

The Dartmouth Undergraduate Journal of Politics, Economics, and World Affairs
Volume. I, Issue. IV, 120-132, July 2022

Conservatism, Collaboration, and Capacity: Political Explanations for Canada's Shift in Immigrant Admissions Logic

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ABSTRACT: Canada is often regarded as the United States' friendlier neighbor to the north, but how welcoming is it really? A critical analysis of immigration and citizenship policy throughout Canadian history reveals that Canada may not be the inclusive member of the world community it is often conceptualized as. This paper examines some of the recent key changes in Canadian immigration policy and their broader contexts, while benchmarking the policies against two leading scholars' thoughts on how the relative presence of certain political ideologies in a country drives its immigration policies to the left or right of the political spectrum. As early 21st century policy changes are outlined, it becomes clear that the standard explanations for political parties as explanatory factors in immigration legislation do not hold entirely true in Canada. Instead, a broader, bipartisan political framework can be used to understand Canadian policy changes. The paper concludes by explaining that party politics do account for some of the reasoning behind changes in Canada, but that a surprisingly cooperative Liberal party, and a surprisingly lenient bureaucratic framework, should be used to reframe Canada as a less friendly, unquestioned welcomer of all than it is often seen as today.

Introduction: The Puzzle of Canada's Shift towards Human-Capital Citizenship

Canada is one of the most popular destinations for immigrants worldwide. With one in five Canadians born abroad, it is estimated that by 2040 immigrants will be responsible for nearly 100% of Canadian population growth, ranking Canada among the top ten immigrant-receiving countries in the world.¹ In addition, rates of naturalization of immigrants in Canada are more than double those in the United States, regardless of national background and education levels, soaring as high as 79% in 2006, compared to just 30% in the United States.²

Since the 1962 termination of Canadian race-based citizenship requirements, the country's citizenship law has undergone numerous changes reflecting evolving cultural values. This policy engineering has, for the most part, been done with one of two goals at its core: increasing family immigration or increasing economic immigration with the hope of attracting newcomers who will provide a boost to Canada's skilled labor economy. In 1983, for example, family immigration accounted for 55% of all new arrivals, an increase from 34% just eight years prior. Furthermore, from 1971 to 1983, the percentage of economic immigrants plummeted from 73% to only 31% of all new Canadian arrivals.³ Over the course of the past sixty years, policymakers have adjusted quotas, restated goals, and adapted their positions to temporal understandings of the ideal Canadian immigrant. Recently, these immigration and naturalization laws have taken a sharp turn away from family unification priorities, in favor of admitting profitable and capital-producing, highly educated new citizens. While family and refugee immigrants accounted for 55% of all immigration

in 1983, this number was down to 30% in 2010, as proportional rates of economic immigrants increased from 31% to 67% in the same time period.⁴

Antje Ellerman explains this change in terms of Canada's shift towards "human-capital citizenship," which understands citizens as economic assets and producers of their own capitalistic worth. Human capital, here, is the collection of hard and soft skills often associated with high-status, high-salary positions.⁵ A country focused on human-capital citizenship would prove this focus by enacting policy changes that demonstrate a higher value placed on economic immigrants than family or humanitarian immigrants. These changes are certainly observable in 21st century Canada. Immigration policy changes have included making it more difficult for children to immigrate to Canada for reasons of economic dependence, awarding immigrants "points" for those with job offers in fields requiring high levels of education, and effectively removing for elderly relatives of Canadian citizens a path to permanent residency and/or citizenship.⁶ Though there had been a precedent in Canada of prioritizing more highly educated and employable immigrants since the mid 1990s, the changes implemented in the first fifteen years of the 21st century created an especially challenging puzzle. These changes fast-tracked Canada's shift towards economic immigrant valuation, and human-capitalization. This observation prompts the question: "Why has Canada adopted the citizenship policy changes that Ellerman says it has?"

