally, we can access data of a more subjective or attitudinal nature, such as degree of confidence in public institutions, levels of trust, identification with nation or province, and so on. These are all known factors which influence participation. Analysis based on these measures allows us to assess the

⁴ afn.ca/elections08/EAHB.pdf, p.3.

relative significance of Aboriginal nationalism as an explanatory factor in the context of a broader exploration of varied influences on Aboriginal turnout levels.

Methodology

The survey used for our analysis is part of the General Social Survey series conducted by Statistics Canada on an annual basis; it is the 17th in the series conducted in 2003 (GSS 17). There is a number of reasons to turn to this particular survey to investigate issues relating to Aboriginal voter participation.

One is the large sample size of the study. Nearly 25,000 Canadians were surveyed – a large enough sample to yield a substantial number of Aboriginal respondents. Other data sets that are commonly used to study voter participation, such as the Canadian National Election Surveys carried out on the occasion of each federal election, use significantly smaller national samples and therefore do not yield adequate numbers of this relatively small sub-group within the Canadian population.⁵

A second important feature of the General Social Survey series is the rigour of the data collection methods. The 2003 survey, carried out by telephone, achieved a response rate of 78% – significantly higher than most academic studies and much higher than those achieved by most commercial polling firms (typically in the 10 to 15% range nowadays; see PMRS Response Rate Committee 2003). A high response rate is an important feature when using survey data to investigate issues relating to political participation, as there is a correlation between the willingness to participate in surveys and engagement of a more general nature, both social and political. As the response rate drops, concerns about a potentially unrepresentative sample increase.

The main concern in the current context is that Aboriginals might be under-represented in the survey sample due to a greater disinclination to participate in survey research, with uncertain consequences for the reliability of results. As a preliminary step in our analysis, we looked carefully at the Aboriginal sub-sample in the GSS – defined as all those who indicated Aboriginal as their first response to a question about ethnic ancestry – to ensure that it was a representative sample. Reassuringly, the overall representation of Aboriginals in the GSS sample was very close to population estimates based on 2006 census data. There were, however, some discrepancies between the sample and population estimates with respect to the provincial distribution and the male/female ratio of Aboriginal respondents. These were corrected through the application of weights to align the sample with population parameters. Further details on the Aboriginal sub-sample and the weighting procedure employed are provided in Appendix A.

A third important feature of the 2003 General Social Survey is the relevance and breadth of the topics covered. The general theme of the survey was ‘social engagement’. The questionnaire asked respondents whether they had voted in the most recent federal election (in 2000), the most

⁵ The Aboriginal Peoples Survey (conducted by Statistics Canada in 1991, 2001 and 2006) has also included questions on voting (municipal, provincial and band), but only as part of a supplementary questionnaire administered to Arctic residents. We would also note the sample used by our co-panellists at this workshop, a special Aboriginal sub-sample in the Prairie provinces, surveyed in 2004, that forms part of the Equality, Community and Security Survey.

recent provincial election (the precise election would vary depending on the province and date of interview) and the most recent municipal election (again, a different election for different respondents). The survey also included questions on a host of behavioural and attitudinal qualities of potential significance to electoral participation. These include questions that speak to the 'nationalist' hypothesis, as well as others that capture other factors relevant to voter participation. By examining linkages between these variables and voter participation in the 2000 federal election, using both bivariate and multivariate methods, we are able to assess the relative significance of various factors thought to be relevant to Aboriginal participation.

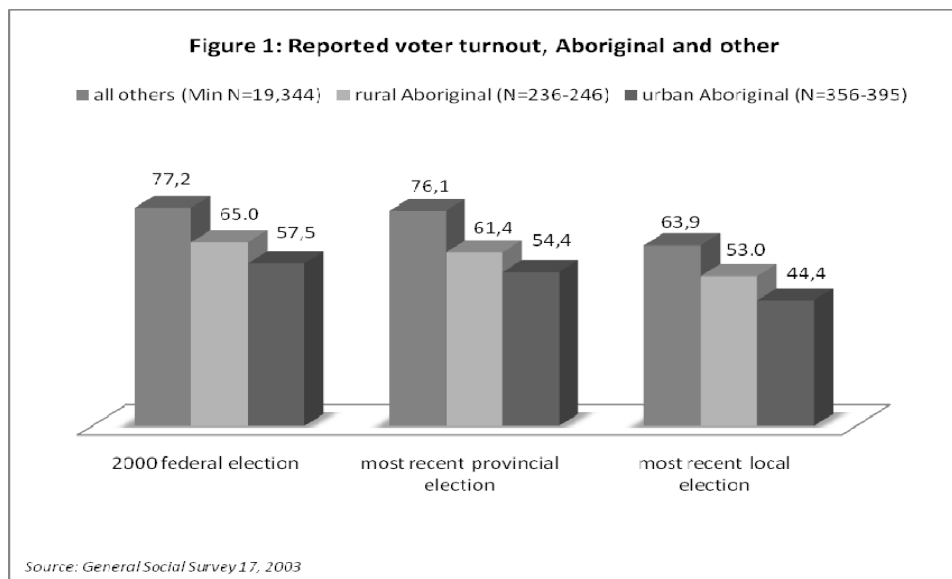
Results

Voter Turnout Among Aboriginals

The first question we consider is levels of reported turnout in different elections. In considering the results, it must be borne in mind that survey estimates of voter turnout are normally higher than actual turnout levels. The results from the GSS are no exception, though the degree of inflation is less than that typically found on other surveys (presumably due to the high response rate on the survey and attendant minimization of sampling bias).

Figure 1 displays reported turnout for each of the three levels of elections for three distinct groups: Aboriginals in both rural and urban areas and all other respondents. For the latter group, reported turnout is 77.2% in the 2000 federal election, 76.1% in the most recent provincial election and 63.9% in the most recent local election. The rates for rural Aboriginals are significantly lower in all three cases: 65.0%, 61.4% and 53.0%. For urban aboriginals, turnout is lower still in all three cases: 57.5%, 54.4% and 44.4%.

There is thus a consistent turnout gap between rural and urban aboriginals. It is, however, smaller than would be suggested by prior research. In 2001, a study based on a survey by Ipsos Reid, commissioned by Elections Canada, reported that Aboriginal people living in urban areas were three times less likely to report having voted in the 2000 federal election than those living on reserves (Guérin 2003, 13). There is clearly a much smaller discrepancy between the two groups in the GSS 17 data. Moreover, the turnout differences separating urban and rural Aboriginals are only slightly greater than the gap in electoral participation for other Canadians who reside in rural and urban areas (2.5% for the 2000 federal election, 3.4% for the most recent provincial and 3.1% for the most recent local). The urban/rural Aboriginal gap thus partly reflects a more general pattern in the Canadian polity.



The simplest method of bringing these survey estimates in line with actual turnout figures is to subtract a fixed number of percentage points from the turnout level within each sub-group.⁶ In the case of the 2000 federal election, this figure would be 15.5 percentage points (actual turnout was 61.2%,⁷ while the GSS estimate for all respondents combined is 76.7%). This would yield an estimated turnout of 49.5% for rural Aboriginals, 42.0% for urban Aboriginals and 61.7% for all other respondents. The figure for rural Aboriginals is very close to that produced by an Elections Canada study for the same election – 47.8% – based on an enumeration of turnout at polling stations located on reserves (Guérin 2003, 12).⁸

This first set of figures establishes a few critical points. First, it offers reassurance that the GSS sampling of the Aboriginal population is sound, since the data, once adjusted for the inflation intrinsic to survey estimates, yield turnout figures for rural Aboriginals generally consistent with those based on polling station data. Secondly, it reveals that turnout among urban Aboriginals is only slightly lower than turnout among rural Aboriginals. Finally, it establishes that the turnout gap between Aboriginals and other Canadians – as well as that between rural and urban Aboriginals – is not specific to any particular type of election, but instead appears consistently across the federal, provincial and municipal context.

