

Symbolic Attitudes and Regional Integration in North America: Challenges and Opportunities

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One of the major barriers to regional integration is the lack of public support for closer relationships with North American neighbors. As a result, politicians are often wary of pursuing unpopular policies that would deepen integration. One of the reasons that public support for closer relationships is lacking in North America is a lack of trust. This paper provides an analysis of public opinion in Canada, and Mexico that shows the relationship between support for integration and attitudes toward neighboring citizens.

Introduction

The North American Free Trade Agreement came into being to codify free trade between the United States, Mexico, and Canada. In all three countries, there was opposition by numerous groups such as labor unions, environmentalist, and popular public figures. Despite this opposition, the leaders of these countries agreed to this free trade accord. NAFTA has become a critical part of the economies of these three countries. As the experience of the European Union has shown, regional integration is a dynamic process. While the initial purpose of the agreement was to open economic markets for goods and services, a more cooperative relationship between these three countries has developed and there have been efforts to deepen and widen the scope of regional integration. One example of this has been the dialogue initiated by Vicente Fox with the United States to liberalize labor markets in addition to trade. While labor market integration and political integration are goals that may never be realized, NAFTA may lead to a closer political and economic relationship between the countries of North America

NAFTA also has political and economic consequences within the member states. While economists have anticipated the *net* economic effect of the agreement to be beneficial to all countries involved, models of international trade predict that certain segments of the economy in each country will benefit from the agreement, and others will lose. These economic changes have the potential to alter political coalitions by changing levels of support for particular parties and elites. Consequences of domestic support for regional integration in turn affect the scope of future integration. If NAFTA serves as winning electoral issue, then elites will likely push for further integration. If, however, support is divided or opposition is great, politicians may seek to de-emphasize the issue or push to weaken the institutions of NAFTA.

Much of the research on public opinion toward free trade has focused on elite level discourse. The work on public opinion and free trade has generally focused on the economic costs and benefits of free trade agreement. This analysis takes a different tact and also looks at the affective component of such agreements. As a student of Latin American politics, my

primary focus is on the Mexico case. I begin with a detailed analysis of the NAFTA debate in Mexico and then see to what extent my affective model works for Canada. I then discuss the implications of this analysis for North American integration more generally.

1. An Economic Interest Model of Attitudes toward NAFTA in Mexico

I begin this analysis by testing an economic model of public opinion and NAFTA. The basic component of this theory is that individuals base support for policies on the economic costs and benefits they derive from these policies. This thesis has been a key aspect in understanding attitudes toward regional integration in Europe. Scholars such as Gabel (1998a, 1998b, 1998c), Scheve (2000), Scheve and Slaughter (2001), Rogowski (1987, 1989), Anderson and Tverdova (2000) and Kramer, Stephenson and Lange (2000) have consistently found that attitudes toward trade liberalization are structured, at least in part, by the expected economic consequences of trade liberalization in Europe and the United States. To test this claim that economic considerations structure attitudes the case of NAFTA in Mexico, I develop hypotheses from three economic models that predict the distributional effects of NAFTA in Mexico: the Ricardo-Viner, Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson, and human capital models.

The Ricardo-Viner model assumes that some or all factors of production cannot move across sectors of the economy, and that incomes vary by sector. A sector that has a competitive advantage over the same sector in a trading country will benefit from trade liberalization. While those employed in the advantaged sector will benefit, those in the disadvantaged sector will suffer losses.

The Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson model focuses on factors of production as the key unit of analysis. Trading partners possess different quantities of particular factors (relative to trading partners). Countries will export products produced by abundant factors and import those produced by scarce factors. Factor prices (such as wages) tend to equalize with trading countries

for the same factor. Stolper and Samuelson (1941), working from the original Heckscher-Ohlin assumptions of inter-sectoral mobility, show that trade lowers the relative share of money going to the scarce factor of production, while benefiting abundant factors. While the net gain to the country as a whole from trade is positive, Stolper and Samuelson argue that the distribution of gains across the economy is not positive to everyone. As a result, governments tend to protect scarce factors with protectionist policies such as subsidies and tariffs to prevent trade from harming scarce factors. Thus, policies that remove barriers to trade often have the effect of harming scarce factors while benefiting abundant factors.

