

Language and Cultural Insecurity

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Raymond Breton has described the continuing evolution of Quebec nationalism from an ethnic to a civic form of nationalism, likening it to a similar (and similarly incomplete) evolution in English-speaking Canada that began half a century earlier.¹ The task has been doubly difficult in Quebec because “le Québec doit...livrer deux combats à la fois: celui de l’affirmation nationale et celui de l’affirmation pluraliste”.² In the process, the “narrow vision that equates the nation with ethnicity”³ has become merely one endpoint defining a continuum of positions.⁴ Yet, some critics continue to perpetuate a stereotype of Quebec francophones as ethnocentric at best and xenophobic at worst. These critics have been able to point to a series of studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s that indicated that Quebec francophones held less positive views than other Canadians toward immigration and toward ethnic and cultural diversity in general.⁵ Those differences were typically attributed to a greater sense of cultural insecurity among Quebec francophones, given a declining birth rate and the tendency of immigrants to assimilate to the province’s anglophone minority. However, much has changed since these studies were conducted. Quebec has been gaining increasing control over immigration to the province, the proportion of French-speaking immigrants has been rising, and language legislation has encouraged the integration of newcomers into the French-speaking milieu. One consequence may be that immigration is no longer perceived to pose such a threat.

Studies of attitudes toward Aboriginal peoples in the 1970s and 1980s revealed a quite different pattern: Quebec francophones were *more* sympathetic than other Canadians to the plight and aspirations of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples.⁶ This, too, was linked to the fact of being a cultural minority, but now a shared history of resisting assimilation and a shared experience of subordinate status were seen as making for empathy. Again, though, much has changed. The claims of Aboriginal peoples have been forcing the dominant “white” majority in both Quebec and Canada at large “to decide the extent to which they are really prepared to go to accommodate difference: what price are they willing to pay for the recognition of otherness?”⁷ And events in the early 1990s have made this question especially pertinent for Quebec francophones. One consequence may be that Aboriginal peoples have come to be perceived as more of a threat.

Meanwhile, members of the dominant English-speaking majority have had their own cultural insecurities to contend with. The most salient source of cultural insecurity outside Quebec has been the United States. As Sylvia Bashevkin notes, “Virtually all English-Canadian nationalists maintain that American corporate penetration endangers Canadian sovereignty”.⁸ While conventional wisdom held that Quebec francophones do not share this concern, Bashevkin showed that Quebec francophones were actually quite supportive of measures designed to control US direct investment in Canada, and

Quebec nationalists were *more* supportive than members of the francophone and anglophone publics alike. However, her survey data came from the late 1970s, a decade before the advent of the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement. Bi-partisan support within Quebec for that agreement suggests that Quebec francophones may indeed perceive continentalism to be less of a threat to their cultural distinctiveness?⁹

It is clearly time to re-examine orientations to all three potential sources of cultural insecurity. In this chapter, we compare the attitudes of Quebec francophones with those of Anglophones in English-speaking Canada toward immigrants, Aboriginal peoples and continentalism.¹⁰ Our data are taken from the Canadian Election Studies, conducted at the time of the 1988, 1993, 1997, and 2000 federal elections and the 1992 referendum on the Charlottetown Accord. A succession of momentous events form the backdrop to these studies: the failure of two constitutional accords, the implementation of two comprehensive trade agreements, a referendum on sovereignty that came very close to victory, and a violent confrontation with Quebec's Mohawks.

Immigrants and Ethnic and Racial Minorities

It was another momentous event--Canada's adoption of an official policy of multiculturalism in 1971—that prompted the landmark study of multiculturalism and ethnic attitudes in Canada in 1974. Based on this survey, John Berry and his colleagues concluded that “French Canadians evidenced a profile of attitudes which can be described as ethnocentric and this pattern was more pronounced for French Canadians than for any other Canadian ethnic group”.¹¹ They characterized this as a “chilling factor in an otherwise favourable climate for immigration”.¹² Subsequent studies confirmed that Quebec francophones held less favourable attitudes on issues relating to immigration, multiculturalism, and ethnic diversity in general.¹³ So, too, did a partial replication of the survey conducted in 1991.¹⁴

Two explanations are typically offered for these findings. Berry and his colleagues pointed to the perceived threat to the survival of the French language, a threat made all the more real by a declining birth rate in Quebec and the propensity of newcomers to integrate into Quebec's English-speaking community.¹⁵ Indeed, they concluded that, “a pattern of ethnocentric attitudes...would seem only reasonable under the circumstances”.¹⁶ Subsequent studies have taken up this theme.¹⁷ Denis Bolduc and Pierre Fortin have provided the most systematic test of this notion that ethnocentric attitudes are linked to the sense of cultural threat.¹⁸ They were able to confirm that concerns about the future of the French language were responsible for the differences they observed in the attitudes of Quebec francophones and Quebec anglophones towards immigration and multiculturalism.

The second explanation focuses on the impact of the introduction of official multiculturalism in Canada. There is a perception that, “official multiculturalism trivializes...the identity and particularistic claims of Quebec”.¹⁹ Leslie Laczko takes the explanation a step further: “Multiculturalism is seen as all the more dangerous because many of the groups being granted symbolic collective rights are viewed as by and large assimilated into the larger Anglophone community across Canada”.²⁰ It should hardly surprise, then, that Quebec francophones proved to be less positive about ethnic diversity in general and multiculturalism in particular.

That was the picture in the 1970s and 1980s, but there have been a number of important changes in Quebec that might have caused a shift in opinion in recent years.²¹ First, Quebec has gained an increasing degree of control over immigration. Second, there has been a concerted move to legislate what Breton termed “Franco-conformity”.²² This move began in the 1970s, with the enactment of Bill 22 and then Bill 101, but it was in the 1990s that the impact of this legislation (and, specifically, its requirements with respect to schooling) on first-generation Quebecers became apparent. Third, beginning in 1990, the Quebec government has made strenuous efforts to raise the proportion of immigrants from French-speaking countries. It is against this background that Bourhis and Laczko alike have asked whether the ethnic attitudes of Quebec francophones have changed.²³ Laczko concludes that, “defensive minority reflexes are...still evident”, but his data are drawn from a 1991 survey and thus predate the policy initiatives of the 1990s.²⁴

If we look at simple measures of likes and dislikes, or affect, responses to recent Canadian election studies seem to support the conventional image of Quebec francophones as harbouring less positive feelings. The wording of the questions has changed across time and so has the target group, but the gap between francophones in Quebec and anglophones outside Quebec has persisted. In 1988, the target group was “ethnic minorities” and the average score (on a scale from 0 to 100) was 60 for francophones in Quebec, compared with 65 for anglophones in the rest of Canada. In 1992, respondents were asked about “immigrants” and the mean scores dropped to 53 for Quebec francophones, versus 64 for anglophones outside Quebec. The target group changed to “racial minorities in 1993 and 1997, and the mean scores were 63 and 53, respectively, for Quebec francophones, compared with 68 and 61 for the other language group.²⁵ Regardless of the wording or the target group, then, Quebec francophones responded less positively than English-speakers in the rest of Canada. It bears emphasis, though, that their mean scores were always positive (a score of 50 represents neutral affect). Clearly, then, we can reject the notion that Quebec francophones typically have negative feelings about immigrants or ethnic and racial minorities.

[Figure 1 about here]

Similarly, the entrenched image of Quebec francophones as being less open to immigration is not supported by the survey data. Since 1988, the Canadian election studies have been asking respondents whether Canada should admit more immigrants or fewer immigrants. It is clear from the responses that francophones in Quebec are no more opposed to immigration than English-speakers in other parts of Canada (see figure 1). On the contrary, in both 1993 and 1997, Quebec francophones were significantly *less* likely to favour a reduction in the number of immigrants admitted. It is also clear that opinion has become progressively more open to immigration in *both* language groups since 1988.²⁶

[Figure 2 about here]

Francophones in Quebec and anglophones in the rest of Canada respond quite similarly when asked whether new immigrants make Canada a better place, whether Canada should encourage immigrants “like us”, or whether foreign-born Canadians should take second place to those who are Canadian born (see figure 2). On all of these questions, opinion tends to be more or less evenly divided in both groups. The picture changes, though, when the questions relate to how well immigrants fit in.

Now there are signs that Quebec francophones do have less positive views. They were more likely to say that immigrants should try harder to be like other Canadians and (except in 1993) they were more likely to agree that recent immigrants do not want to fit in. They were also much less likely to agree that immigrants make an important contribution.

There are signs of a hardening of opinion between 1993 and 1997. It is tempting to attribute this to the aftermath of the 1995 referendum and the perception that “the ethnics” deprived the yes side of victory. It turns out, though, that committed sovereignists and steadfast federalists held very similar views in 1997 on whether immigrants make an important contribution and whether recent immigrants try to fit in. They only differed on the question of giving priority to the Canadian-born, and it is those who strongly *favoured* sovereignty who were less likely to agree with what is tantamount to discrimination against “new Canadians” (54 percent).