The Canadian government during this time had numerous policy priorities that can offer possible insight into their citizenship agenda. Goals were set for national financial growth, such as "establishing Canada's place in the world economically," reviving the country's "entrepreneurial spirit," and doubling foreign student recruitment.⁷ There were also direct policy moves that addressed these economic aims, including requiring proof of economic worth and stability prior to obtaining permanent residency, granting work permits for humanitarian refugees less generously, and the further development of the immigrant point system to more highly value younger, more educated and employable applicants.⁸ Evaluating the case of Canada in particular provides an example of a country highly sought after by immigrants, but with recent modifications to its immigration policy that exemplify the human-capital approach Ellermann introduces. In this paper, I investigate the hypothesis that the ideologies of the conservative political party in power can explain the shift towards human-capital citizenship that Ellermann observes. However, the findings on the changes observed by Ellermann refute Howard and Janoski's theories of party influence on citizenship policy, given that common goals between Liberals and Conservatives, as well as executive ministerial power, were more influential than the power of one party's ideology in human-capitalizing Canadian citizenship.

I. A Theoretical Explanation for Canada's Evolving Logic

The aforementioned hypothesis makes sense given the timing of Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper's years in power, as well as common conceptions of conservatives' views on immigration. Multiple authors in the existing literature draw parallels between the power of political parties and the resulting policy changes, which present the basis for the hypothesis. Both Thomas Janoski and Marc Morjé Howard provide foundational knowledge for linkages between liberal political parties and certain types of immigration policy.

Janoski provides causal links between the relative power of a country's leftist party and higher rates of integration through naturalization. Janoski explains how Sweden, which has a greater degree of social democratic political party power than Norway, Denmark, and Finland, experiences the highest naturalization rate of the four countries. Following World War II, social democratic governments in Sweden established agencies that helped humanitarian-based

immigrants with the naturalization process, fought to lower language test requirements, and implemented a concerted national attitude reform project to decrease anti-refugee sentiment.⁹ This evidence for the progressive, humanitarian immigration framework adopted in Sweden under liberal governments can then be weighed against Harper's government in Canada. Without a liberal government, let alone social democratic one, Canadian citizenship policy was left up to the discretion of a government that was not only conservative, but more conservative than recent Canadian precedent, opening the door for the country's leaders to take Canada in the opposite direction, immigration-wise, from the one observed by Janoski in Sweden.¹⁰ In the case of Canada, this would mean naturalization and integration rates would be low under Conservative leadership, and that *any* type of immigration, whether economic or not, would be less likely with Conservatives in power.¹¹

Howard finds additional evidence for the influence of political party leanings on citizenship policy and what the relative presence of a far-right movement means for a country's immigration law. Whereas Janoski provides evidence for the liberalizing power that social democratic political parties can have, Howard explains how the pressures of public opinion, when coming from the right in particular, influence immigration policy and prevent liberalization (which, in this case, would mean moving towards a view of immigrants not as producers of human capital, but as those in need of familial or humanitarian aid). Howard states that the presence of a far-right group in a state's political arena promises non-liberalization, but the absence of far-right mobilization does not guarantee liberalization. In other words, the presence of a far-right movement can prevent much more than its absence can facilitate.¹² Applying this school of thought to the case of Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper in Canada, the country would seem almost doubly guaranteed to have shifted right towards an economic system of immigration. First, the 2003 founding of the Conservative Party and Harper's 2006 election established the presence of a party that was further-right than any other recent Canadian political party that had possessed significant political power. Such a right-leaning party is thus more likely to support economic or human-capital immigration.¹³ Second, for the second half of Harper's time in office, beginning in 2011, Conservatives held a parliamentary plurality that emboldened them to pull national policy to the right.¹⁴ There existed then not only the non-absence, but the more real and genuine presence of a "further-right" stance in Canada than there previously had been, exemplifying a nascent apparatus for moving citizenship policy to the right.