The human capital model focuses on individuals' skill levels within an economy. Individuals with high levels of skill are assumed to be better able to adapt to changing economic circumstances that come with changing trade policy. Becker (1993) argues that skills may be acquired through formal education and on-the-job-training. He argues that when firms observe a decline in demand, highly skilled employees are more likely to be retained. The marginal productivity of workers with high levels of human capital is greater than those with low skill levels. As a result, firms can reduce expenditures by laying-off unskilled labor and maintain higher levels of productivity by retaining skilled labor. Thus, in an uncertain economy where some firms may experience a decline in demand, workers with high levels of human capital may have greater job security.

If attitudes toward trade policy are based on individuals' economic self-interest, then those that are expected to gain from the trade agreement will favor it, while those who lose will oppose it. These three models provide alternative visions of just who those winners and losers will be.

Mexico possesses an abundance of unskilled and semi-skilled labor compared to the United States and Canada (Dunn 1993). Following the Heckscher-Ohlin model and the Stolper-Samuelson extension, trade between countries with differences in factor endowments produces changes in incomes. Wages of Mexicans with lower skill levels will rise as the United States and

Canada import labor-intensive goods. Wages of higher skilled workers will decline as Mexico imports goods that are human capital-intensive (Dunn 1993). Because skilled labor is scarce, the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson model predicts that Mexican skilled labor will lose from trade liberalization. Unskilled Mexican workers are thus expected to have positive attitudes toward NAFTA, because they are relatively abundant and will benefit from trade barrier reductions. If attitudes toward NAFTA are based on economic considerations, then unskilled laborers should favor the agreement, and skilled labor should oppose it, according to this model.

The Ricardo-Viner model predicts that those in competitive economic sectors will benefit from trade, whereas those in disadvantaged sectors will lose. If attitudes are consistent with economic gains, then those in competitive sectors will favor NAFTA and those in disadvantaged sectors should oppose it. For example, the textile industry in Mexico is an advantaged sector that will likely profit from trade, whereas the agricultural sector will likely lose without protective tariffs. Mexican textile workers should favor NAFTA, and agricultural workers should oppose it, according to the Ricardo-Viner model.

The human capital model predicts more job security for those with high skill levels. Those workers with low skill levels are faced with greater uncertainty in a changing economy. Therefore, attitudes toward NAFTA should be more favorable among those with high skill levels than among those with low skill levels. For Mexico, the human capital thesis and Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson model yield opposite expectations for the relationship between skill level and attitudes toward free trade. Previous studies like Gabel (1998a, 1998b, 1998c) and Scheve (2000) only test these economic hypotheses for Europe. In the European case, the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson and human capital models produce the same expectations: skilled workers should be more favorable towards European integration. As a result, none of these studies have been able to disentangle the two hypotheses. Because the expectations for the two models are different in the case of Mexico, this study has the advantage of distinguishing between the two competing hypotheses.

Implicit in a model that posits a relationship between self-interest and attitudes is the assumption that individuals are able to assess their interests in a changing economy. The ability of Mexicans to determine the benefits and harms of NAFTA may improve as they have more experience with the agreement or with US-Mexican trade generally. While individuals can use a variety of shortcuts and cues to determine their interests, as Mexicans experience the consequences of the agreement, the relationship between attitudes toward NAFTA and economic self-interest may become stronger. Individuals living in Northern Mexico have had a history of trade relations with the United States. Because of the proximity of these states to the U.S., individuals in this region may expect to be the first area affected by new trade liberalization policies. Indeed, by 1998 Mexico had become the United States' main supplier of textiles and apparel. These are products produced primarily by Northern Mexican states, although this industry has spread throughout Mexico in the last ten years. As a result, Northerners' attitudes toward NAFTA may more clearly reflect self-interest. Likewise, Mexicans in states that have high levels of trade penetration may have a clearer sense of self-interest than those who live in states without much trade with the U.S. This difference may be greater in the early years of NAFTA than in subsequent years, because self-interest may become apparent to all Mexicans after a certain period of time, regardless of proximity to the United States or trade penetration.