More important than views about sovereignty are perceptions of a threat to the future of the French language in Quebec.²⁷ In 2000, 66 percent of those who considered the future of French to be in jeopardy thought that immigrants do not try to adapt to their new surroundings, compared with 54 percent of those who were more sanguine. This difference may not be huge, but it is sufficient to explain most of the difference between francophones in Quebec and anglophones in the rest of Canada. Control for linguistic insecurity and the difference between the two groups is reduced to a mere two points.

It bears emphasis that there was a noticeable softening of attitudes toward immigrants on the part of Quebec francophones between 1997 and 2000. A similar trend was apparent among English-speakers in the rest of the country. What makes the shift in opinion on the part of Quebec francophones especially interesting is that it occurred despite an apparent increase in linguistic insecurity over the same period.²⁸ It is not that linguistic insecurity mattered less in 2000, but rather that the shift in opinion was just as apparent among those who were fearful for the future of French.

[Figure 3 about here]

They may continue to be less sanguine about the extent to which newcomers try to adapt, but fully two-thirds of Quebec francophones in 2000 agreed that immigrants make an important contribution. And when the focus shifts from immigrants to racial minorities, there are indications that Quebec francophones are *more* accepting of ethnic and racial diversity than English-speaking Canadians outside Quebec. Quebec francophones are significantly more likely to say that more should be done for racial minorities (see figure 3).²⁹ In 1988, the question asked about “ethnic minorities” and it is plausible that some Quebec francophones interpreted this term to include their own community. However, the difference persisted when the wording was changed to “racial minorities” in 1993 so it cannot simply be attributed to self-interest.

The difference also persisted when respondents were asked about concrete measures to benefit members of racial minorities. The 2000 Canadian election study asked respondents whether they favoured or opposed requiring political parties to have more members of racial minorities as candidates to remedy the numerical underrepresentation of racial minorities in the House of Commons. Fifty-four percent of Quebec francophones were in favour, compared with only 41 percent of the other language

group. A similar number of Quebec francophones (53 percent) responded affirmatively when asked about action to remedy the lack of women MPs in the House of Commons. This is telling because the questions were not being posed to the same respondents. One random half sample was asked about racial minorities and a second random half sample was asked about women, so we can rule out any strain to consistency motivating these responses.³⁰ This suggests that Quebec francophones may be more sympathetic to minorities, in general, reflecting perhaps their own experience of being a minority within Canada.

Aboriginal Peoples

A similar explanation was advanced when studies of attitudes toward Aboriginal peoples in the 1970s and 1980s revealed that Quebec francophones were *more* sympathetic than English Canadians to the plight and aspirations of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.³¹ Laczko, for example, suggests that this reflected "a sense of shared collective minority status within the Canadian state".³² Not only has there been a common experience of subordinate status, but the claims of Quebec francophones and Aboriginal peoples alike have been couched in the language of collective rights and have had a territorial basis.³³ We could add a shared history of resistance to assimilation and concern for the survival of their cultural distinctiveness as additional sources of Quebec francophones' greater sympathy for Aboriginal peoples.

Much has changed, though, since the 1970s. Laczko himself points to the deterioration of relations between Quebec francophones and Quebec's Aboriginal peoples.³⁴ These tensions came to a head in 1990 with two events. The first was the role of Elijah Harper in the collapse of the Meech Lake Accord. His vote in the Manitoba Legislature led to the perception among some Quebec francophones that "Native people as a group were...the ones who, in collusion with a hostile English Canada, had killed the constitutional agreement" that would have recognized Quebec as a distinct society and brought Quebec back into the Canadian constitution.³⁵ This was followed in the summer by the violent standoff at Oka, just outside Montreal. The Oka crisis was precipitated by a dispute over land for a golf course. The resulting confrontation pitted Mohawk protesters against both the provincial police force and the Canadian armed forces. In addition to the death of a police officer, a major bridge linking Montreal to the South Shore was blockaded for several weeks.

Laczko speculates that these tensions may have wrought a shift in the climate of opinion on Aboriginal peoples among Quebec francophones. He notes a 1994 poll finding that showed that more than half of Quebec francophones were under the impression that Aboriginals living on Quebec reserves enjoyed a higher standard of living than other Quebecers, a perception quite at odds with the realities of reserve life. He concludes that opinion on Aboriginal rights is presenting "a more ambiguous picture" than heretofore, though he cautions that the hardening of opinion on the part of Quebec francophones might represent a temporary aberration rather than the beginning of a trend.³⁶

There is reason, though, for greater pessimism on this score. There are deeper structural sources of deterioration in relations with Quebec's Aboriginal peoples. As Salée notes, Aboriginal claims pose a much more fundamental challenge to Quebec identity than do Quebec's "cultural communities". Where immigrant minorities seek to share in existing power structures, the claims of

Quebec's Aboriginal peoples ultimately imply autonomous power structures. Moreover, Quebec francophones and Aboriginal peoples across Canada have become in a very real sense rivals as "recognition seekers within the Canadian polity".³⁷ To many Quebec francophones, this is the legacy of official multiculturalism and the Charter. Each, in turn, undermined the "hierarchy of identities" implicit in the notion of two founding nations.³⁸ Even more fundamentally, though, Aboriginal claims threaten Quebec's territorial integrity. For Sal e, it is precisely the territorial component of Aboriginal claims that makes them so problematic for Quebec: "The Aboriginal question challenges Quebec francophones in a most brutal fashion... The Quebec identity comes with a profound sense of belonging to the territory traditionally recognized by cartographers. Many believe that to carve up this territory would be tantamount to carving up the identity of Quebecers".³⁹

There has indeed been a decline in sympathy on the part of Quebec francophones for the conditions and aspirations of Canada's Aboriginal peoples. When asked to rate their reactions to Aboriginal peoples in the 1988 Canadian Election Study, francophones in Quebec provided less favourable ratings than anglophones outside Quebec, but their average rating was still clearly favourable (see figure 4). The picture changes quite dramatically by the time of the 1993 Canadian Election Study. On the one hand, the gap between the mean ratings of the two language groups has widened to 25 points on a 0 to 100 scale, and on the other hand, the ratings of Quebec francophones are now clearly unfavourable on average. What we are seeing is the imprint on Quebec public opinion of the failure of the Meech Lake Accord and the Oka crisis in the summer of 1990. These legacies endure. There is no sign of warmer feelings on the part of Quebec francophones in 2000. Moreover, this hardening of feelings is largely confined to francophones in Quebec.⁴⁰ The mean ratings of Quebec anglophones are as favourable as those of their counterparts in the rest of the country.

[Figure 4 about here]

There is a similar trend in views about the conditions of Aboriginal peoples (see Figure 5). In 1988, Quebec francophones were as likely (or not) to think that more should be done for aboriginal peoples and they were actually less likely to believe that aboriginal peoples should be completely assimilated.⁴¹ Again, the three most recent Canadian Election Studies provide a starkly different portrait of the climate of opinion among Quebec francophones. By 1992, English-speakers in the rest of Canada were twice as likely as Quebec francophones to respond that more should be done for Aboriginal peoples. Meanwhile, Quebec francophones were much more likely to think that Aboriginal peoples could be as well off as other Canadians if they just made more effort, and they were more likely to believe that Aboriginal peoples are in fact better off than other Canadians. Not surprisingly, Quebec francophones were also more likely to say that the federal government should cut spending for Aboriginal peoples. These differences show little sign of abating in the most recent study.

[Figure 5 about here]

Sovereignists are, if anything, a little more sympathetic toward Aboriginal peoples. In 2000, for example, the strongest sovereignists rated Aboriginal peoples a little more positively on average (45) than committed federalists (40) did, and they were not quite as inclined (74 percent) as their opponents (81 percent) to believe that Aboriginals needed to try harder. However, the larger fact remains that

strong federalists and sovereignists alike tend to harbour more negative feelings than English-speaking Canadians in the rest of Canada (and in Quebec). This is understandable in light of Pierre Martin's observation that, "In a way, the distinct situation of Quebec in North America makes almost every francophone Quebecker, to some degree, a 'nationalist'".⁴² And Aboriginal claims cut to the heart of the nationalist project, however defined.

[Figure 6 about here]

Interestingly, the gap between francophones in Quebec and anglophones outside Quebec narrows when we turn from views about the conditions of Aboriginal peoples to perceptions about their rights (see Figure 6). It is clear that opinions relating to Aboriginal rights depend very much on the phrasing of the question. The vaguer the principle at stake, the more positive the opinion within both language groups. This is a typical finding of surveys on tolerance and civil liberties as well: the more grounded the situation, the less favourable opinion becomes.⁴³ In the 1988 Canadian Election Study, respondents were asked whether native peoples should be able to have a large amount of self-government "as long as their system of government conforms with principles of Canadian democracy" or "no matter what system of government they adopt". "Neither" was also a possible response option. Francophones in Quebec were actually more likely (14 percent) than anglophones in the rest of the country (6 percent) to respond "no matter what" and they were almost as open to the notion of a large amount of self-government provided it was in conformity with Canadian norms. The 1992 study on the referendum on the Charlottetown Accord asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with "recognizing the right of Canada's Aboriginal peoples to govern themselves". In the wake of the Oka crisis, Quebec francophones proved to be less accommodating on this question. Interestingly, though, the gap between the two language groups is not as wide as Figures 4 and 5 might have led us to expect. And when the implications of self-government are spelled out, as they were in the 1993 study, both groups are much less open to the idea of self-government. However, even when the implications are spelled out, the gap remains.