Socio-Demographic Factors

In turning to consider factors that influence voter participation among Aboriginals, a sensible starting point is socio-demographic variables known to have a significant influence on voter participation in the general population. These include socio-economic indicators, such as education and income, that have long been recognized as important influences on electoral participation; and age, which has come to be recognized as a critical determinant in recent times, as researchers concerned about the decline in voter turnout have uncovered evidence of a steady generational ebbing in electoral participation in Canada (Blais et al 2004). The relevance of these factors to Aboriginal turnout is revealed in two distinct steps: first, through a consideration of

⁶ This method assumes, of course, that both sampling bias and over-reporting of voting are consistent across sub-groups. This may not be the case, but in the absence of any information or evidence about differential bias, assuming such consistency is the most judicious approach.

⁷ This figure was later updated to 64.1% by Elections Canada after removal of duplicate names from the voters list (though 61.2% remains the official turnout figure).

⁸ Alternative methods could also be used to adjust the survey estimates: for example, applying the *ratio* of actual turnout to the overall survey estimate to each sub-group. This method would pull up the Aboriginal turnout figures slightly). However, given that there is a fair margin of error due to the modest sample size of the Aboriginal groups, there is limited value in attempting to calibrate the GSS data to derive definitive estimates of overall turnout levels among Aboriginals.

Sample size varies slightly for the different elections due to the exclusion of age-ineligible respondents (for the federal and provincial elections, we are able to calculate quite precisely whether respondents were eligible for the most recent election; for municipal, we simply exclude everyone under the age of 23). For urban Aboriginals, the sample size for the 2000 federal election question is 395. For this group, the margin of error, using the standard formula for percentage-based measures, is $\pm 4.9\%$ nineteen times out of twenty. For rural Aboriginals, the sample size for the 2000 federal election is 246. The associated margin of error is $\pm 6.0\%$ nineteen times out of twenty. For other respondents, the sample size for the 2000 election is 20,341, yielding a margin of error of $\pm 0.6\%$ nineteen times out of twenty. These error estimates should be taken as approximations only, as the application of weights to the GSS data renders the standard formula somewhat imprecise.

differences between Aboriginals and other respondents with respect to these socio-demographic variables; and second, by looking at the relationship between each of the socio-demographic variables and voter turnout.

Figure 2 indicates the distinctive socio-demographic profile of Aboriginal respondents within the GSS sample. Aboriginal respondents, on the whole, are significantly younger than other respondents, have lower levels of formal education and report lower household incomes. The differences are considerable and must be consistently borne in mind, not only in evaluating turnout levels among Aboriginals, but also in investigating other factors that have some bearing on Aboriginal electoral participation. In a number of instances, distinguishing traits of the Aboriginal population are – either partly or fully – simply reflections of their distinctive socio-demographic profile.

The impact of the socio-demographic variables on electoral participation is displayed in Figure 3. The largest differences in turnout are associated with age (note that here and in Figure 2, this refers to respondents' age at the time of the November 2000 federal election, not at the time of interview⁹). Among Aboriginal respondents, reported turnout among those 50 and over is nearly 80%. The level drops steadily with decreasing age, falling below 50% among those under 30. This mirrors the pattern in the general population, where there is also a consistent decrease in turnout across age categories, from nearly 90% to just over 55% in the youngest group. It should be emphasized that these numbers represent inflated estimates of turnout and that subtracting 15.5% from each is the simplest method of bringing them in line with the true turnout figure for the 2000 election. It should also be noted that the generally accepted interpretation of the age gap in participation is that it reflects significant cohort effects – in other words, signals a turnout deficit among younger generations of Canadians that will, in good part, persist as they age, rather than just a temporary shortfall among young adults that will diminish as they grow older (Blais et al 2004).

⁹ Age at the time of the 2000 election can be calculated quite precisely based on respondents' current age, which is recorded to one decimal point in the GSS 17 data set (e.g. 25.3), and the month in which they were interviewed (important to know, as interviewing stretched over the full 12 months of 2003).