Testing the Economic Model

The data used to test hypotheses derived from the theories above come from two surveys. The surveys and the survey methodology are described in Appendix 1. Additional data used to determine the relationship between economic self-interest and attitudes toward Mexico as a function of trade penetration come from the United States Department of Transportation's statistics on surface freight transportation between the United States and individual Mexican states. The Department of Transportation collects statistics on the value of products exported from the United States and the destinations of these products. While these data only include surface transport, they are likely to reflect overall trade.

Hypotheses derived from all three theories (Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson, Ricardo-Viner, and human capital) are empirically testable. However, there exist limited data in Mexico to test hypotheses derived from the Ricardo-Viner model. While this is troubling, there is considerable justification for using only the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson and human capital models to test the relationship between expected outcomes from trade liberalization and policy attitudes. First, Scheve and Slaughter (2001) test the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson and Ricardo-Viner models for the United States and find that attitudes toward trade liberalization are inconsistent with the Ricardo-Viner model. Instead, they find that attitudes toward trade liberalization vary across factors rather than sectors—consistent with expectations derived from Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson. There is little evidence in the study to suggest that the Ricardo-Viner model explains variation in support for trade liberalization. Second, the use of the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson and human capital models is consistent with studies of attitudes toward European integration (eg. Gabel 1998a, Gabel 1998b, Gabel 1998c, Anderson & Tverdova 2000, and Scheve 2000). Both Gabel (1998a, 1998b, 1998c) and Scheve (2000) find that attitudes toward European integration are related to expectations derived from these models. Given the findings of these works, if there is a relationship between expected economic outcomes from trade liberalization and preference for NAFTA in Mexico, it is likely to be consistent with either the human capital or Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson model.

There is, however, one economic sector identified in the surveys used for this study. Farmers are identified as an occupational category. While farmers in Mexico are a heterogeneous group, on average, they may respond similarly to free trade. Substantial subsidies have been in place to protect the agricultural industry in Mexico. One aspect of NAFTA has been to gradually eliminate agricultural subsidies. A few farmers, especially those who produce exotic tropical fruits, will benefit from fewer trade restrictions. The vast majority, however, will no longer be able to compete with the more efficient U.S. agro-business (McDonald 1994). McDonald (1994) argues that “(t)he limitations set by agrarian policy, technology, and the natural resource base

make Mexican agriculture uncompetitive on the international market". Therefore, I expect that farmers will have negative attitudes toward NAFTA because they will suffer economic losses as a consequence of the subsidy-reduction policy (an hypothesis consistent with the Ricardo-Viner model).

Based on the Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson and human capital models, I expect attitudes toward NAFTA to vary with skill level. However, there are three possible ways to operationalize the skill cleavage. The first is to use education as a proxy for skill. Those with higher levels of education are assumed to possess more specialized skills. The Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson model would predict that, in Mexico, favorable attitudes toward NAFTA will be inversely related to level of education. The human capital model would predict that attitudes toward NAFTA will be directly related to levels of education. The second method of measuring skill level is to use income as a proxy. Income is assumed to reflect skill level, since the Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson model assumes income to be similar across a factor (else the individual will move costlessly across sectors to a more lucrative job). Income may be a better proxy for skill level than education since income may reflect on-the-job training as well as formal education (Becker 1993). Like education, income is expected to be inversely related to favorable attitudes toward NAFTA under Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson, and directly related under the human capital model. The third method of measuring skill level is to use occupational category. The assumption made by this method is that those in a particular occupational category will have similar skill levels. Therefore, hypotheses can be derived for each occupational category depending on the skill necessary for jobs in that category.