Where Howard provides a theory of citizenship law and Janoski provides one of naturalization rates, I investigate a broader system of immigration that encapsulates a country's attitudes and politics at a certain point in time. The connection between my investigation and Howard and Janoski's theoretical frameworks is not perfectly congruent, but the comparison is apt nonetheless. The central hypothesis in my research is that certain party ideologies, rather than a specific metric like Howard's theory of law or Janoski's theory of naturalization rates in which those policies could be analyzed, lead a party to adopt certain citizenship or immigration policies. It is important, however, to explain how party ideologies are to be understood. In this paper, a party's "ideology" refers to the set of beliefs that provides their foundation as a political group. These ideologies can be exhibited, for example, as part of a campaign platform, or as talking points at major political events. Of course, the true individual desires of these policymakers may differ slightly, or even stray more drastically, from these openly espoused goals, but for the sake of this paper ideologies will be defined as what are more openly expressed in the public sphere.

If this hypothesis is correct, we would see through Canadian history only Conservatives (or conservative-adjacent politicians before the founding of the current Conservative Party)

pushing for economic-focused immigration, and only Liberals or liberal politicians pushing for increased family and/or humanitarian immigration policy. Proof of the theory would be strengthened if there were a dearth of evidence of parties working together on citizenship policy, signifying a logic of immigrant admissions in Canada that is divided entirely along party lines. In actuality, however, the opposite is evident.

II. Early 21st Century Citizenship Policy Changes in Canada

In the 1990s, Canadian immigration quotas were adjusted to make much more room for economic admittances, and the cap on allowances of family immigration was subsequently lowered.¹⁵ The policies and quota revisions adopted in the 1990s further opened an already-cracked door for the Canadian shift towards economic admissions, and changes in the early 2000s stepped through with full force. The most relevant, recent changes in Canadian immigration policy have been enacted as amendments to the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, initially enacted in 2001. These changes were facilitated by the government of Conservative party Prime Minister Harper, who was elected in 2006 and remained in power until 2015. Harper's ideologies were much further to the right than recent Prime Ministers; he and his supporters were often deemed "Harper Conservatives" to express the shift to the right in their policies as compared with their other conservative predecessors. A new coalition, formed between more centrist political actors, gave Harper's government space to move to the right in immigration policy, which, in this case, meant greater prioritization of economic immigration. This tipping of the scale was intensified by the Harper Conservatives' focus on the liberalization of Canada's economy, particularly within the context of immigration.¹⁶

For Harper's first campaign in 2006, the official campaign platform of the Conservative Party makes explicitly clear their economic idealization of Canadian immigration. In the official platform statement released, Harper and the Conservatives write, "We need an immigration policy that responds to Canada's economic needs."¹⁷ Harper and his government also made their ideas known at major political events. At the World Economic Forum in 2012, among top influential economic powers, Harper outlined a new economic plan for Canada that, in his own words, necessitated "significant reform of [Canada's] immigration system" and "mak[ing] economic and labour force needs the central goal of immigration efforts in the future."¹⁸ In 2007, Immigration Minister Diane Finley stated that Canada was in a "global war for talent," and traveled to India with the *expressed purpose* of "send[ing] a message that Canada is looking for talented Indian people, looking for the best and brightest to come [to Canada]."¹⁹ Though these cases by no means express all or even most of the Harper government's beliefs, they demonstrate forums through which "ideologies" can be conceptualized, examples of how Harper's government publicized their ideologies, and what those ideologies were.

Changes to immigration policy began within Harper's first term in office. The 2008 C-50 Bill was enacted with the primary goal of expediting the immigration application assessment process, which essentialized applicants based on country of origin, education, employment prospects, and age, among other factors intended to assess human capital.²⁰ This categorical reframing resulted in increased priority for economic immigrants and placed strict limits on who and how many people could apply for citizenship on humanitarian grounds. Since 2012, the Immigration Minister can designate certain countries as "safe," indicating that any refugee applicants from those regions have no legitimate reason to flee, and thus denying humanitarian appeals for admission.²¹ The effects of these changes have been clear to see, as myriad federal worker admissions programs – for highly-skilled or highly-educated applicants – have been

reimagined in Canada since the start of the 21st century. Most notably, the points system (which was originally established with the intent of keeping “mentally defective” people out of Canada) moved in a more explicit career-driven direction, guaranteeing a higher point score for anyone with a job offer than anyone without, regardless of all other factors.²² As a result, government support for family and refugee admissions has waned, bringing national civilian support down with it; across Canada, far fewer people in 2020 believed that refugees should be the most prioritized immigrant class when compared with years prior.²³