Figure 2: Socio-Demographic Profile, Aboriginal and Others

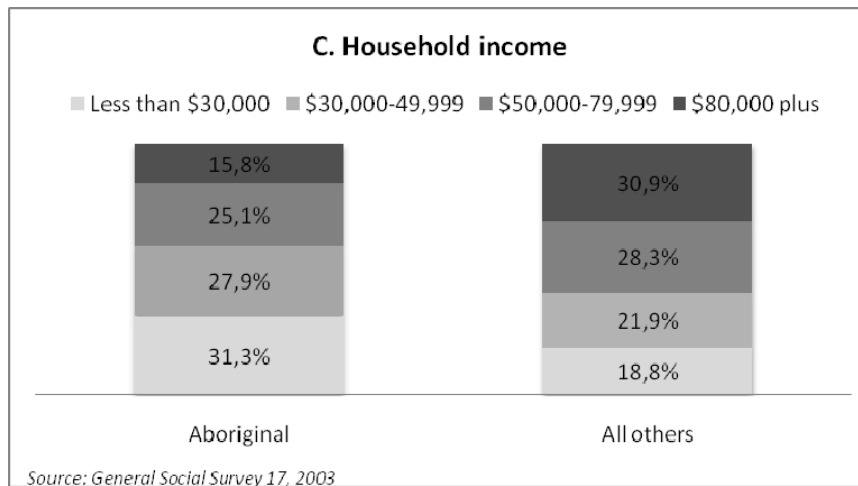
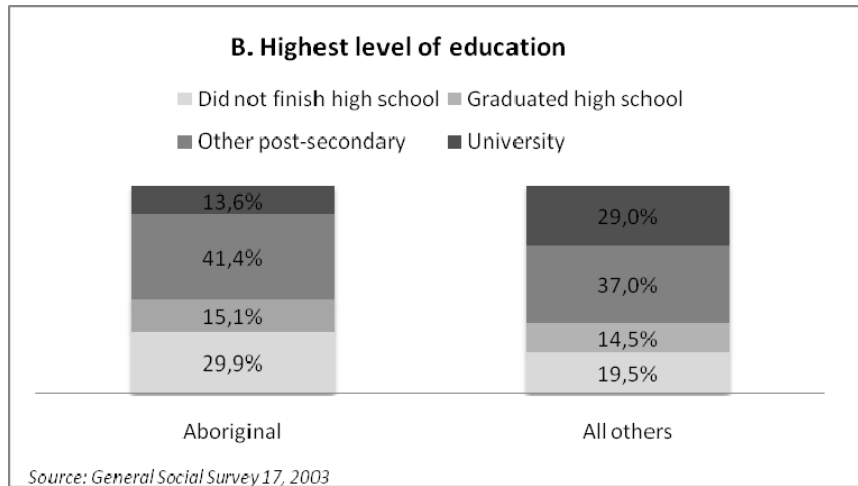
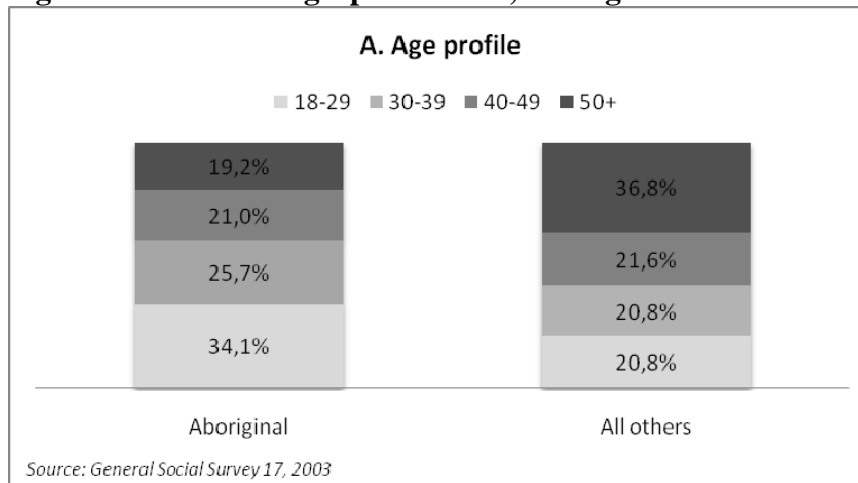
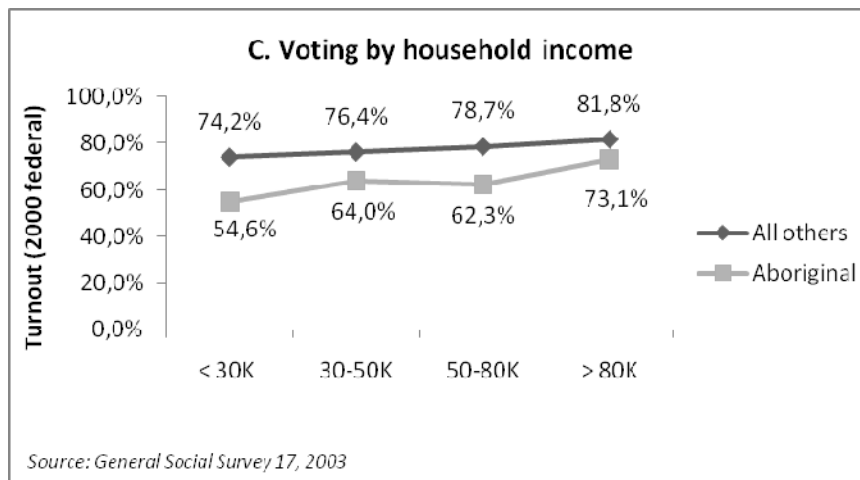
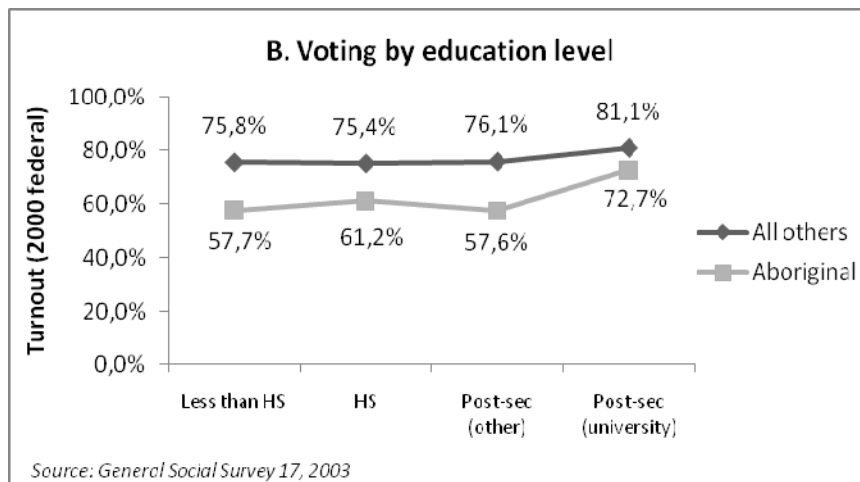
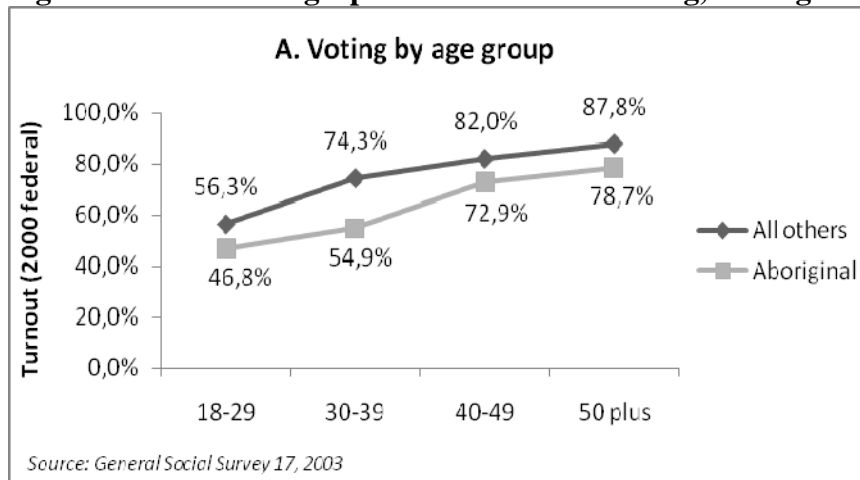


Figure 3: Socio-Demographic Influences on Voting, Aboriginal and Others



Education and income have weaker effects than age on voting within the Aboriginal electorate, but considerable nonetheless. Differences of 15 to 18 percentage points separate those in the most affluent/educated categories and those at the other end of the socio-economic spectrum. In both cases, the effects of socio-economic stratification appear to be somewhat greater for Aboriginals than other respondents, among whom education and income have decidedly modest effects on voter turnout (about 5 to 8 percentage points only). The relatively small sample sizes for Aboriginal respondents (once divided into education and income categories) preclude firm conclusions on this point; but the possibility of a differential effect for Aboriginals should be noted nonetheless, as this is potentially an important dimension of distinctive Aboriginal participation patterns.

In light of these initial observations, the question that naturally arises is how much of the turnout gap between Aboriginals and other Canadians can be explained by socio-demographic differences. To this end, Table 1 presents two models of voter turnout. The modelling of the variables and the method of analysis (OLS regression) are chosen in order to facilitate easy interpretation.¹⁰ The first column model in one includes three variables representing three different groups: one representing rural Aboriginals, one representing urban Aboriginals, and a third representing rural non-Aboriginals. Thus configured, the constant in the model, 76.7, represents estimated turnout in the 2000 election for the ‘missing’ group – urban non-Aboriginals – while the coefficients for each of the three categories represent the estimated difference in turnout in comparison to that group. In the case of rural Aboriginals, this difference is estimated at -14.2 percentage points, in the case of urban Aboriginals, -19.2. In the case of rural, non-Aboriginal voters, on the other hand, the coefficient suggests a turnout rate 2.4 points higher than in the comparison group.

¹⁰ For binary dependent variables, logistic regression is normally considered the more appropriate technique. However, logistic regression coefficients are not as easily interpreted and the essence of the results is not altered by using OLS regression. Appendix B provides logistic regression results for the final multivariate voting models presented later in the paper (corresponding to the OLS regression results reported in Tables 6 and 7).

Table 1: Voting in 2000 federal election, socio-demographic effects

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	(se)	B	(se)
Urban Aboriginal	-19.2*	(2.1)	-10.7*	(2.1)
Rural Aboriginal	-14.2*	(2.8)	-6.0**	(2.6)
Rural non-Aboriginal	2.4*	(0.7)	2.8*	(0.7)
Age			33.2*	(0.7)
Education			12.2*	(0.8)
Household income			9.1*	(0.9)
Constant	76.7	(0.3)	45.1	(0.9)
R ²	.005		0.096	
(N)	(20,981)		(20,981)	

*p<.01; **p<.05

Notes: Entries are unstandardized regression coefficients and standard errors based on OLS regression.

Dependent variable: Voting in 2000 federal election, coded 0 (did not vote) and 100 (did vote).

All independent variables coded on 0-1 interval (for binary variables, 1 represents the category indicated in table).

Source: General Social Survey 17, 2003.

The addition of socio-demographic variables in the second model shows how much the Aboriginal turnout gap is reduced when these factors are taken into account.¹¹ As the table reveals, the coefficient for urban Aboriginals diminishes to -10.7, while that for rural Aboriginals falls to -6.0. In other words, approximately half of the turnout gap (slightly less for urban Aboriginals, slightly more for rural) can be attributed to distinctive socio-demographic contours of the Aboriginal population. Age differences are the most important to this result, as age is the socio-demographic variable that has the greatest effect on voting. About one third of the Aboriginal participation gap can be attributed to the younger age profile of the Aboriginal population.