These three methods have been used in various combinations by a number of authors. Scheve (2000) uses education to determine the skill cleavage in Western Europe. Scheve and Slaughter (2001) use both education and income to measure skill in the United States. Gabel (1998a, 1998b, 1998c) uses all three methods to distinguish between skill levels for members of the European Union. Davis (1998) uses occupational category to measure skill in Mexico.

Because individuals living in the North and in states with higher trade penetration may be better able to identify self-interest, I expect that the relationships between skill level and attitudes toward NAFTA will be stronger for respondents who live in the Northern region and in states with high levels of trade penetration than for those who live in other regions of Mexico or in states with low levels of trade penetration. This is most likely to be true in the earlier sample than in the later one. Over time, I would expect that while there may be regional differences due to variation in trade levels, the relationship between self-interest and attitudes toward NAFTA will be consistent across Mexico.

In this study, independent variables for skill level are derived from survey questions that asked respondents to provide education and income levels, and occupational category.¹ Educational categories are consistent across the two surveys, but categories for income in 1991 and 1996 are different. In 1991, respondents were asked to place themselves in one of seven income categories, whereas in 1996, respondents provided actual income in pesos. Therefore, for both years, income is converted to US dollar equivalents for the month and year in which the survey was conducted and 1996 income is categorized to match the 1991 data. Responses for both income and education are scaled zero to one, where zero represents the lowest income or educational level, and one is the highest. Non-responses and responses of “don’t know” are coded as missing.

The broad nature of the occupational categories in these surveys makes it difficult to sustain the assumption that skill levels within categories are homogenous. The survey does not provide enough information about the occupational categories to determine the nature of work done by the respondents. For example, the 1996 survey provides a category for laborers. However, this may include both semi-skilled and unskilled laborers. Furthermore, there is significant variation of both education and income within many of the occupational categories (See Appendix 3). As a result, occupational category, as measured in these surveys, does not appear to be a useful proxy for skill. The only occupational category retained for this analysis is

the farmer category. Respondents are coded as one if they are farmers and zero if they fall into some other occupational category. Non-responses and “don’t know” are coded as missing.

The dependent variable used to determine the relationship between attitudes toward NAFTA and the economic consequences of this trade liberalization for individuals is based on the following survey question contained in both the 1991 and 1996 surveys:

Are you in favor or opposed to the free trade agreement between Mexico and the United States, or have you not heard enough about the proposal to say? (ASK: Totally or Somewhat?)

The responses to these questions are coded on a four-point scale ranging from 0 to 1, where zero corresponds to “totally opposed” and one corresponds to “totally in favor”. Responses of “don’t know”, “not enough information”, and non-responses are treated as missing values for the purpose of this analysis. Table 1.A provides descriptive statistics for the dependent variable for each year. Overall, respondents in 1991 are more favorable toward NAFTA than those in 1996. The mean response for 1991 is 0.67, which corresponds to “somewhat in favor”, whereas the mean response for 1996 is 0.52, which is approximately neutral towards the agreement.

As discussed in the theoretical framework section, the relationship between skill level and attitudes toward NAFTA may be stronger in the Northern region of Mexico and in areas that have higher levels of trade with the United States. To test this hypothesis, the skill variables are interacted with two variables. The first variable takes on the value of one if the respondent lives in a Northern state, and zero if the respondent lives in another region. The second variable is a measure of the average monthly value of exports from the United States to the respondent’s state. The earliest data available is for 1993, so these values are combined with the 1991 survey data. The 1996 export data is combined with the 1996 survey data. The values are logged to reduce the likelihood that extreme outliers will skew the results.