Perhaps the most interesting result in Figure 6 is the relatively high proportion of Quebec francophones who agreed in 1997 that Aboriginal communities have the *right* to remain part of Canada if Quebec separates. Almost two out of three Quebec francophones recognized such a right. And even among those who were very favourable to Quebec sovereignty, nearly half (48 percent) agreed with the proposition. This is remarkable given that "territorial reappropriation...can only be seen as a frontal assault against the Quebec identity, whose subconscious foundation is intimately tied to a geography considered as inalienable and untouchable".⁴⁴ Should commitment to this right actually be put to the test, of course, opinion might well be different. Nonetheless, the willingness of two in three Quebec francophones to recognize this right in the abstract can only reinforce Salée's observation that, "It would be incorrect, and intellectually dishonest, to conclude that the absence of the will to satisfy completely Aboriginal identity claims demonstrates the narrowness and intolerance of the Quebec blueprint for identity".⁴⁵

Continentalism

Explanations of why Quebec francophones appear to hold more negative views on immigration and multiculturalism have typically pointed to the importance of linguistic insecurity. We have shown that concerns about the future of the French language are indeed an important factor in explaining Quebec francophones' opinions about immigrants' efforts to fit in. This emphasis on the perceived threat to the French language poses a puzzle: if Quebec francophones are so fearful for the future of their language, why did both provincial political parties come out in favour of a comprehensive free trade agreement with the United States? If Quebec francophones feel culturally threatened by the immigrant presence in their midst, why are they not even more fearful of opening up Quebec to the influence of the vast English-speaking neighbour to the south? The Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA) and then the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will surely "maintain if not accentuate the presence of English on the Quebec economic and cultural market".⁴⁶ The contrast with Canada outside Quebec is striking: for many English-Canadian nationalists, these agreements posed a fundamental threat to Canada's identity, if not to Canadian sovereignty itself. It is all the more puzzling given the fact that "conventional theories of international political economy would lead one to predict that Quebec should have resisted free trade".⁴⁷ In linking nationalism and protectionism, Martin explains, these theories imply that "free-trade nationalism" is "a contradiction in terms".⁴⁸ He concludes, though, that "Quebec did not endorse free trade *in spite* of its nationalism; it endorsed free trade *because* of its nationalism".⁴⁹

Bashevkin was the first to examine empirically whether Quebec nationalism is characterized by "an unavoidable tilt toward continentalism".⁵⁰ The notion was plausible, she argued, because closer Quebec-US relations would serve as "a political and entrepreneurial counterweight to English Canada".⁵¹ Moreover, Quebec needed more US investment to ensure economic growth. However, when she examined views on foreign investment controls in Canada⁵², she found little support for the notion that Quebec nationalists are continentalist. In fact, Quebec nationalists proved to be more supportive of the proposed measures than Quebec francophones in general *and* nonQuebecers in general.

Bashevkin's data were taken from a survey conducted in 1979, ten years before the ratification of CUFTA. It is quite possible that Quebec nationalists have become more continentalist in the wake of the shift to continental free trade. This is Martin's thesis.⁵³ He argues persuasively that CUFTA was strategically important to sovereignists and moderate nationalists alike. Free trade with the United States offered moderate nationalists the hope of "more economic autonomy while preserving the political security of federalism" *and* undercutting the need for secession.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, the institutionalization of trade liberalization offered sovereignists a way not only of reducing Quebec's dependence on Canadian markets, but also of easing the transition to independence and its attendant costs.

It turns out that Quebec francophones *in general* are more continentalist than English-speaking Canadians in the rest of the country. This parallels Neil Nevitte's finding, based on the 1991 World Values Survey, that Quebec francophones were more likely than nonQuebecers to support doing away with borders between Canada and the United States.⁵⁵ Since 1988, the Canadian Election Studies have asked respondents whether Canada's ties with the United States should be closer or more distant. In

every survey, Quebec francophones have been more likely to respond that ties should be closer (see figure 7). The gap was widest in 1988, when the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement dominated the election agenda, and in 1993, when the North American Free Trade Agreement had been negotiated. In both years, the gap was 20 percentage points or more. Not surprisingly, the gap has narrowed in the two recent elections. After all, the two trade agreements have institutionalized the closer ties that many Quebec francophones wanted. Nonetheless, a gap persists: Quebec francophones are more likely to want even closer ties.

[Figure 7 about here]

Interestingly, the gap is smaller when we look at support for the trade agreements themselves (see figure 8). Quebec francophones were more likely to support CUFTA in 1988 (and to remain supportive in 1993) and NAFTA in 1993, but English-speakers outside Quebec were more supportive of both agreements than we might anticipate on the basis of Figure 1. It turns out the latter's views about ties with the USA were more strongly related to their support or opposition to CUFTA in 1988 ($\tau=.50$) than they were among Quebec francophones ($\tau=.30$). On the one hand, compared with English-speakers outside Quebec (84 percent), Quebec francophones who wanted closer ties in the abstract were less likely (71 percent) to come out in favour of the concrete agreement. On the other hand, Quebec francophones who resisted closer ties were much more willing (35 percent) than English-speakers in other parts of Canada who felt the same way (16 percent) to support CUFTA. One possible explanation is that opinion about CUFTA was less polarized in Quebec because both the Parti québécois and the provincial Liberal party supported the agreement.

[Figure 8 about here]

This explanation gains credence when we look at the strength of support and opposition to CUFTA. Opinion about the agreement was much more polarized outside Quebec in 1988. Among supporters, 34 percent of English-speakers outside Quebec felt strongly, compared with only 25 percent of Quebec francophones. Even more tellingly, 51 percent of opponents outside Quebec felt strongly, compared with only 21 percent of their Quebec francophone counterparts. Support for NAFTA was much more lukewarm among Quebec francophones (10 percent) and English-speakers in the rest of the country (18 percent) alike, but NAFTA's opponents within the latter group were significantly more likely to feel strongly (56 percent) than their francophone counterparts in Quebec (26 percent). Continentalism, it appears, is much less of an axis of conflict among Quebec francophones than it is beyond Quebec's borders.

[Figure 9 about here]

There were three aspects of trade and investment relations with the United States that really differentiated the opinions of Quebec francophones (see figure 9). First, they were much more likely to believe that more US investment was necessary. While we cannot tell from the survey data, this could plausibly be because Quebec francophones see US capital as "a convenient and less ideologically troubling source of development".⁵⁶ Second, Quebec francophones were much less concerned that

CUFTA would compromise control over key industries or pose a threat to social programmes. Among English-speakers outside Quebec (and within Quebec), concern on both fronts was higher. These differences are not simply a function of the gap in support for CUFTA. The two communities were much closer when it came to fears about job loss, on the one hand, and the perceived need for a larger market and a hedge against US protectionism, on the other (see figure 9).

By 1993, however, the gaps had widened on these questions. Just over half (53 percent) of Quebec francophones believed that unemployment had gone up because of CUFTA, compared with three-quarters of those in the other language group (74 percent). A similar gap appeared (58 percent versus 73 percent) when it came to the view that NAFTA would cause unemployment to go higher still. Meanwhile, Quebec francophones (54 percent) and especially English-speakers outside Quebec (41 percent) were much less persuaded that NAFTA was necessary to maintain Canada's position in the US market. Not surprisingly, support for CUFTA had dropped by 1993, and support for NAFTA was lower still.

Since then, the unemployment rate has dropped, and by 1997, a majority of Quebec francophones (71 percent) and English-speakers in the rest of Canada (62 percent) alike agreed that free trade has been a good thing for Canada. By 2000, these figures had risen slightly to 75 percent among Quebec francophones and remained at 62 percent in the other language group.

Clearly, though, for all the changes in opinion wrought by the advent of comprehensive trade agreements with the United States and by the upturn in the job situation, Quebec francophones remain more continentalist at the beginning of the twenty-first century than nonQuebecers. The question remains: why? We can rule out at least three plausible explanations. One possibility is that Quebec francophones are simply more open to liberalized trade in general. However, when asked in 1997, Quebec francophones were actually more likely (85 percent) than English-speakers outside Quebec (69 percent) to agree that more should be done to protect Canadian business. They were also slightly less likely (58 percent) to agree that international trade creates jobs, compared with 64 percent in the other language group. Continentalism, then, is not simply another manifestation of a more open attitude toward the liberalization of trade on a global scale. In fact, Quebec francophones' views on both the need for protection and whether international trade creates jobs are virtually unrelated to their opinions about closer ties with the United States (tau of .04 and .03, respectively). Among English-speakers outside Quebec, on the other hand, there is a closer link, at least with respect to international trade (tau of .19).