In 2015, Harper's final year in office, additional policy changes made the path to Canadian citizenship increasingly human-capital based. A system of permanent guaranteed residency for admitted foreign workers was scrapped in favor of a framework in which workers were first admitted on a temporary basis, and then had to prove the extent of their economic establishment before transitioning to permanent residency.²⁴ This adaptation favors workers in high-skill jobs who are more likely not only to retain one job consistently, but also to establish greater financial roots because of that job. The changes made by the Harper government in his three terms from 2006 to 2015 set heavy precedents for a new logic of immigrant admissions, as well as a revised understanding of who should have the power to make immigration decisions. At a glance, the Harper government's modifications to immigration policy appear attributable to Harper's and the Conservative Party's aim to reconstruct the Canadian population of their nation as a more educated and wealthy group, especially given the aforementioned theoretical bases offered by Howard and Janoski. However, further research indicates a greater range of factors at play.

III. Findings

Three primary causal factors stand out as influencing Canada's shift towards more human-capital centered citizenship policy. As predicted, the rise of Harper and the Conservative Party was influential in the changes observed, but it was to a lesser degree than expected. Contrary to the theory presented, research shows that there was multi-party support for citizenship policy changes that prompted human-capital citizenship, or at least a lack of resistance from the left on the human-capitalizing mission that was led by the right. Findings also indicate that the precedent for executive ministerial power was furthered during Harper's time in office, allowing immigration policy leaders to make their changes without the need for parliamentary approval, public opinion concurrence, or other roadblocks. While the changes enacted by a given administration's Immigration Minister are dependent on the political party, and therefore ideologies, of the Prime Minister and their government, political party ideology alone is not the all-explaining variable it was hypothesized to be. The human-capital citizenship policies were passed under the regime of and with pressure from a Conservative government, but the influence of Liberal support, as well as ministerial power, cannot be overlooked in passing these policies.

Conservatives: The Influence of One Political Party

Harper's government's conservative ideologies aimed to reconform Canadian citizenship to be more human-capital focused. Harper's government did not possess a parliamentary majority until 2011, meaning many of the changes it enacted to further its immigration ideology were passed outside the legislative sphere. Unfazed by this challenge, in 2008 Harper and his cabinet designated a Canadian Experience Class, which allows high-skill immigrants to more easily obtain permanent residency.²⁵ In order to apply for permanent residency with this option, an applicant must have at least one year of skilled work experience in a managerial, professional, or skilled trade field, as well as pass a more stringent language test than standard applicants.²⁶ The Harper regime also

enacted policy changes that moved to suppress family immigration, one of the biggest threats to their envisioned system whose admission of new immigrants was, as one scholar puts it, “premised on its economic utility.”²⁷ This suppression was aided with the introduction of a Super Visa program which admitted parents and grandparents of Canadian citizens only as long-term visitors for the foreseeable future, limiting family members to visitor status if they could not prove to be strong economic producers. Under the Super Visa, parents and grandparents had to re-apply every two years, with a ten-year cap, to stay in Canada as long-term visitors. The introduction of temporary policy by Harper Conservatives into a previously permanence-based system demonstrates a greater effort to welcome only those immigrants who were able, willing, and expecting to support Canada economically. This shift is also evident given the fact that the Harper government lowered the age maximum from 22 to 19 for children eligible for family sponsorship, thus limiting possibilities for family reunification admission at the upper and lower ends of the age spectrum.²⁸

Finally, there is evidence of Harper’s regime steering immigrant application decisions from government workers to employers themselves, reflecting a clear increased valuation of immigrants who come for employment-based reasons. As Harper’s second Immigration Minister Jason Kenney said in a statement that bluntly expresses the Harper understanding of immigrant admissions, “[e]mployers are going to do a much better job at selection than a passive bureaucracy.”²⁹ Harper’s government rapidly expanded the scale of the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), which allows Canadian provinces to request immigrants in a certain industry if they fill a specific, employment-based need in the province. Fewer than five thousand immigrants had been admitted under the PNP in each year from 2000 to 2005, but these figures shot up to 33,000 per year, a 550% increase, during Harper’s time in office.³⁰