The empirical model used to estimate the relationship between attitudes toward NAFTA and the economic consequences of the agreement for individuals also contains two control

variables for age and sex. These variables are likely to influence skill levels. Women may have lower levels of income and education and less experience in the work force. Additionally, older adults' skills may be less transferable and less valued than the skills of younger workers. As a result, age and sex are included in the model.

The following model is estimated using the Ordinary Least Squares approach²:

Equation 1

Attitudes toward NAFTA=

$$\alpha_1 + \beta_1 \text{ North} + \beta_2 \text{ Farmer} + \beta_3 \text{ Female} + \beta_4 \text{ Income} + \beta_5 \text{ Education} + \beta_6 \text{ Trade Penetration} + \beta_7 \text{ Income*North} + \beta_8 \text{ Education*North} + \beta_9 \text{ Income*Trade Penetration} + \beta_{10} \text{ Education*Trade Penetration} + \beta_{11} \text{ Age}$$

The interaction terms pose a problem of multicollinearity for estimation. The interaction terms (income*trade penetration, income*North, education*trade penetration, education*North) are closely related to their constituent parts that are also included in the model (income, education, North, trade penetration). The OLS estimates in the presence of multicollinearity can be suspect. While variables may have explanatory power, the inclusion of all terms in the model may result in high standard errors. To avoid some of these problems, the variables for income, education, North, and trade penetration are centered on their means before they are included in the model (the mean is subtracted from each individual value).^{3,4}

The hypothesized relationship between the dependent variable and each independent variable for the Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson and human capital models is presented in Table 1.B. Under the Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson model, skill level as measured by income and education should be negatively related to attitudes toward NAFTA. Under the human capital model, the relationship between skill and attitudes toward NAFTA should be positive. If residents of the Northern states and states with high trade penetration have a clearer sense of their economic interest, then the interaction terms should be significant. The direction of these interactions should be positive if consistent with the human capital model and negative if consistent with the Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson model. Note, however, that neither proximity nor trade penetration is

a fundamental part of these two models. If these relationships are insignificant, either of the models can still hold true. However, if they are significant, then the direction of the interaction coefficient should be the same as for income and education. If farmers perceive the removal of agricultural subsidies to be a threat, the coefficient for that variable should be significant and negative. On the basis of the theories discussed, there is no *a priori* expectation for the term for North, trade penetration or sex.

Because the model contains dummy variables (those coded 0 or 1), the constant term reflects the mean of the regression in which all dummy variables are at their minimum value (zero). In this case, the baseline category is a male respondent who is from a non-Northern state and employed in an occupation other than farmer.

Table 1.C provides the OLS estimates of equation 1. for both 1991 and 1996. The results are consistent with the human capital model. Income is a significant predictor of attitudes toward NAFTA (at the 1- percent level) for both 1991 and 1996. The positive coefficients indicate that as income increases, attitudes toward NAFTA are more favorable. The significant, positive coefficients for the income variable are consistent with the expectations of the human capital model. As skill level increases, as measured by income level, attitudes become more favorable toward NAFTA. Individuals in Mexico with high skill levels are more favorable toward the agreement because they face less economic uncertainty. These individuals are more valuable to employers and have transferable skills. Thus, as economic changes occur from trade liberalization, employees with high skill levels can benefit by taking advantage of new opportunities, or at least minimize the possible losses.

The expectation for the relationship between income and attitudes toward NAFTA under the Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson model is significant, but negative. The strong positive relationship indicates that respondents in Mexico do not perceive the expected gains and losses from NAFTA in a manner consistent with the Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson model. This inconsistency may be explained by the fact that Mexicans have incorrect expectations about how

the policy will affect them. However, the fact that this relationship is positive in both 1991 and 1996 suggests that this is not the case. If Mexicans were simply uncertain about how NAFTA would affect them economically, then one would expect the relationship to be insignificant as respondents would be just as likely to assume NAFTA would be beneficial as they would to assume it would be costly. Furthermore, Mexicans would be more likely to mistakenly assess the costs and benefits of the agreement in 1991 when the agreement was first being implemented. Yet, even in 1996, high skill levels are significant predictors of favorable attitudes toward NAFTA. One would imagine that by 1996, respondents in Mexico would be able better assess the consequences of the agreement. Therefore, the finding that skill levels are directly and significantly related to attitudes toward NAFTA indicates that the economic considerations of Mexicans are inconsistent with the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson economic model, but consistent with the human capital model.