A second possible explanation for why Quebec francophones are more continentalist is that they simply feel more warmly about the United States. However, when respondents in 1988 were asked how they felt about Americans on a 0 to 100 scale, there was little difference between the mean ratings provided by Quebec francophones (58) and English-speakers in the rest of Canada (60). The same was true when respondents were asked a similar question about the United States in 1997 (except that the mean scores were a little lower at 56 and 58, respectively). Meanwhile, in both 1993 and 2000, Quebec francophones actually rated the United States significantly lower on average (53 in 1993 and 49 in 2000) than did the other language group (60 in 1993 and 58 in 2000).

Finally, we find no support for the argument that sovereignists are more continentalist than federalists. Indeed, like Bashevkin, we find that sovereignists are actually *less* continentalist than federalists.⁵⁷ In both 1988 and 2000, we compared the views of those who were very favourable to sovereignty with those who were very opposed. In both years, the strongest sovereignists were less supportive (48 percent in 1988 and 28 percent in 2000) of closer ties with the United States than the staunchest federalists (59 percent in 1988 and 49 percent in 2000).

On the other hand, strong sovereignists *were* more likely (74 percent) to support CUFTA than strong federalists (63 percent) in 1988. How can we resolve this apparent contradiction? Martin has argued convincingly that sovereignists see free trade agreements as a way of “reducing the economic risks of sovereignty...[through] the combination of open markets, which favour the natural north-south flow of economic transactions, and strengthened international institutions, which reduce the risks of open trade for a smaller political unit”.⁵⁸ This thesis suggests that it is the institutionalization of ties that enhanced the appeal of CUFTA to sovereignists. Sovereignists may be more cautious when it comes to endorsing closer ties *without* the accompanying institutional safeguards. A second possibility is partisanship. Strong federalists were more likely to identify with the federal Liberal Party than with the Conservative government that had negotiated the agreement. Finally, for sovereignists, support for the free trade agreements likely has an important strategic component. These agreements make it easier to “sell” sovereignty: if Quebec has guaranteed access to the North American market, the argument goes, it does not need Canada.

We are still left with the puzzle of why Quebec francophones are more continentalist overall than nonQuebecers. Our data point to one possible answer and that is the language barrier. We cannot test this possibility directly, but it is revealing that perceptions of a threat to the future of the French language were unrelated to views about closer ties with the United States. This contrasts with the pattern we observed for opinions about immigrants. The absence of a similar relationship with continentalism strongly suggests that Quebec francophones may not share the fears of cultural assimilation that have often characterized views about the United States among English-speakers in the rest of Canada.

Discussion

Reviewing the findings of earlier studies of the attitudes of Quebec francophones, Laczko observed, that, “during the 1970s Francophones were apparently *more* sympathetic than Anglophones were to Indian [*sic*] affairs, and *less* sympathetic than Anglophones to immigration and the ethnic diversity that it has produced”.⁵⁹ This picture no longer holds. Quebec francophones are now *less* sympathetic than English-speakers outside Quebec to the conditions and aspirations of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples (though tellingly the gap narrows when concrete proposals are under discussion). And while we cannot claim that Quebec francophones have become *more* sympathetic than nonQuebecers to immigration and ethnic diversity, the picture that emerges from our analysis of Canadian Election Study data is much more mixed than it once was. Certainly, any global generalization about ethnocentrism is unwarranted. Quebec francophones’ views about immigration are little different from those of the other language group and they are actually more open to racial diversity. This is significant, given the changing complexion of immigrant flows. Where Quebec francophones do appear

less positive is in their views on the integration of immigrants, but here, too, there is a softening of attitudes, even among those who are fearful for the future of the French language

The perception of threat has been a thread running through discussions of Quebec francophones' attitudes toward immigration and ethnic diversity since the 1970s. This only serves to underline the contrast in orientations toward the United States. Quebec francophones are clearly more open to closer ties with the United States than are English-speakers outside Quebec. Far from perceiving a threat to their language and culture, Quebec francophones seem to see the language as a barrier to assimilation. The contrast with the cultural insecurity of English-Canadian nationalists vis-à-vis the United States is striking. It is interesting, though, that the continentalist divide between Quebec francophones and nonQuebecers has narrowed considerably since the "free trade election" of 1988.

What can we say about the future trajectories of opinion? If the key to Quebec francophones' views of immigrants is their perceived threat to the future of French, then it will take a reduction in the perception of threat for those views to become more positive. The policy initiatives of the 1990s were designed to encourage more French-speaking immigrants to come to Quebec and to facilitate the integration of those who arrived with no knowledge of the language. To the extent that those policies are successful, the climate of opinion may well improve. Set against that, however, are the realities of a French-speaking enclave that constitutes a mere 2 percent of the North American population and a globalized culture that places a premium on the ability to speak English.

It is harder to be sanguine about shifts in opinion about Aboriginal peoples. The threat that Aboriginal claims pose are of a quite different order of magnitude. They are not simply a matter of integrating to one rather than the other linguistic community, but challenge the very conception of Quebec identity. In fact, given the context of Aboriginal claims, what is perhaps surprising is that the gap between Quebec francophones and English-speakers outside Quebec (who have yet to experience their own "Oka crisis") is not a good deal wider. That it is not should give pause to those who still subscribe to the old stereotypes of Quebec francophones as xenophobic and ethnocentric.

Endnotes

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¹ Raymond Breton, "From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism: English Canada and Quebec" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (1988) 11, 85-102.

² France Giroux, "Le nouveau contrat national est-il possible dans une démocratie pluraliste? Examen comparatif des situations française, canadienne et québécoise", *Politique et sociétés* 16 (1997), 147.

³ Gérard Boismenu, "Perspectives on Québec-Canada relations in the 1990s: Is the Reconciliation of Ethnicity, Nationality and Citizenship Possible?" *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 3 (1996), 101

⁴ Gérard Bouchard, "La nation au singulier et au pluriel: L'avenir de la culture nationale comme 'paradigme' de la société québécoise", *Cahiers de recherche sociologique* 25 (1995), 79-99; Gilles Bourque et Jules Duchastel (1995) "Pour une identité canadienne post-nationale, la souveraineté partagée et la pluralité des cultures politiques", *Cahiers de recherche sociologique* (1995) 25, 17-58; M. Labelle, "Immigration, culture et question nationale", *Cahiers de recherche sociologique* 4 (1990), 143-51; Daniel Latouche, "Le pluralisme ethnique et l'agenda public au Québec", *Revue Internationale d'action Communautaire* 21 (1989), 11-26.

⁵ John W. Berry, Rudolf Kalin, and Donald M. Taylor, *Multiculturalism and Ethnic Attitudes in Canada* (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1976); Ronald D. Lambert and J. Curtis, "The French and English Canadian Language Communities and Multicultural Attitudes", *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 16 (1982), 30-46; Ronald D. Lambert and J. Curtis, "Opposition to Multiculturalism among Québécois and English-Canadians", *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 20 (1983), 193-206; Paul F. Sniderman, David Northrup, Joseph Fletcher, Peter Russell, and Philip E. Tetlock, "Psychological and Cultural Foundations of Prejudice: The Case of Anti-Semitism in Québec", *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 30 (1993), 242-70.

⁶ Laczko, *Pluralism and Inequality*; J. Rick Ponting and Roger Gibbins, "The Reactions of English Canadians and French Québécois to Native Indian Protest," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 18 (1981), 222-38

⁷ Daniel Salée, "Identities in Conflict: The Aboriginal Question and the Politics of Recognition in Quebec" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18 (1995), 280.

⁸ Sylvia Bashevkin, "Solitudes in Collision? Pan-Canadian and Quebec Nationalist Attitudes in the Late 1970s," *Comparative Political Studies* 23 (1990), 9

⁹ Bashevkin, "Solitudes in Collision?" 10.

¹⁰ The two language groups are defined in terms of both first language learned and still understood and language usually spoken at home. Given the focus on attitudes towards immigrants and immigration, people born outside Canada are not included.

¹¹ Berry, Kalin and Taylor, *Multiculturalism and Ethnic Attitudes*, 217.

¹² *Ibid.*, 88.

¹³ Lambert and Curtis, "The French and English Canadian Language Communities" and "Opposition to Multiculturalism"; Leslie S. Laczko, *Pluralism and Inequality in Quebec* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995)

¹⁴ John W. Berry and Rudolf Kalin, "Multicultural and Ethnic Attitudes in Canada: An Overview of the 1991 National Survey" *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science* 27 (1995), 301-20; Rudolf Kalin and John W. Berry, "Ethnic and Multicultural Attitudes" in John W. Berry and Jean Laponce (eds.) *Ethnicity and Culture in Canada: The Research Landscape* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

¹⁵ Berry, Kalin and Taylor, *Multiculturalism and Ethnic Attitudes*. The authors also emphasized the importance of processes of social comparison whereby feelings of relative deprivation vis-à-vis English Canadians fostered a strong sense of "ingroup solidarity, awareness of own ingroup identity, tightness of group boundaries and ethnocentrism", 220.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 220.