Belonging and Trust

The results above, focussing attention solely on key socio-demographic variables that influence electoral participation, are designed to indicate how much of the Aboriginal voting gap is distinctively 'Aboriginal' and how much is simply a reflection of basic socio-demographic characteristics of the Aboriginal population. While these results offer some initial insight, clearly more is needed for a deeper understanding of Aboriginal abstention. The inhibiting factors most often cited are ones relating to concepts of belonging and trust. Lower participation rates, it has been suggested, reflect a burgeoning Aboriginal nationalism and consequent alienation from the Canadian state and people. Sentiments of belonging and trust – or conversely, exclusion and distrust – have certainly been found to have some influence on electoral participation in the

¹¹ The constant in the second model now indicates estimated turnout among those with a value of 0 on all independent variables – in other words, urban non-Aboriginals in the age group 18–29, who have not completed high school, and who live in households with annual incomes of less than \$30,000.

population at large. It is to be anticipated that their effects on voting among the Aboriginal population would be at least as great.

Table 2 presents results that speak to the first part of the posited relationship: comparisons between Aboriginals and others on various measures of belonging and trust, both social and political in nature. Some of the results run counter to expectations, in particular the first two sets of figures displaying responses to questions concerning the strength of respondents' attachments to Canada and to their province. In the case of provincial attachments, Aboriginals are actually a bit more likely to indicate very strong attachments, though this is offset by the slightly greater number indicating very weak attachments; overall, there is little difference on this question between Aboriginals and other Canadians. In the case of Canada, the direction of the difference is consistent with expectations – Aboriginals express weaker attachments – but the magnitude of the difference is surprisingly small. Over half of the Aboriginal respondents indicate a very strong attachment to Canada, just slightly fewer than among other respondents. Moreover, this small difference is largely a reflection of the age composition of the Aboriginal population, as young people in general tend to express weaker feelings of attachment on both questions.

A further set of questions probing social trust reveals patterns more in keeping with expectations. In this case, results for two GSS questions were combined. The questions asked respondents about their degree of trust in strangers and in neighbours, using a 1 to 5 scale (1 meaning 'cannot be trusted at all', 5 meaning 'can be trusted a lot'). The results are blended and recoded to create a scale running from 0 to 3.¹² As Table 2 indicates, nearly 35% of Aboriginal respondents lie at the bottom end of this social trust scale, compared to only 21% of other respondents. Again, the results are partly a reflection of the distinctive socio-demographic profile of the Aboriginal electorate, as those who are younger, less educated and poorer tend to exhibit lower levels of social trust. But there remains a significant difference between Aboriginals and other Canadians even when these factors are taken into account.¹³

¹² The aim in creating a smaller number of categories is to ensure reasonable sample sizes for different groups of Aboriginal respondents.

¹³ This statement (and similar statements in other parts of the paper) refers to multivariate regression analysis we have undertaken that treats social trust as the dependent variable and assesses whether there remains a significant difference between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals when age, education and income are included in the regression model.

Table 2: Belonging and Trust, Aboriginals and Others

	Aboriginal	All others
<i>Attachment to Canada</i>		
very weak	7.4%	3.6%
somewhat weak	7.3%	8.6%
somewhat strong	33.5%	33.2%
very strong	51.8%	54.6%
(N)	(647)	(20,496)
<i>Attachment to province</i>		
very weak	7.4%	4.6%
somewhat weak	15.0%	14.5%
somewhat strong	38.3%	46.6%
very strong	39.2%	34.4%
(N)	(645)	(20,283)
<i>Social trust scale</i>		
0 (least trusting)	34.6%	21.2%
1	15.9%	15.4%
2	20.4%	19.5%
3 (most trusting)	29.1%	43.8%
(N)	(609)	(18,981)
<i>Confidence in public institutions</i>		
none	19.5%	8.3%
one	27.3%	23.8%
two	26.3%	31.2%
three	26.9%	36.7%
(N)	(532)	(17,639)

Source: General Social Survey 17, 2003.

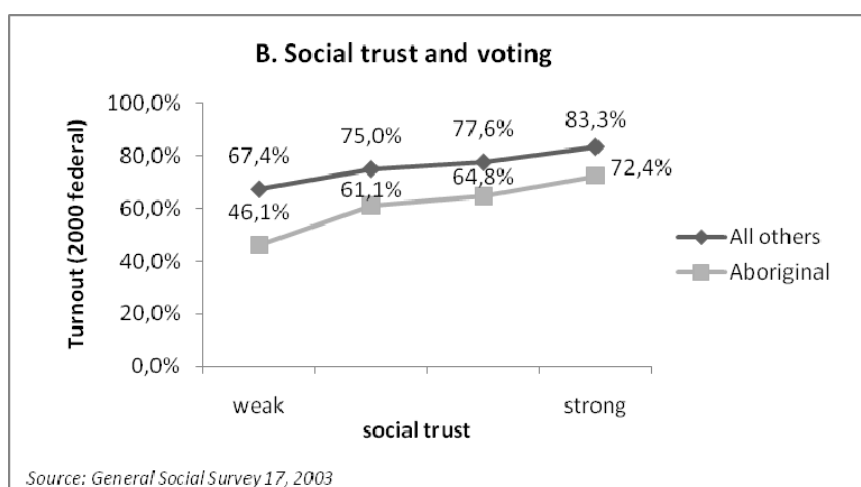
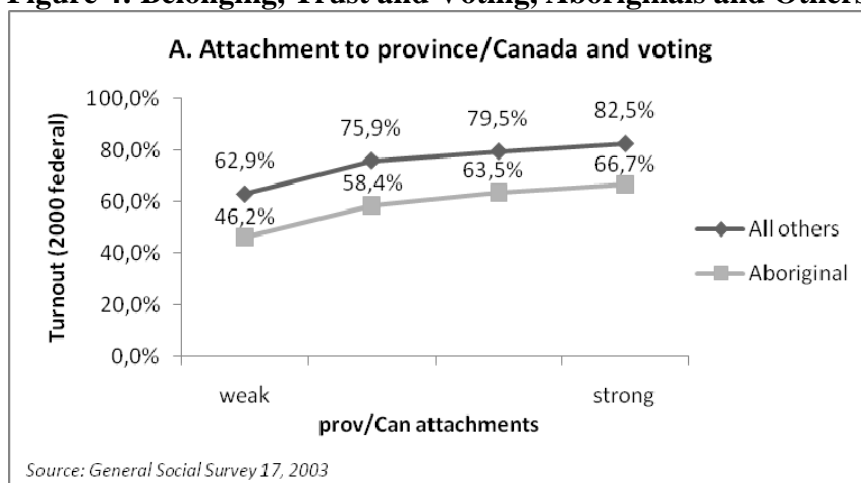
In addition to social trust, there is also the matter of political trust: whether Aboriginals exhibit greater distrust towards institutions of the Canadian state. A series of questions appears on the GSS 17 asking respondents how much confidence they have in different public agencies: a great deal, quite a lot, not very much, or no confidence at all. Our analysis is limited to those agencies over which Aboriginals exercise little jurisdictional authority: the police, the justice system and courts, and the federal Parliament.¹⁴ Respondents were deemed to have confidence in any given body if they expressed a ‘great deal’ or ‘quite a lot’ of confidence in it. Table 2 displays the total number of public agencies in which Aboriginals and other Canadians expressed confidence (thus scores running from 0 to 3). Lower levels of confidence among Aboriginals are clearly evident: nearly half (46.8%) indicate confidence in only one agency or none, compared to just under a third (32.1%) of other respondents. In this case, controlling for age, education and income using