To understand the size of the effects brought on by these changes, in 2005, one year before Harper took office, Canada admitted 140,000 economic immigrants and 110,000 other immigrants. In 2014, Harper’s final full year in office, 165,000 economic immigrants and 92,000 other immigrants were admitted – an increase of only 7,000 total immigrants, but a proportional shift from 56% economic to 64% economic.³¹ Furthermore, in this same time period the number of International Mobility Programs work permit holders in Canada increased more than threefold, from 74,000 to 257,000.³²

It may seem logical to assume, especially given the theoretical groundings provided by Howard and Janoski about the effects of the political party on immigrant and citizenship liberalization, that these human-capitalization changes observed by Ellermann can be explained by the fact that a conservative politician was in power. However, it is necessary also to understand the institutional frameworks of multi-party policy agreement and non-parliamentary policymaking strategies that facilitated the changes enacted by Harper. To illustrate the insufficiency of party ideology in explaining Canada’s shifting logic, I turn now to discuss the power of Liberal cooperation.

Liberals: The Influence of Two-Party Cooperation and Collaboration

Though many of the policies that moved Canadian citizenship law in the direction of human-capital valuations were passed while Harper and his Conservative government were in power, Conservatives were not the only group who facilitated these policy changes. The Liberals, Canada’s other major political party, actively supported or were complacent to many of the Harper Conservatives’ policies and also bore some of the responsibility for providing the economic admissions precedent that Conservatives expanded on. This means that it was not simply

Conservative political party members' ideologies that can be used to explain Canada's shift towards human-capital citizenship, but the consent and shared policy goals and ideologies of the Liberal party. Although Liberals and Conservatives in Canada are opposed to one another in many spheres, little compromise was required, among such high levels of agreement in immigration logic.

Facilitated by a Liberal Prime Minister in 1995, the Provincial Nominee Program was established. The program allows provinces to place requests for employment-based immigrants in a specific relevant industry.³³ Not only does this establishment reflect the goal in Canada of increasing economic immigrant admissions, but it also demonstrates the role Liberals played in giving employers more admission decision power than government workers. Moreover, at the end of the 20th century, with Liberals still in power and before the formation of the current Canadian Conservative party, provinces fought for, and were granted, the right to develop their own more targeted criteria for their provinces' PNPs specifically – evidence of not just the passive allowance, but the active commitment, on the part of Liberals to human-capitalize Canadian citizenship.³⁴

Under that same Liberal Prime Minister in 1998, Citizenship and Immigration Canada's multiculturalism budget was cut in half. This budget supports action items such as anti-racist education, investing money in programs that welcome new humanitarian or family refugees and immigrants, and other work that would indicate the opposite of a human-capital agenda. These changes were not necessarily passed with the goal of shifting towards a human-capital logic of admissions, but they nonetheless provide an evidentiary basis for the fact that Liberals themselves passed policies that carved a more difficult path for non-economic immigrants toward integration. This action helped set the precedent for Harper's government to assume support from the "rival" Liberals across the aisle.

In 2001, a new Immigrant and Refugee Act was passed to justify the current immigration law paradigm, given that the most recent act of similar stature had come 25 years prior in 1976. There was multi-party support for the 2001 Act, despite the fact that the Immigration Minister who introduced it in the House of Commons was Liberal Elinor Caplan. Caplan said at the time, "The new century will belong to those who are best able to develop and expand their collective human capital... If Canada is to compete and succeed, we must continue to attract skilled workers from across the globe." This direct value statement of human-capital citizenship from a Liberal Immigration Minister counters my hypothesis that Conservative politicians' ideologies are responsible for human-capitalizing Canadian citizenship law, given that nearly identical ideologies were introduced before the modern Conservative party had even been formed.³⁵ This statement also counters the idea that it was Conservative action combined with Liberal permission that pulled Canada's immigrant admissions in an economic direction. Though there was not as much human-capitalizing action taken explicitly by Liberals following Harper's election in 2006, the events outlined above show how Harper inherited an admissions logic that, thanks to Liberals, was already moving in a more economic direction.