¹⁷ Berry and Kalin, "Multiculturalism and Ethnic Attitudes"; Richard Y. Bourhis, "Ethnic and Language Attitudes in Quebec" in John W. Berry and Jean Laponce (eds.), *Ethnicity and Culture in Canada: The Research Landscape* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Laczko, *Pluralism and Inequality*; Lambert and Curtis, "Opposition to Multiculturalism"; 1995; Joseph O'Shea, "Individual versus Collective Rights in Quebec" in Leo Driedger and Shiva S. Halli (eds.) *Race and Racism: Canada's Challenge* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000).

¹⁸ Denis Bolduc and Pierre Fortin, "Les francophones sont-ils plus 'xénophobes' que les anglophones au Québec? Une analyse quantitative exploratoire," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 22 (1990), 54-77.

¹⁹ Salée, "Identities in Conflict", 300

²⁰ *Pluralism and Inequality*, 166

²¹ See Bourhis, “Ethnic and Language Attitudes”

²² “From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism”

²³ Bourhis, “Ethnic and Language Attitudes” and Laczko, *Pluralism and Inequality*

²⁴ *Pluralism and Inequality*, 167

²⁵ The question was not asked in the 2000 Canadian election study. The gaps persist, even when we restrict the definition of English-speakers outside Quebec to those with English, Irish, Scots, or Welsh ancestry.

²⁶ It is possible that some of the apparent change is an artifact of a change in question wording. In 1988 and 1993, “stay the same” was not an explicit response option. However, the percentage responding “fewer” continued to decline after the inclusion of “stay the same” among the response options in 1997.

²⁷ The two sets of attitudes are, of course, related: 34 percent of Quebec francophones who perceived a threat were very favourable to sovereignty, compared with 16 percent of those who did not perceive a threat.

²⁸ Sixty percent of Quebec francophones in the 2000 study responded that they perceived a threat to the future of their language, up from 54 percent in 1997.

²⁹ This is true of sovereignists and federalists alike. Interestingly, some of the earlier studies of ethnic and multicultural attitudes also found that Quebec francophones were more tolerant of racial diversity than Angloceltic respondents (Lambert and Curtis 1983), suggesting that our conclusions are not bound to the particular questions asked in the Canadian Election Studies, but reflect a more enduring orientation.

³⁰ English speakers in the rest of the country were even less supportive (30 percent) of action on behalf of women than they were on behalf of racial minorities.

³¹ Laczko, *Pluralism and Inequality*; J. Rick Ponting and Roger Gibbins, “The Reactions of English Canadians and French Québécois to Native Indian Protest,” *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 18 (1981), 222-38

³² Laczko, *Pluralism and Inequality*, 165; see also Sylvie Vincent, “La révélation d’une force politique: les Autochtones” in G. Daigle (ed.), *Le Québec en jeu: Comprendre les grands défis* (Montréal: Les Presses de l’Université de Montréal, 1992), 749-90.

³³ Laczko, *Pluralism and Inequality*, 161-2

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., 164

³⁶ Ibid., 164

³⁷ Salée, “Identities in Conflict”, 277

³⁸ Ibid., 301

³⁹ Ibid., 295

⁴⁰ Higher education is typically associated with greater tolerance (see, for example, Herbert McClosky and Alida Brill, *Dimensions of Tolerance: What Americans Believe About Civil Liberties* (New York: Russell Sage, 1983), but the hardening of feeling among Quebec francophones is evident at every education level. In 2000, for example, mean ratings of Aboriginal peoples ranged from 41 among those who did not complete high school to 48 among university graduates.

⁴¹ The 1988 Canadian Election Study used the term “native peoples” in English. Since 1993, the terminology has been “Aboriginal peoples”. In French, the term “Autochtones” has been used throughout, so we can rule out the possibility that the changes in the climate of opinion between 1988 and 1993 are an artifact of differences in question wording.

⁴² Pierre Martin, “When Nationalism Meets Continentalism: The Politics of Free Trade in Quebec,” *Journal of Federal and Regional Studies* 5 (1995), 14.

⁴³ James L. Gibson, “Pluralistic Intolerance in America”, *American Politics Quarterly* 14 (1986), 269-93; McClosky and Brill, *Dimensions of Tolerance*

⁴⁴ Salée, “Identities in Conflict”, 302

⁴⁵ Ibid., 304

⁴⁶ Bourhis, “Ethnic and Language Attitudes”, 337

⁴⁷ Martin, “When Nationalism Meets Continentalism,” 2

⁴⁸ Ibid., 1

⁴⁹ Ibid., 2

⁵⁰ “Solitudes in Collision?” 10

⁵¹ Ibid., 6

⁵² Her data came from the 1979 Social Change in Canada survey.

⁵³ “When Nationalism Meets Continentalism”

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 13

⁵⁵ Neil Nevitte, “Toward A North American Community? Canada, the United State and Mexico”, in Donald Berry (ed.), *Bringing Values Back In: Value Change and North American Integration* (Westview Press: Boulder Colorado, 1995), 185-209.

⁵⁶ Bashevkin, “Solitudes in Collision?”

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ “When Nationalism Meets Continentalism”, 20

⁵⁹ *Pluralism and Inequality*, 165

Figure 1: Percentage Wanting to Admit Fewer Immigrants

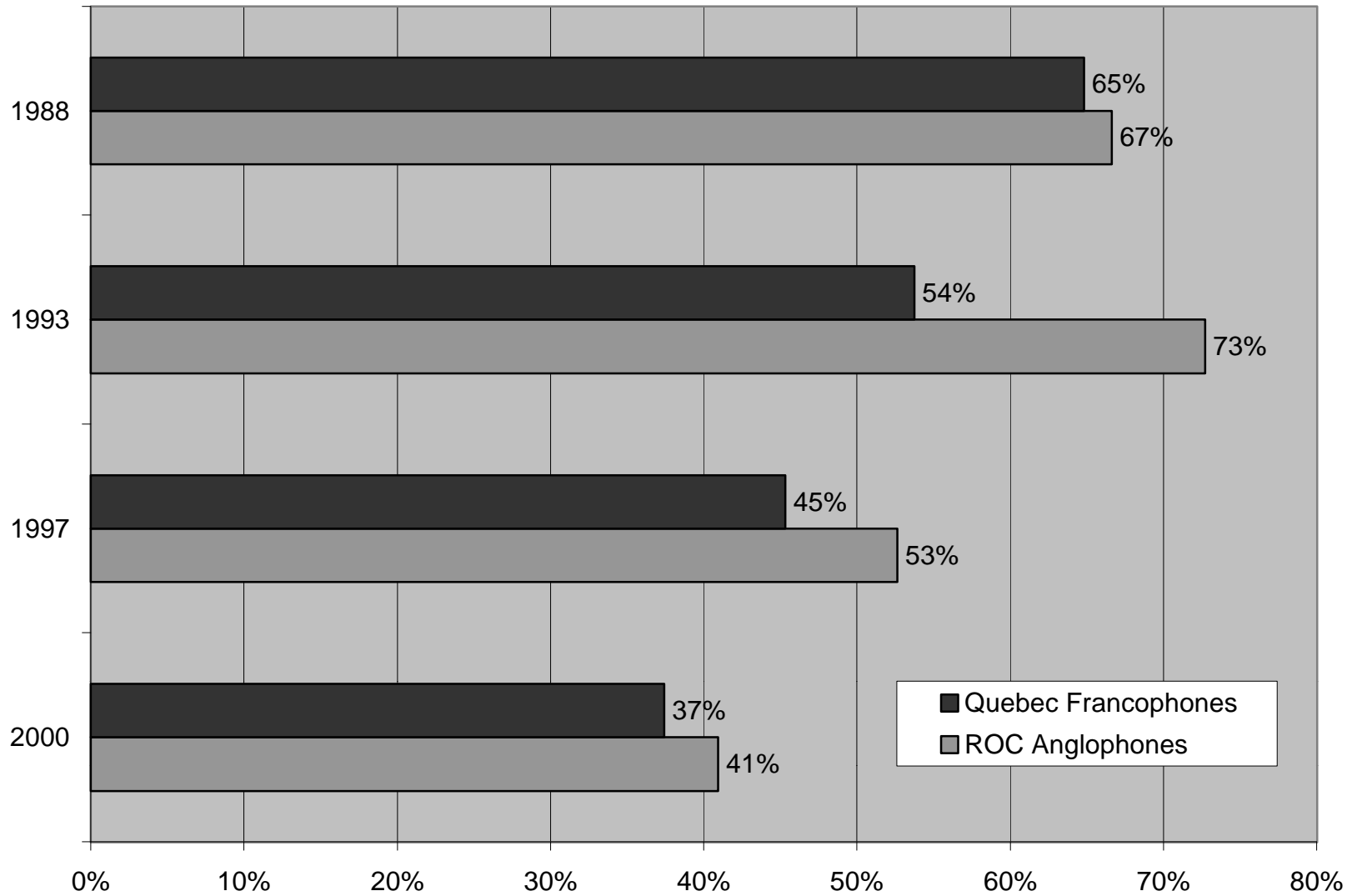


Figure 2: Views about Immigrants (percentage agreeing with the statement)