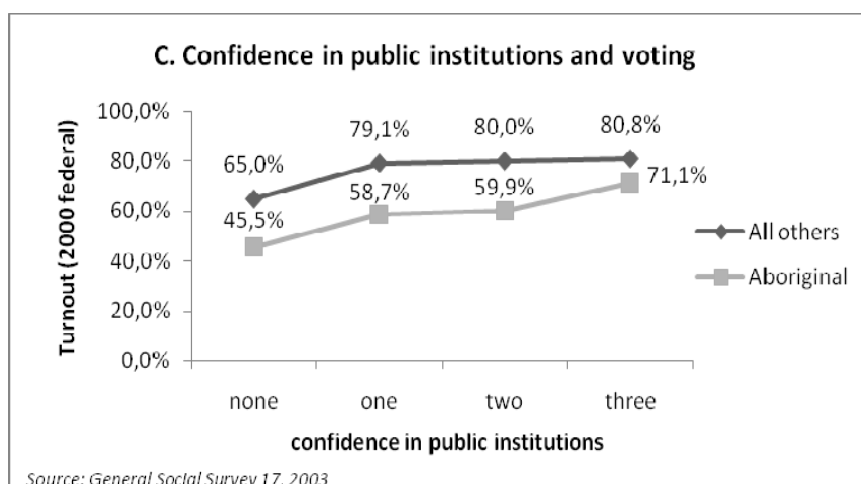
¹⁴ The other questions asked about areas where there is some measure of Aboriginal authority: the health care system, the school system and the welfare system.

multivariate methods has little effect on this result (results not shown), as the socio-demographic variables are only weakly related to the measures of institutional confidence.

How are these various barometers of belonging and trust related to voter turnout? The relationship is reasonably strong and fairly consistent across each of the dimensions considered. The difference in voting in the 2000 federal election between the lower and upper end of each of the three scales – provincial/national attachments, social trust and institutional confidence – ranges between 20 and 26 percentage points (Figure 4). In the first case, provincial/national attachments, the effects within the Aboriginal electorate are similar to those seen in the broader population. In the latter two cases, social trust and institutional confidence, it appears that the effects are somewhat stronger among Aboriginal respondents. For example, among non-Aboriginals it is only among those expressing confidence in none of the public institutions that voter turnout drops off (by about 15 points), whereas among Aboriginals there is a more steady and marked decline in reported turnout as institutional confidence diminishes.

Figure 4: Belonging, Trust and Voting, Aboriginals and Others





Following Politics

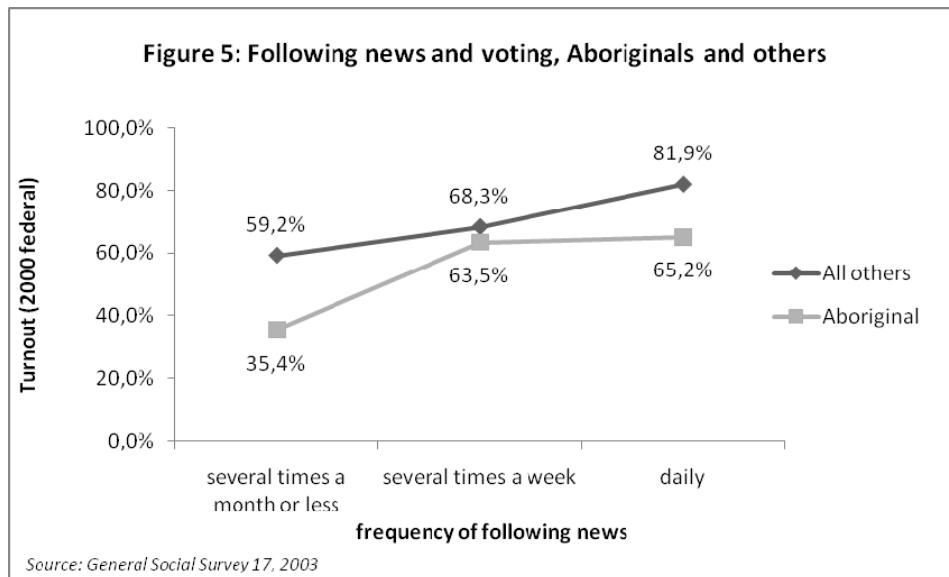
In the general literature, another dimension of citizen engagement that has been found to be strongly correlated with voter participation is attentiveness to politics – which nowadays primarily means following politics in the media. The habit of keeping up with current events, it has been found, significantly enhances knowledge and understanding of political issues, giving citizens a basis for making choices in the polling booth. It also reflects and serves to reinforce a general interest in political affairs (Norris 2000).

While a comprehensive analysis of political attentiveness would consider not only news media habits, but also levels of political knowledge and political interest, the only pertinent question in this general area on GSS 17 was one asking respondents “How frequently do you follow news and current affairs?”. There is, on this single item, a significant difference between Aboriginals and other respondents. Whereas 73% of the latter claimed to follow the news each day, only 59% of Aboriginals responded likewise (Table 3). As with other variables previously considered, the gap here is partly a reflection of underlying socio-demographic differences, and again it is age that is the main confounding factor (younger people being significantly less inclined to follow the news on a regular basis). But there remains a difference between Aboriginals and other respondents even with all socio-demographic variables controlled using multivariate regression methods (results not shown).

Table 3. Following the News, Aboriginals and Others

<i>Follows news and current events:</i>	Aboriginals	All others
several times month or less	15.7%	10.1%
several times a week	25.4%	17.0%
daily	58.9%	72.9%
(N)	(649)	(20,534)

There is, not surprisingly, a significant relationship between following news and current affairs and the propensity to vote (Figure 5). In the general population, the difference in participation in the 2000 election between those who follow the news daily and those who do so no more than several times a month is 23 percentage points. Among Aboriginals, there is likewise a substantial drop in voting with reduced attention to news and current affairs. Reported turnout among the least attentive group is only 35%.



There is undoubtedly more to be uncovered about the relationship between political attentiveness and voting, which might be revealed by a more comprehensive battery of questions in this area. At the same time, the viewpoint should be acknowledged that political attentiveness, rather than being treated as a reason for political disengagement, might simply be seen as a further symptom of disengagement. The more interesting and probing question, on this view, is *why* certain people and groups tend not to pay attention to politics, which potentially leads back to larger questions about detachment from, and disaffection with, the political system and Canadian society. Nonetheless, it is worth marking political attentiveness as a distinct dimension of engagement that is significantly correlated with electoral participation and which provides at least some additional insight into the reasons behind lower voter participation rates among Aboriginals.

Practical Matters

To this point, we have focused on the socio-demographic resources and motivational factors that influence voter turnout. In addition to these areas, there is also considerable emphasis in the relevant literature on the practical circumstances that can hinder or facilitate electoral participation. For groups in disadvantaged circumstances especially, considerable insight can be gained from looking closely at various concrete obstacles that serve to inhibit voter participation.

One potential hindrance to electoral participation is residential mobility. One hypothesized effect of moving frequently is that it disrupts community ties and can therefore have a negative effect on one's sense of belonging (Highton 2000). If this were the extent of it, residential mobility might be seen as a superfluous variable in an analysis that takes direct account of sentiments of

belonging and attachment. However, moving frequently has other implications as well. In particular, it can introduce complications with respect to voter registration, creating a procedural hurdle to electoral participation (Highton 2000). While traditionally a less significant concern in Canada due to the practice of undertaking door-to-door enumeration just prior to each election (a method that effectively captured nearly all eligible voters), this has now emerged as a more important issue in light of the adoption of a permanent voters list, first deployed in the federal election of 2000. Even though this computerized database of eligible electors is updated regularly with information from other government agencies (e.g. Canada Revenue Agency), information for those who move frequently is more likely to be out-of-date, necessitating remedial action by the elector to ensure valid registration status. Though the procedures are not onerous, they can represent an additional hurdle that makes the difference between participation and abstention, particularly for those unfamiliar with electoral procedure (Black 2005).