Not only is the Liberal government's introduction of the shift towards human-capital logic in the 2001 Bill salient, but the lack of opposition for the Bill from other parties is worth noting. Ellermann argues that paradigmatic changes, like the shift from a family-centered to an economically-focused national understanding of immigration in Canada, are often accompanied by serious political contestation. However, such contestation was not present at any level in Canada. Left-leaning Liberals and Progressive Conservatives adopted the 2001 Bill with enthusiasm and the right-leaning Canadian Alliance, a primary predecessor of the Conservatives, met the Bill with no real resistance. Furthermore, though they did not enthusiastically endorse the

Bill in 2001, members of the Canadian Alliance expressed goals similar to those of Liberals: to limit family and humanitarian immigration.³⁶

In the previously mentioned 2008 Amendment to the 2001 Act, Conservatives spearheaded the categorization of Canadian immigrants by class and placing increased priority on fast-tracking the applications of those coming for economic reasons. However, in the process of voting on this amendment, most Liberals either abstained or voted with the Conservatives. Despite potentially having the power to stop this Conservative immigration move, depending on how smaller parties had cast their votes, the Liberals did not lead a movement to do so. A member of one of these smaller third parties, the Bloc Quebecois, accused the Liberals of their complicity in the process, saying “I find it a bit sad to see the Conservatives profiting from the fact that the Liberals don't really want to show their true colours -- that they're not ready to defeat the government.”³⁷

A common theme begins to emerge, as research shows that many changes initially prompted under the government of one party actually appear to be much more bilaterally supported than may be expected given a party's known ideology. Multi-party support was influential again in Harper's final year in office, 2015, as a revamping of the Canadian points system was suggested. The points system is one of the crudest examples of human-capital citizenship, as it numerically evaluates applicants based on their employment prospects, education, and language skills. The Government of Canada's website suggests in plain terms that rejected applicants “may be able to get a higher score by... completing another degree.”³⁸ In 2015, a restructuring of the system made it so that anyone with a job offer would earn more points than anyone without, regardless of family, humanitarian, linguistic, or any other factors. Given typical thought on conservative immigration ideologies, and assumptions surrounding the human-capital-driven motives of the Harper Conservatives in particular, this policy may seem to support the hypothesis that the changes Ellermann observes are because of party power. However, further research reveals that there was “bipartisan agreement that the points system was in need of reform.”³⁹ This was largely due to employer complaints about trouble finding sufficient labor, and demonstrates how Conservatives and Liberals responded uniformly, even following nine years of Harper Conservatives' reign, on matters of immigration.

This uniformity of Canadian immigration values has outlived Harper's years as Prime Minister. Research finds that, from 2016 to 2020, the percentage of Canadians who think refugees should be the most highly prioritized immigrant category plummeted from 35% to 22%. This could of course be for a variety of other reasons, including worldwide refugee crises, the Coronavirus pandemic, or statements made by Harper's successor, Liberal Justin Trudeau. Whatever the reason(s), however, the findings suggest a more pro-economic immigrant attitude in Canada that transcends Harper's government as well as party lines, refuting the hypothesis presented in this paper that the changes Ellermann observed in Canada were because of the power of one party. The research also draws into question Howard and Janoski's theories, given that neither the presence of a social democratic left nor a far-right, which Howard and Janoski implicate in immigration policy de-liberalization, pushed Canada in a human-capital direction.

Streamlining: The Expansion and Reliance on the Power of the Executive Branch

One final causal factor contributing to the shift to human capital immigration policy is the precedent of deferring to ministerial executive power (here, the Prime Minister and/or Immigration Minister) and their aims and voting patterns, without putting policy up to vote or debate in the legislative branch. This practice was brought to new levels during Harper's regime, as the political ideologies of certain actors came to be less influential than the strategies used by those actors to

enact policy they wanted to see. Findings on the furthering of ministerial executive power complicate Howard and Janoski's theories. Howard explains the presence of the far right as a limiting factor in citizenship law liberalization, while Janoski understands the presence of leftist parties to have the opposite effect. When ministerial executive power is considered, however, the perspective widens to highlight the significance of enactment methodologies in addition to party ideologies. These methodologies were introduced to Canada under the rule of Harper Conservatives, meaning potential links could reasonably be made between conservative ideology and streamlined policymaking, but the salient point here is that political party power as a freestanding ideological variable is not sufficient to explain Canada's policy shifts. Newfoundland methods of policymaking are a separate and significant variable entirely.