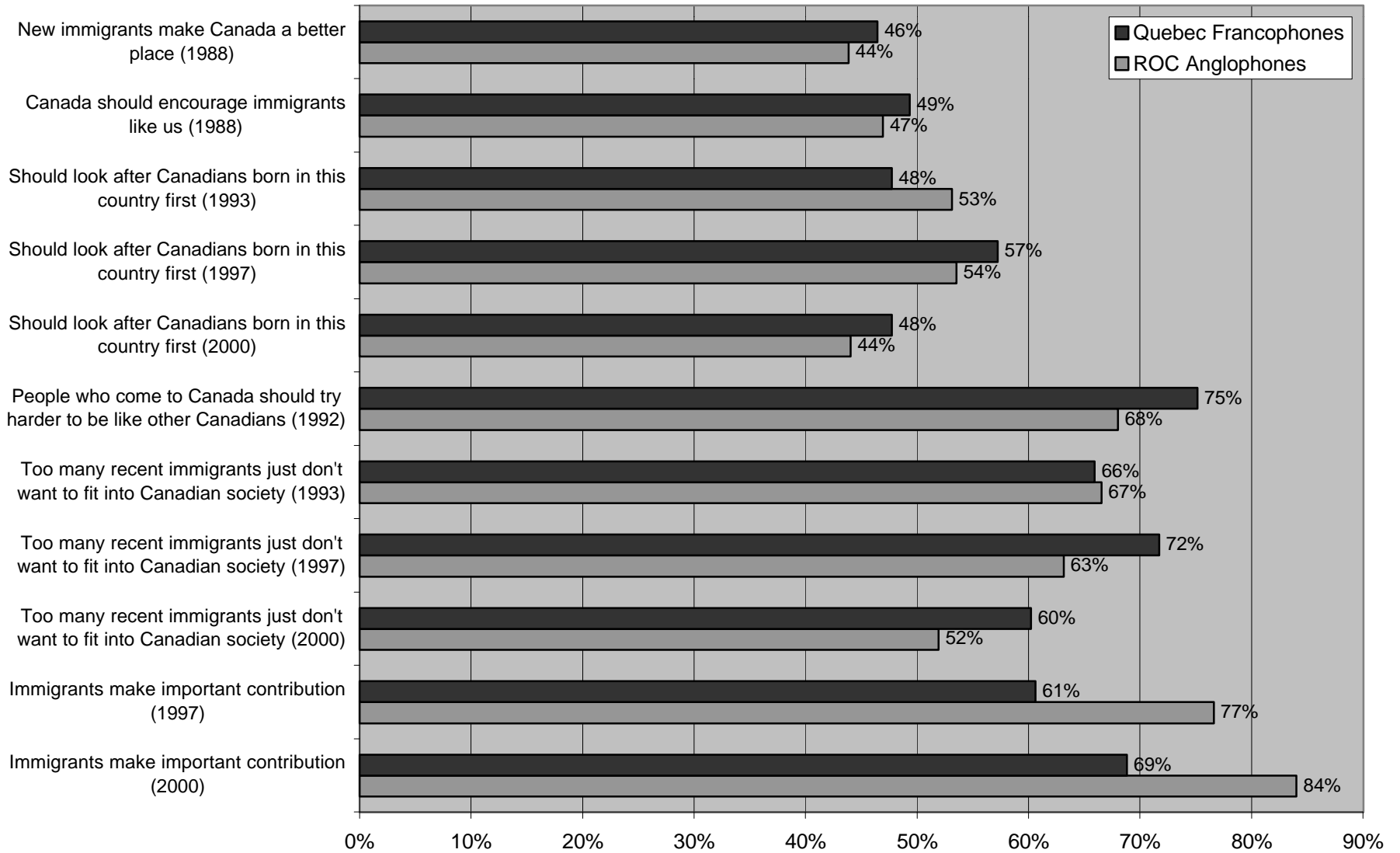
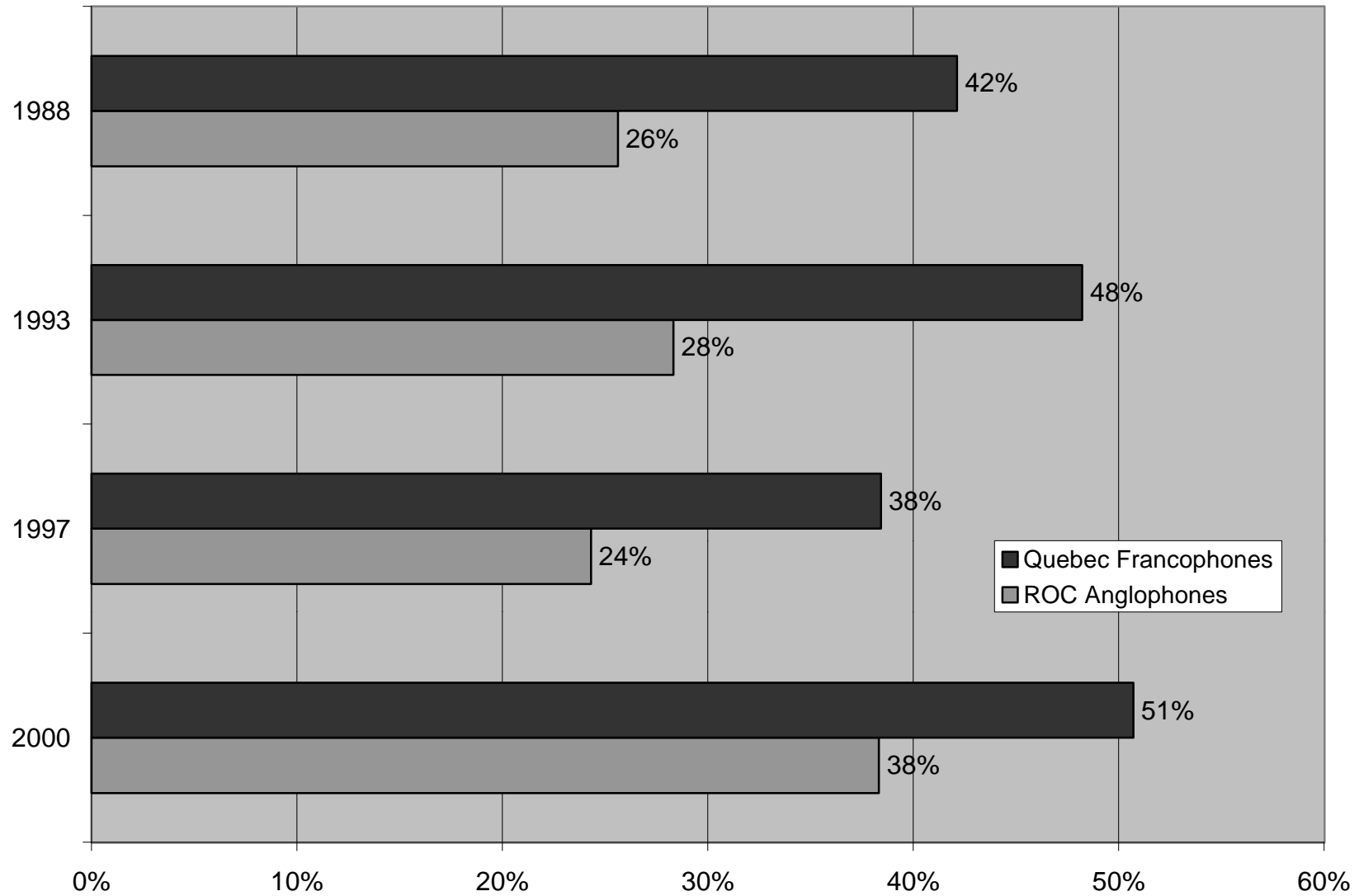