A second practical factor that can create challenges to electoral participation is poor health. Physical infirmity can entail mobility challenges and therefore difficulty in accessing a polling station (Prince 2007). Poor health can also lead to a measure of psychological debilitation, which could also have implications for electoral participation.

A third circumstantial factor influencing electoral participation is the presence or absence of other adults in the household. The reasoning here is that the presence of other potential voters in the household can stimulate participation, whether through the diffuse influence of political discussion and the like or through specific prompts to participate on voting day itself. Studies that have examined patterns of voting within households have concluded that such influence can be considerable (Gray 2003). In a similar vein, it has also been suggested that the presence of children can hamper participation due to time constraints and preoccupation with family matters (Wolfinger and Wolfinger 2008). Such effects would presumably be more marked for single parents who would encounter greater difficulties in finding an opportunity to vote (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2003, 475). Based on this reasoning, GSS respondents were categorized into three family types apt to have differing levels of voter participation: single parents, single adults, and couples.

Table 4 reveals that on all three counts the circumstances of Aboriginals are less propitious to electoral participation. About 43% of Aboriginal respondents report moving within the past three years compared to 28% of non-Aboriginals. Though in part a reflection of the age composition of the Aboriginal population – and the fact that young people move more frequently – there remains a difference in rates of residential mobility even when age and other socio-demographic variables are taken into account using multivariate regression (results not shown).

Table 4: Practical Hindrances to Participation: Aboriginals and Other Canadians

	Aboriginal	All others
Residential mobility		
moved within past year	20.6%	12.3%
moved within past 1 to 3 years	22.1%	16.1%
not moved for 3 or more years	57.4%	71.6%
(N)	(652)	(20,483)
Health status		
poor/fair	19.2%	12.5%
good	30.6%	26.9%
very good/excellent	50.2%	60.7%
(N)	(657)	(20,765)
Family type		
single parent	15.5%	7.7%
single adult	20.4%	21.3%
couple	64.1%	70.9%
(N)	(658)	(20,799)

Source: General Social Survey 17, 2003.

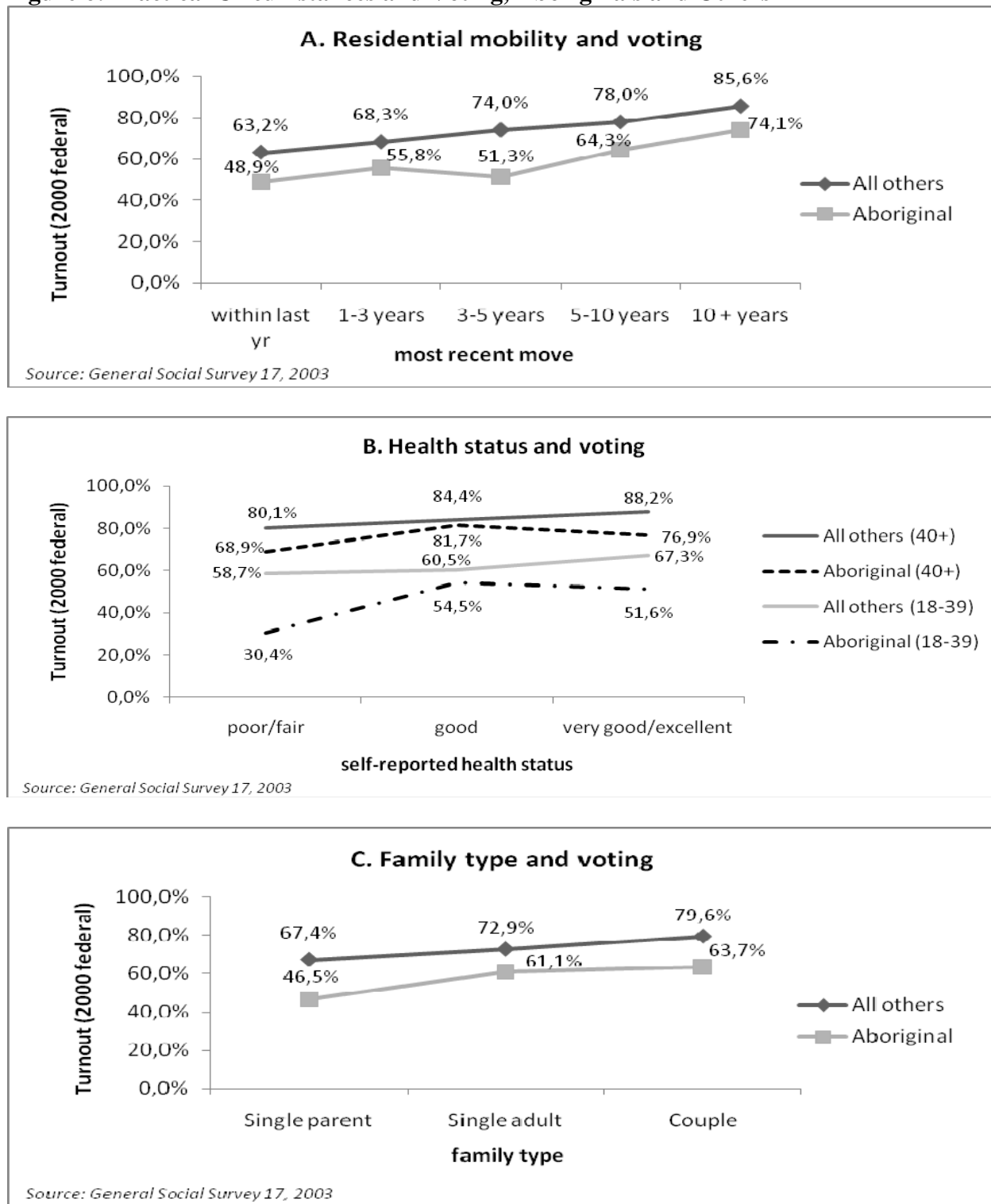
The self-reported health status of Aboriginals is also relatively poor compared to the broader population. Only 50% report that their health is very good or excellent as against 61% of non-Aboriginal respondents. In this case, the age composition of the Aboriginal population serves to mask the true magnitude of the differences, since younger people are healthier on the whole. When comparisons are drawn within age categories, larger discrepancies are revealed. Among 30- to 39-year olds, for example, 49% of Aboriginals indicate their health is very good or excellent compared to 71% of non-Aboriginals. For those 40 to 49, the respective figures are 44% and 61%.

Finally, family configurations within the Aboriginal population are also less conducive to electoral participation. Among Aboriginal respondents there is about twice the rate of single parenthood. There is also a somewhat lower incidence of living as part of a couple.

The effects of these three factors on voter participation in the 2000 election are captured in Figure 6. The figure reveals a clear drop-off in voter participation with increasing residential mobility, a pattern that holds just about equally among Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. Health status also is related to participation. Looking at the relationship within two broad age categories – a necessary adjustment, given that young people are much healthier than older adults but also vote less – there is consistent evidence of a decline in voting among those whose health status is relatively poor. In the Aboriginal population, the sample sizes become rather small with this particular configuration of results, so the non-Aboriginal pattern is the more reliable barometer. Here the decline in voting is about 8 or 9 percentage points between those in excellent or very good health and those whose health is only fair or poor. Finally, we see lower levels of turnout among single parents and, to a lesser degree, single adults compared to those living as part of a

couple. Among Aboriginal respondents, the difference in voter turnout between single parents and couples is 17 percentage points.

Figure 6: Practical Circumstances and Voting, Aboriginals and Others



Aboriginal Electoral Participation: Multivariate Analysis

For the most part, our investigation to this point has considered one element at a time, sifting through various factors identified by previous studies as relevant to Aboriginal electoral participation in order to assess their significance using relevant variables from the GSS 17 dataset. The one exception was near the start, where regression analysis was used to consider how the Aboriginal turnout gap, in both urban and rural settings, stood up when the effects of relevant socio-demographic variables were taken into account. We now return to that method of analysis to consider how the turnout gap is affected as other factors are entered into the equation.