In 2008, the Canadian government passed amendments to a 2001 Immigration Act that allowed federal lawmakers to make changes to the categories of immigrants who would be prioritized, giving the Immigration Minister the authority to make these decisions without consulting Parliament. This change was not only influential in the arena of immigrant admissions, as has been previously discussed, but was a watershed moment for Canadian immigration policy administration as well, laying the groundwork for a system that has increasingly been controlled much more at the executive level than the legislative. The change endowed immigration officials with decision-making freedom that nearly dashed any hopes of parliamentary resistance to executive powers' immigration goals, as later evidence will show.

It is important, however, to recognize the wider context within which these amendments were passed. Though they were indeed passed without Liberal pushback, indicating a possible link to the aforementioned variable of Liberal cooperation, evidence shows that it was the methodology of the passing of these key amendments that explains the lack of Liberal resistance. Pushed through in an omnibus bill about the more menial topic of budget implementation, the amendments that first enhanced ministerial power were passed because the bill needed to pass in order to structure Canada's budget for the coming year. Thus, the bill separating parliamentary debate from the field of immigration was itself passed without parliamentary input, establishing a precedent for the years to come.⁴⁰

The initial use of this omnibus bill to alter political protocol established a trend of Conservatives sneaking larger points of immigration legislation into bills that had to be passed for reasons of bureaucratic maintenance. Indeed, policymaking came to be conducted frequently in ways that made the road to public and/or parliamentary discussion or resistance more challenging.⁴¹ For instance, when Harper's Immigration Minister Jason Kenney was in charge of Canadian citizenship and immigration, his office did not issue statements about their comprehensive immigration goals and did not hold public or parliamentary forums.⁴² Kenney and Harper were able to build a structure so protected from Parliament that one expert claimed it was common "for immigration practitioners to jokingly refer to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act as the 'Jason Kenney Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.'"⁴³

In 2008, a formal Ministerial Instruction was passed that limited skilled worker immigrant applications to those only with an arranged offer of employment in specific, high-skill occupations.⁴⁴ This change meant that even the most highly-educated and employable applicants would be barred from entry without a job in a pre-approved field. In 2010, Minister Kenney took this policy further, putting forth a more narrowly refined list of acceptable occupations and cutting in half the number of these permits available. He cut this number in half again a year later.⁴⁵ In addition to the formal use of ministerial power, additional workarounds were used in order to limit the chance of parliamentary debate over immigration policy. For example, the Department of

Immigration often produced annual immigration statistics on the last day of a session of parliament, leaving no time for debate.⁴⁶

The changes listed above have multiple implications for understanding human-capital citizenship and the theories put forth by Howard and Janoski. The enhancement of ministerial executive power in Canada as a means to human-capitalize challenges the theory initially presented in this paper, as human-capital citizenship policy can clearly be implemented outside of party lines, and may depend more on two-party cooperation or simply the means that exist in a country for laws and executive orders to be passed. It may be true that Canadian immigration policy required the presence of the further-right Harper in order to introduce these human-capitalizing changes, but enough evidence of multiple alternative factors exists to disprove my initial theory as the only salient explanatory variable.

These findings also indicate that Howard's theory that the presence of a stronger far-right party will lead to less liberal immigration policy does not hold. At least in Canada, enough causal links exist between Liberal-Conservative cooperation and ministerial executive power to disprove the idea of the far-right as an impetus for de-liberalization. The right, in addition to the left and the Immigration Minister, all enacted restrictive citizenship policies that placed Canada firmly in the human-capital camp.