Figure 3: Percentage Wanting to do More for Racial Minorities



**Figure 4: Feelings about Aboriginal Peoples
(mean scores on a 0 to 100 scale)**

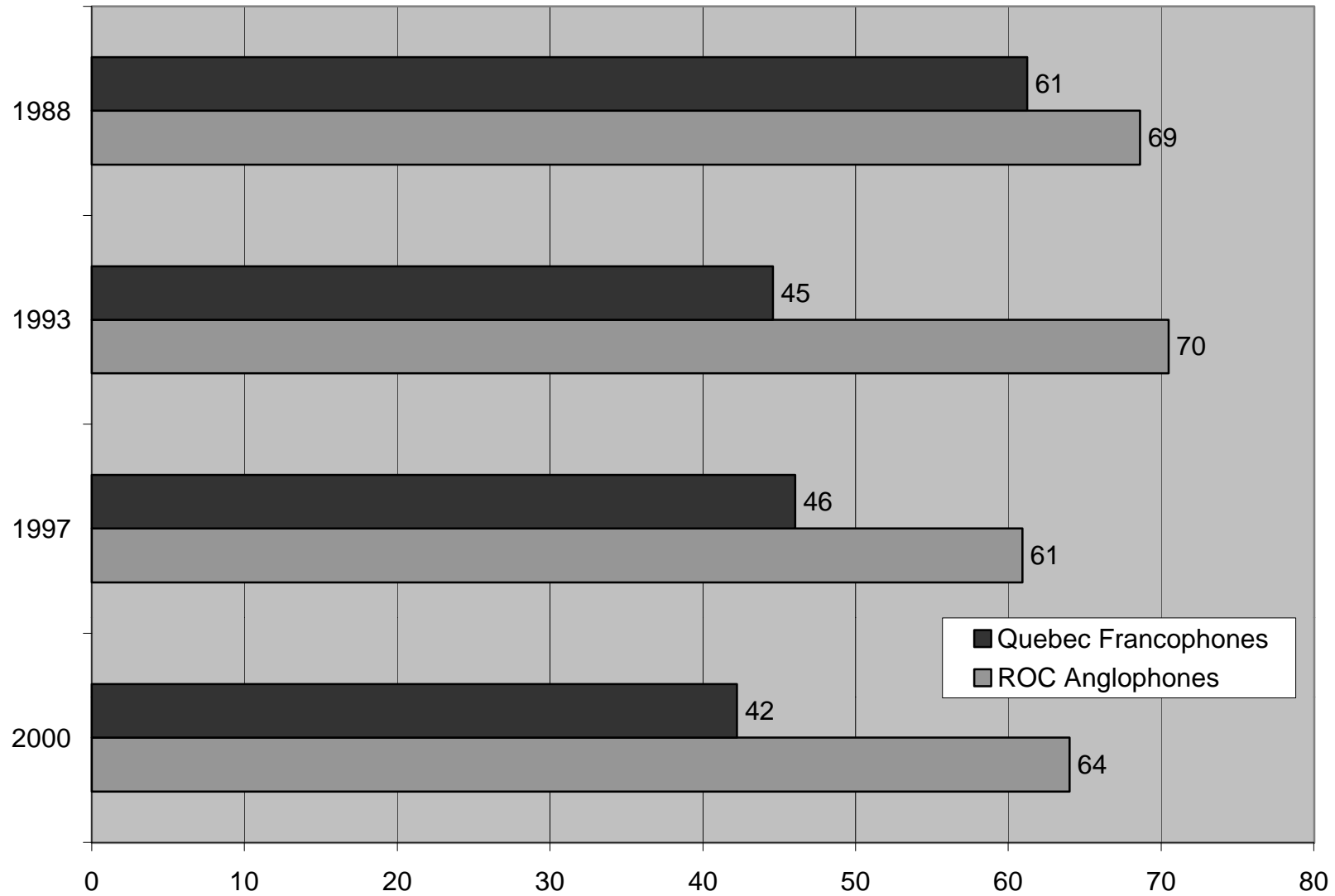


Figure 5: Views about Aboriginal peoples (percentage agreeing)

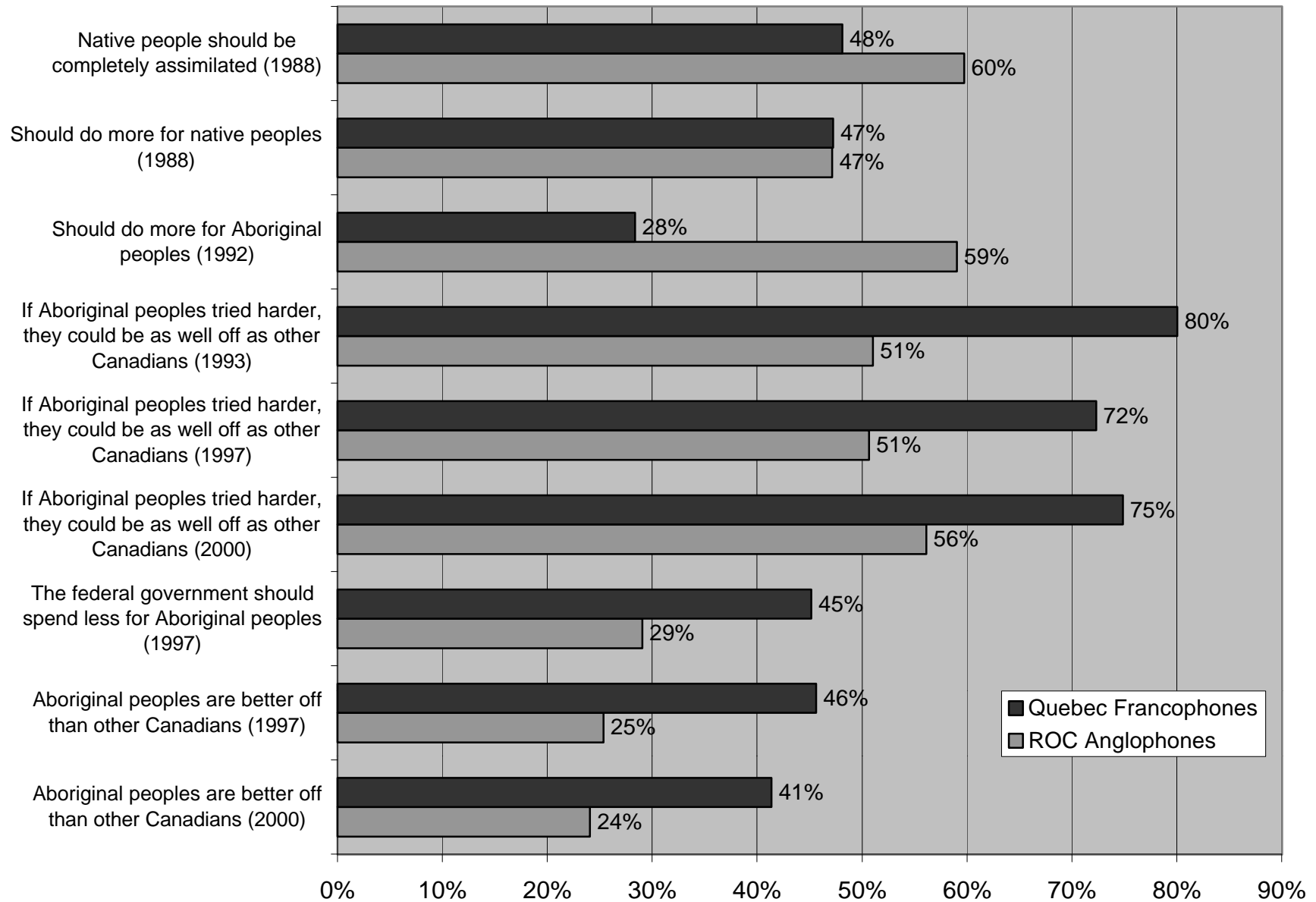


Figure 6: Views about Aboriginal Rights (percentage agreeing)