Table 5, in the first two columns, replicates the earlier multivariate results from Table 1: an initial OLS regression model including variables representing urban Aboriginals, rural Aboriginals and rural non-Aboriginals; and a second model incorporating age, education and income. Subsequent columns display results as further variables are entered into the regression equation. The first block of variables are those relating to issues of belonging and trust. Added next to the model is the single variable measuring frequency of following the news. Finally, the set of variables representing practical impediments to participation are entered into the equation.

With the addition of these variables, the turnout gap for urban Aboriginals is reduced to -8.0, the gap for rural Aboriginals to -3.5. These are much smaller than the initial differences of -19.2 and -14.2 respectively, indicating that the overall model accounts for a large part of the Aboriginal voting gap. As noted previously, much of the explanatory power comes from the socio-demographic factors alone. With these controlled, the additional explanatory power of other variables – that is to say, the further reduction in the Aboriginal coefficients as these variables are added to the model – is relatively modest.

**Table 5: Voting in 2000 Federal Election, Socio-Demographic and Other Factors
(all respondents)**

	B	B	B	B	B	(se)
urban Aboriginal	-19.2*	-10.7*	-9.9*	-9.5*	-8.0*	(2.0)
rural Aboriginal	-14.2*	-6.0**	-4.3	-3.8	-3.5	(2.6)
rural non-Aboriginal	2.4*	2.8*	1.9*	2.3*	1.4**	(0.7)
age		33.2*	30.6*	27.4*	24.6*	(0.9)
education		12.2*	11.1*	9.9*	9.9*	(0.9)
income		9.1*	8.1*	7.3*	3.5*	(0.9)
attachment to prov/Can			7.0*	6.4*	6.3*	(0.9)
social trust			6.7*	6.6*	5.3*	(0.8)
confidence in institutions			6.8*	6.8*	6.0*	(0.9)
following news				13.6*	13.2*	(0.9)
time since last move					10.1*	(0.8)
health status					5.3*	(0.8)
family type					7.1*	(0.9)
Constant	76.7	45.1	35.3	27.5	16.9	(1.4)
R ²	.005	.096	.106	.116	.128	
(N)	(20,981)	(20,981)	(20,981)	(20,981)	(20,981)	

*p<.01; **p<.05

Notes: Entries are unstandardized regression coefficients and standard errors (for final model only) based on OLS regression.

Dependent variable: voting in 2000 federal election, coded 0 (did not vote) and 100 (did vote).

All independent variables coded on 0-1 interval. For binary variables, 1 represents the category indicated in table; for other variables, 0 represents category with lowest turnout, 1 the category with highest turnout.

Logistic regression results provided in Appendix B for final model.

Source: General Social Survey 17, 2003.

At the same time, it must be noted that this should be considered a minimalist approach to assessing the effects of factors beyond socio-demographic variables. For there is further explanatory power located in the changes effected to the coefficients for age, education and income as further variables are added to the model. Take income for example: the coefficient is whittled down from an initial value of 9.1 (in model 2) to 3.5 in the final model as additional variables are added to mix. This signals that factors such as residential mobility, health status, family type and others help explain why those with lower incomes vote less – and thereby do provide additional insight into why Aboriginals, their incomes considerably lower than other Canadians', are less inclined to participate. By examining the effect of other variables only once socio-demographic factors are in place, we are effectively limiting their explanatory potential to that component of the voting gap over and above that which can be linked to the distinctive socio-demographic contours of the Aboriginal population.

The rationale for this approach is that it makes sense to first sort out how much of the voting gap is distinctively 'Aboriginal' and how much is simply a reflection of more generic socio-demographic variables before turning our attention to additional explanatory factors. But at

the end of the day, it should be recognized that those other factors influence Aboriginal voting both directly *and* indirectly, via their connection to basic socio-demographic features that sharply distinguish Aboriginals from non-Aboriginals. To capture these effects more fully, we can simply eliminate the socio-demographic factors from the model and allow the other variables to carry the full explanatory burden. When this is done, the coefficients for urban and rural Aboriginals respectively become -11.8 and -7.4. In other words, setting aside the socio-demographic factor, roughly half of the Aboriginal voting gap can be linked to the other factors we have identified.

Another way in which the basic multivariate model may be somewhat misleading is in its presumption that the effects of any given independent variable are the same for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. In earlier sections, we were consistently mindful of the possibility that the influence of certain factors on voting might be more or less pronounced in the Aboriginal population, and did indeed see suggestive evidence of such differential effects in several places. To capture such effects in a single regression model is a more complex procedure that renders interpretation of coefficients more cumbersome. A simpler approach is to juxtapose parallel models for the two groups to see if there are any strong discrepancies that emerge in the effects of particular variables on electoral participation.

Table 6 displays the relevant OLS regression models for Aboriginals and other respondents. It largely confirms results suggested by the analysis in earlier sections. A number of variables appear to have stronger effects on voting among Aboriginals. These include socio-economic factors: coefficients for education and family type are both considerably larger in the Aboriginal model. They also include the variables capturing social trust and confidence in public institutions: coefficients in the Aboriginal model are again substantially larger than those in the other model. Because the sample size for Aboriginals is relatively small, there are fairly large standard errors for all variables in this model. If a more formal test were carried out (that is to say, creating a single regression model with interaction effects) to determine whether differences between the relevant coefficients in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal models are statistically significant, they clearly would not be. Nonetheless, the tentative conclusion suggested by the general pattern of results is that a number of factors relating to socio-economic disadvantage and feelings of alienation and distrust appear to have a stronger inhibiting effect on electoral participation within the Aboriginal population than among Canadians at large.

**Table 6: Voting in 2000 Federal Election, Socio-Demographic and Other Factors
(Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)**

	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	B	(se)	B	(se)
rural	5.7	(3.8)	1.5**	(0.7)
age	26.3*	(5.6)	24.5*	(0.9)
education	15.2*	(5.6)	9.8*	(0.9)
income	7.5	(6.4)	3.4*	(0.9)
attachment to prov/Can	4.9	(5.4)	6.4*	(0.9)
social trust	12.8*	(4.9)	5.1*	(0.8)
confidence in institutions	16.9*	(5.8)	5.6*	(0.9)
following news	16.0*	(5.0)	13.1*	(0.9)
time since last move	11.9**	(5.3)	10.0*	(0.8)
health status	-0.1	(5.1)	5.4*	(0.8)
family type	12.4**	(5.1)	6.9*	(0.9)
Constant	-7.7	(7.7)	17.6	(1.4)
R ²	0.148		0.123	
(N)	(640)		(20,341)	

*p<.01; **p<.05

Notes: Entries are unstandardized regression coefficients and standard errors based on OLS regression.

Dependent variable: voting in 2000 federal election, coded 0 (did not vote) and 100 (did vote).

All independent variables coded on 0-1 interval. For binary variables, 1 represents the category indicated in table; for other variables, 0 represents category with lowest turnout, 1 the category with highest turnout. Logistic regression results provided in Appendix B for both models.

Source: General Social Survey 17, 2003.

Conclusion

The data from the 2003 General Social Survey allow us to develop a clearer understanding of why there is such a large difference in voter turnout between persons of Aboriginal ancestry and the Canadian public as a whole. The limited extant literature has offered possible reasons for the participation gap, mostly based on conjecture. Most notable among these hypotheses is the supposition that an emerging nationalist identity as Aboriginal and not Canadian, in which Canadian institutions and political practices are understood as foreign, accounts for the lower rates of participation. This hypothesis, which was until now largely untested, can be evaluated within the limits of the GSS dataset. The conclusions that we came to – using both bivariate and multivariate analysis – weaken the nationalist hypothesis. While relevant, it certainly does not stand out as a factor of singular importance. Socio-demographic factors such as age, income and education have the greatest influence on electoral participation. Practical and circumstantial factors such as mobility and health status also significantly affect rates of voter participation.