Janoski's theory is based more on the effects of right party power on naturalization rates, while this paper looked at types, rather than quantity, of naturalized immigrants as a measure of Conservative influence. Nonetheless, Janoski's findings discuss liberal party power as fostering liberal immigration logic. This paper conceptualizes liberal and conservative logic as family versus economic immigrant admissions, rather than Janoski's more-versus-fewer idea of immigrant admissions. Janoski, however, still makes an argument centered around political party power as the *explanation* for a shift in immigration systems. This paper refutes this theory by suggesting that a combination of party influence, multi-party support, and ministerial power has aided Canada's shift towards human-capital logic. These refutations are not to say that party power plays no role, but they do indicate that Howard and Janoski overstate, in the case of Canada, the extent to which immigrant admission policy changes can be attributed to political parties.

If Howard's theory held true against Ellermann's observations in the case of Canada, the influence of the far-right would have been observed as a stronger factor in the shifting of admissions logic. Though multiple human-capitalizing changes were enacted under the presence of the right-wing Conservatives, it would be remiss to consider party power as the strong factor that Howard posits it to be. Conservative ideologies may have prompted Harper's government to enact these changes, but the changes could only be actualized either with the support of Liberals or, when unable to acquire Liberal support, through the sphere of executive power.

In applying Janoski's theory to the changes Ellermann notices, we would expect to see a Conservative-led push towards an economic frame of immigrant admissions, given the absence of a social democratic party that Janoski associates with more humanitarian-based admissions logic. However, similar to the application of Howard's theory, party alone does not paint a full picture of the changes Canada made, even under the Harper Conservatives. The lack of a legacy of social democratic parties in Canada may have made the Harper government more optimistic about their ability to push immigration in an economic direction, but the help it received from Liberals' shared goals, as well as strategic policymaking through executive pathways, is important to recognize in gaining a full understanding of Canada's policy shift.

IV. Conclusion

Given the recent shift in Canadian immigration policy towards an economic logic of admissions, Ellermann observed and classified these changes as moving Canada in the direction of human-capital citizenship, defined as the valuation of potential immigrants according to their ability to be economic producers. In order to better understand the reasons for these changes, I asked the question, "Why has Canada adopted the citizenship policy changes that Ellerman says it has?" Grounded in the theories posited by Howard and Janoski, and given the common logic about conservative parties' approach to immigrant admissions, I hypothesized that the ideologies of the conservative political party in power can explain the shift towards human-capital citizenship that Ellermann observes.

At first glance, Prime Minister Harper and the ideologies of his Conservative party are evidence of the further-reaching effects of the human-capitalization of citizenship laws that a highly conservative Prime Minister can have. Many of the policies that pulled Canadian citizenship most extremely in a human-capital direction were during Harper's nine-year reign, and from this fact assumptions can be made that these changes were solely, or mostly, his or his party's doing. And, to some extent, findings indicate that party ideologies in Canada did influence agenda setting and mechanisms that parties can use to pass their policies. However, stronger evidence of other factors is available which shows the ways in which Harper Conservatives' policies passed.

Ultimately, my hypothesis, along with Howard and Janoski's theories, is refuted. Party power certainly played a role in deciding which policies Harper and his Conservatives would pursue in terms of immigration, but we see stronger evidence that policy goals shared by Liberals, as well as strategic expansion of ministerial power and strategic workarounds to avoid parliamentary discussion processes, go a long way toward explaining Canada's changes. Further evidence against my hypothesis, and against Howard and Jansoki's theories, is provided by the fact that the Canadian Liberal party initially enacted many of the laws that Conservatives then expanded on in their human-capitalizing changes; this expansion was often done with either the support or lack of resistance from Liberals.

These findings prompt broader questions about the actual influence of political parties on immigration policies. Harper and the Conservatives undoubtedly pushed for many of the human-capitalizing policies in Canada, but future research should examine a wider range of factors before positing that political party pressure (from the left or the right) *explains* changes in immigration or citizenship logic. More critical investigations should be done on confounding factors, such as multi-party agreement or the use of non-legislative policymaking avenues, before making claims about the actual observable effects that any one political party can have.

Endnotes

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