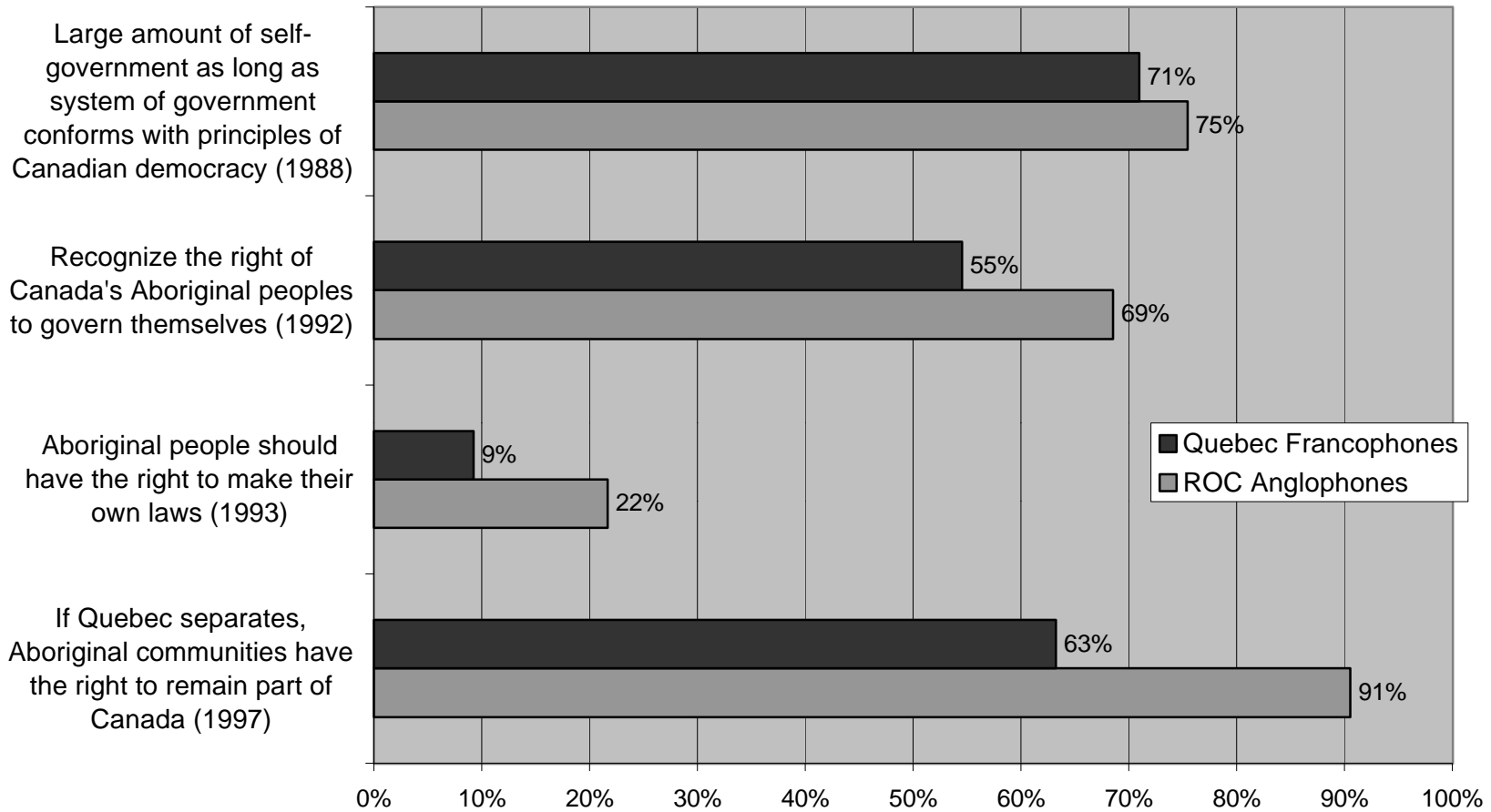


Figure 7: Percentage Wanting Closer Ties with the USA

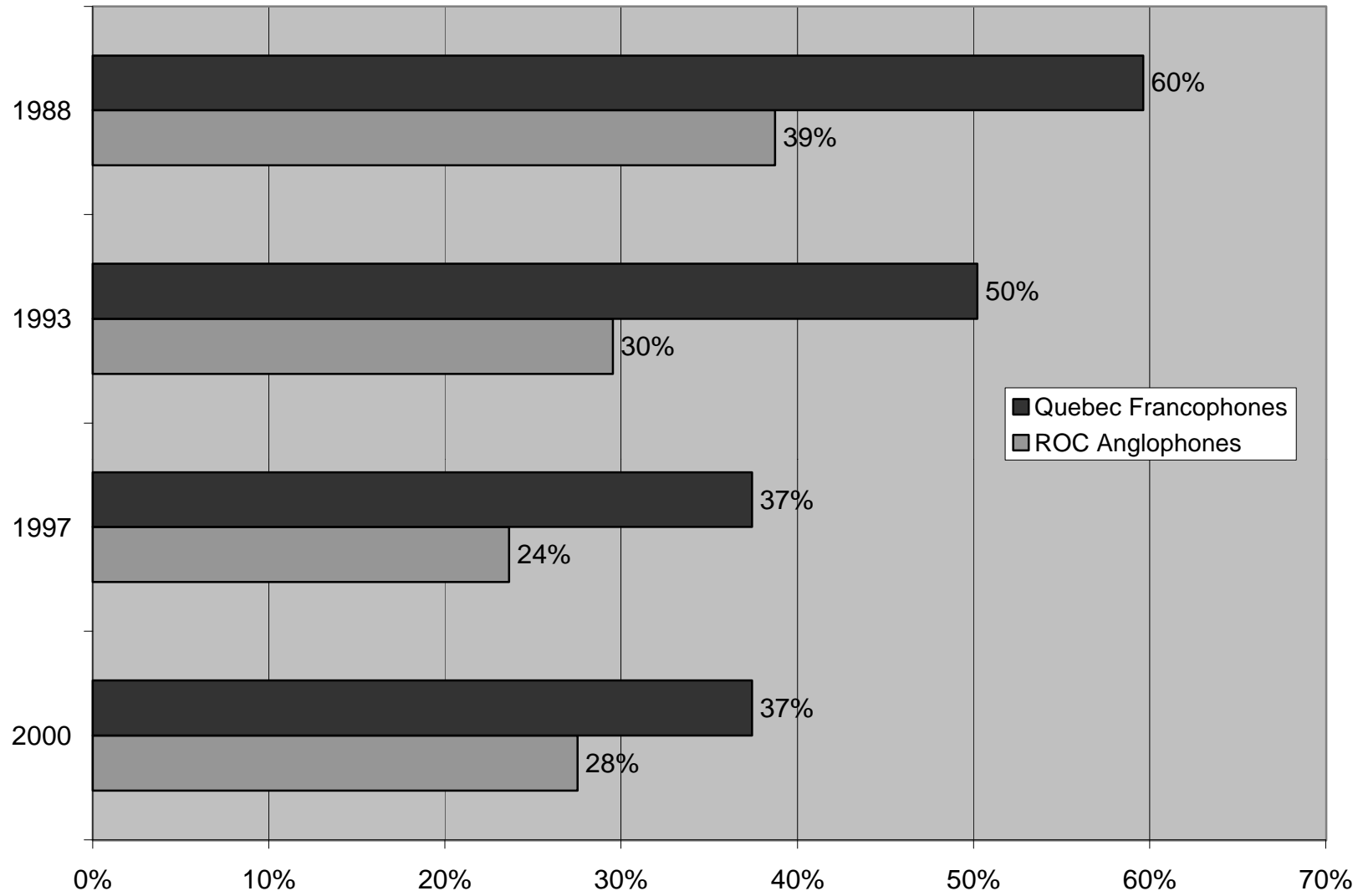


Figure 8: Support for CUFTA and NAFTA

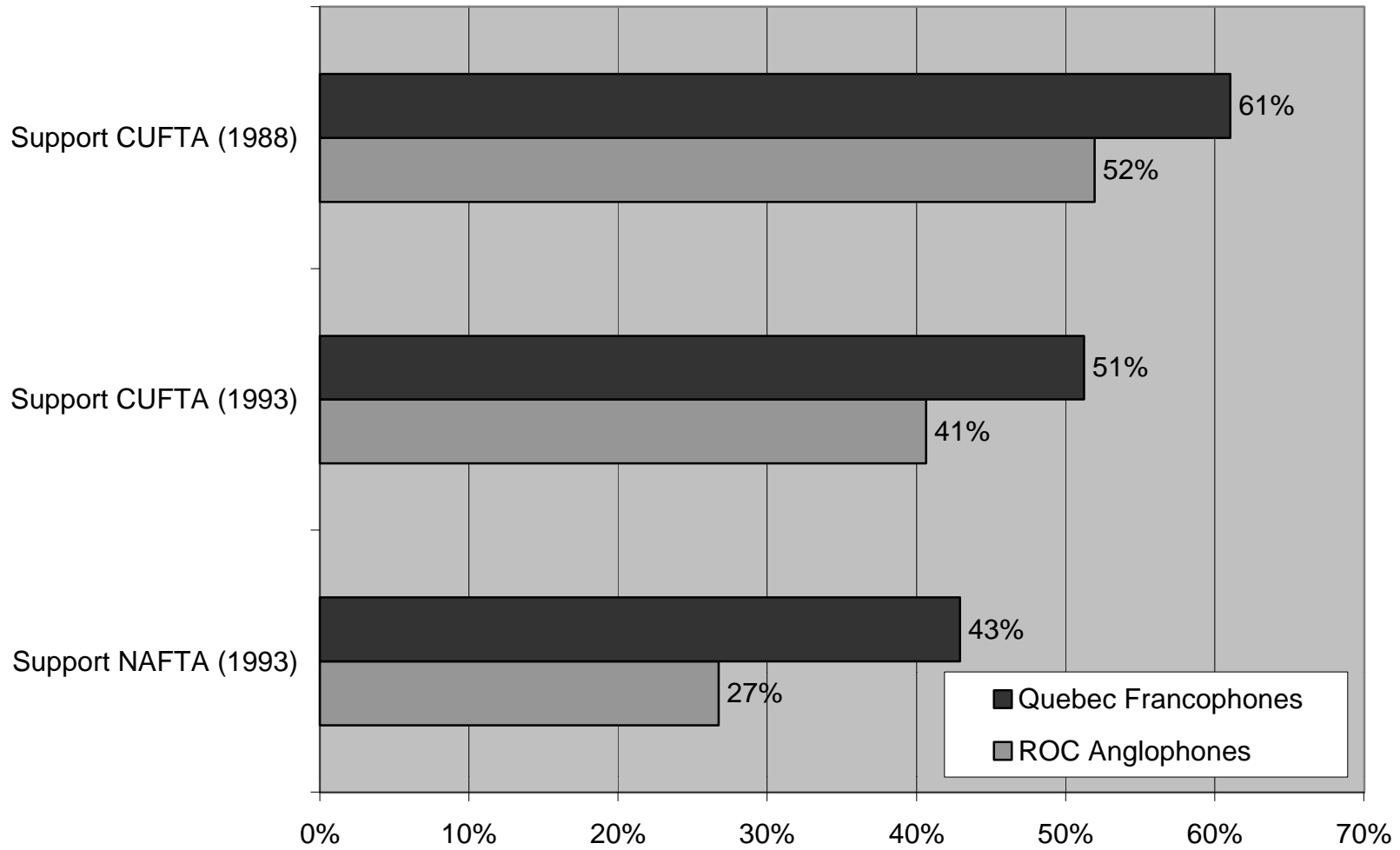


Figure 9: Views about CUFTA and US Investment in 1988
(% agreeing)