Future research might usefully build on the findings and methods of analysis we have presented here. While we have focused on the variables we believe to be the most pertinent, the GSS 17 data set does contain a wide array of other variables relating to social and civic engagement that might yield further insights into factors influencing electoral participation among Aboriginals. Other surveys undertaken by Statistics Canada, including the multi-wave National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, could also be consulted, as these also contain questions on electoral participation and would, by virtue of their large sample sizes, include significant numbers of Aboriginal respondents. Using other data sets would also allow for the examination of Aboriginal participation in elections other than just the 2000 federal election (a limitation of our study).

While there is clearly more to be learned, our results concerning the causes of the lower turnout rates among persons of Aboriginal ancestry do suggest some important policy implications. A number of the factors that most influence voting among Aboriginal persons are the same as for non-Aboriginals. Therefore, initiatives by organizations like the AFN, Elections Canada, political parties, civic groups and so on that target Aboriginal communities should include those directed to the general population. This is a surprising and important conclusion from our data. Long term programs to address differences in education and income will help reduce the participation gap. In the shorter term, effort must be put into reducing the circumstantial impediments to voting that bear down on mobile populations and those who experience difficulties voting due to health and family conditions. While not as important a factor as initially hypothesized, alienation from public institutions can also be addressed by making them more inclusive of Aboriginal persons and issues. Finally, as age is the single most important factor, it is crucial that programs that focus on increasing participation of young people specifically target Aboriginal communities, as the proportion of youth therein is so much higher than in the population as a whole.

Appendix A Sampling and Weighting Issues

The question on the GSS 17 used to identify Aboriginal respondents asks about ethnic ancestry, allowing respondents to offer up to four responses (essentially the same as the question used on the census about ethnic ancestry). The representation of those with at least some Aboriginal ancestry on the GSS is closely aligned with population estimates. The total percentage reporting some aboriginal ancestry on the GSS is 5.3%, nearly identical to the 2006 census figure of 5.4% (Statistics Canada 2008a).

This categorization does, however, represent a broad definition of ‘Aboriginal’. The more relevant demarcation, given the supposition that issues of detachment and disaffection are critical to explaining Aboriginal electoral participation, is those who self-identify as Aboriginal – 3.8% of the Canadian population, according to the 2006 census (Statistics Canada 2008b). Since there was no self-identification question on the GSS, another approach was used to whittle down the sample to a more limited group likely to identify as Aboriginal. One option was to focus on those citing Aboriginal as their only response to the ethnic ancestry question. This, however, is probably too narrow an approach, as census data (Statistics Canada 2008c) reveal that only 2.0% of the Canadian population fall into this category (the figure for the GSS is again nearly identical at 1.9%). The alternative approach which we adopted was to focus on those who indicated Aboriginal ancestry as their *first* response – 3.1% of the GSS sample, or 771 respondents in all.

For reasons that are not entirely clear, the distribution of these respondents across the Canadian regions deviates somewhat from population figures. In particular, there are more Aboriginal respondents from Quebec than would be expected and fewer from other regions of the country (Table A1). To compensate for this, a set of weights was calculated to bring the provincial distribution of Aboriginal respondents in line with population estimates for those with Aboriginal ancestry based on 2006 census data. It is also the case – again for reasons unclear – that the sample slightly over-represents Aboriginal women (who constitute 56.5% of the sample). Consequently, another weighting factor was applied to bring the sample in line with the Aboriginal population ratio of 51.6% women to 48.4% men.

Table A1: Distribution of Persons with Aboriginal Ancestry by Region

	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Man/Sask	Alta/BC
population (2006 census)	7.7%	16.3%	24.9%	20.7%	30.5%
GSS sample	5.5%	34.3%	19.9%	16.0%	24.4%

Sources: Statistics Canada 2008a; General Social Survey 17, 2003.

With these weights in place (in addition to a general weight provided by Statistics Canada to ensure accurate population estimates), the urban/rural split among Aboriginal respondents is 59.5% to 40.5%.¹⁵ This is nearly identical to the urban/rural split from the 2006 census based on those reporting any Aboriginal ancestry: 59.7% to 40.3% (Statistics Canada 2008a). Figures from the same census based on Aboriginal identification rather than ancestry indicate an urban/rural split of 53.2% to 46.8% (Statistics Canada 2008b) – reasonably close to our GSS sample.¹⁶

The more significant contrast, with respect to place of residence, lies in the comparison to Canada's non-Aboriginal population. In the GSS sample, 81.0% of non-Aboriginal respondents were living in urban areas and only 19.0% in rural areas.

¹⁵ The urban figure includes those living in Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs). The former is one or more adjacent municipalities centred on an urban core of 100,000 or more, the latter one or more adjacent municipalities centred on an urban core of 10,000 or more. Thus, the rural figure includes those living in small towns (in keeping with the approach used by Statistics Canada in its demarcation of urban and rural residents).

¹⁶ In the census data, the categories used are urban, rural and on reserve. In census figures cited above, the latter are included with the rural population.

Appendix B Logistic Regression Results for Multivariate Analysis in Tables 5 and 6

**Table B1: Voting in 2000 Federal Election, Socio-Demographic and Other Factors
(all respondents)**

	B	(se)
urban Aboriginal	-0.35*	(0.11)
rural Aboriginal	-0.15	(0.15)
rural non-Aboriginal	0.09**	(0.05)
age	1.52*	(0.06)
education	0.69*	(0.06)
income	0.19*	(0.06)
attachment to prov/Can	0.42*	(0.06)
social trust	0.31*	(0.05)
confidence in institutions	0.37*	(0.06)
following news	0.69*	(0.05)
time since last move	0.60*	(0.05)
health status	0.36*	(0.05)
family type	0.40*	(0.06)
Constant	-2.22	(0.09)
Nagelkerke R square	0.184	
(N)	(20,981)	

*p<.01; **p<.05

Notes: Entries are logistic regression coefficients and standard errors based on same model as final column of Table 5.

Dependent variable: voting in 2000 federal election, coded 0 (did not vote) and 1 (did vote).

All independent variables coded on 0-1 interval. For binary variables, 1 represents the category indicated in table; for other variables, 0 represents category with lowest turnout, 1 the category with highest turnout.

Source: General Social Survey 17, 2003.

**Table B2: Voting in 2000 Federal Election, Socio-Demographic and Other Factors
(Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)**

	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	B	(se)	B	(se)
rural	0.30	(0.19)	0.09**	(0.05)
age	1.36*	(0.29)	1.53*	(0.06)
education	0.78*	(0.28)	0.69*	(0.06)
income	0.40	(0.32)	0.19*	(0.06)
attachment to prov/Can	0.23	(0.26)	0.42*	(0.06)
social trust	0.61*	(0.24)	0.30*	(0.05)
confidence in institutions	0.83*	(0.28)	0.34*	(0.06)
following news	0.75*	(0.24)	0.69*	(0.05)
time since last move	0.58**	(0.26)	0.60*	(0.05)
health status	0.04	(0.26)	0.37*	(0.05)
family type	0.60**	(0.25)	0.39*	(0.06)
Constant	-2.89	(0.42)	-2.21	(0.09)
Nagelkerke R square	0.220		0.178	
(N)	(640)		(20,431)	

*p<.01; **p<.05

Notes: Entries are logistic regression coefficients and standard errors based on same models as in Table 6.

Dependent variable: voting in 2000 federal election, coded 0 (did not vote) and 1 (did vote).

All independent variables coded on 0-1 interval. For binary variables, 1 represents the category indicated in table; for other variables, 0 represents category with lowest turnout, 1 the category with highest turnout.

Source: General Social Survey 17, 2003.

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