While income is significant and positive, education is not significant in either year. Since this is another indicator of skill level, both the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson and human capital models would expect a significant relationship between attitudes toward NAFTA and education. And, since income is directly related to the independent variable, one would expect education to also be positive. This may be because, as Becker (1993) argues, education is not as good an indicator of skill as income. Income takes into account not only formal education, but on-the-job training as well. Therefore, it appears that attitudes toward NAFTA are related to a wider variety of job skills than just formal education.⁵

In both 1991 and 1996, respondents in Northern states are significantly more favorable toward NAFTA. The interaction terms, however, are not significant in either year. This signifies that among Northerners, the relationship between skill level and attitudes toward NAFTA are not stronger than in the rest of the sample. Therefore, it appears that while Northerners are more supportive of the agreement, they do not use economic self-interest as a basis for determining

their position any more than Mexicans as a whole do. Therefore, the hypothesis that Northern Mexicans have a clearer sense of their economic self-interest does not hold.

The trade penetration variable is significant at the five-percent level in 1991, though it is negative. This indicates that as the level of imports increases, attitudes toward NAFTA are less favorable in 1991. The interaction term for trade penetration and income for 1991 is positive and significant at the 10 percent level. The relationship between income and attitudes toward NAFTA becomes more pronounced as levels of trade increase. This is consistent with the human capital model since the relationship is positive. It appears that, for Mexicans in states with higher levels of trade penetration, economic self-interest is a stronger factor in determining policy position than in states with low levels of trade penetration. In 1996, neither trade penetration nor the interaction between trade penetration and income is significant. Over time, it may be that levels of awareness of self-interest have become more consistent across all Mexican states, regardless of levels of trade. While, in 1991, Mexicans who have a greater experience with trade by virtue of the fact that they live in a state with high levels of trade with the U.S. may be more aware of the consequences of the agreement for their own economic situation, by 1996 all Mexican seem able to evaluate the consequences of the agreement equally. Therefore, trade penetration matters less in 1996 than it does in 1991.

The farmer variable is not significant in either 1991 or 1996, indicating that farmers are no more or less favorable of NAFTA than those in other occupations. Despite the losses that farmers are expected to experience from subsidy reductions due to the agreement, once other factors like skills are controlled, farmers' attitudes toward NAFTA are not significantly different from those of other occupational groups. Therefore, the fact that the agricultural sector in Mexico is disadvantaged in comparison to the American agricultural sector does not affect attitudes among farmers.

The two control variables, female and age, are insignificant in 1991, but in 1996 age is highly significant and negative. That is, as age increases, respondents are less favorable toward

NAFTA. This is consistent with the hypothesis that younger adults' skills are perceived as more valuable in a changing economy. Likewise, older adults perceive their skill levels to be disadvantageous in a liberalizing economic environment.

The individual parameter estimates indicate a relationship between skill level and attitudes toward NAFTA that is consistent with economic self-interest as determined by the human capital model. However, the overall model fit statistics indicate that the economic model explains very little about attitudes toward NAFTA. In 1991, the economic model explained only six percent of the variation in the dependent variable (as measured by the adjusted R^2 statistic). In the 1996 sample, the same model explained only half as much variation (three percent). While the similar studies of European integration have found low R^2 statistics (ranging from seven to fifteen percent), these studies typically explain the low explanatory power of these models as due to the cross-country variation in the data. However, in this single country study, the explanatory power of the model is still very low. In fact, it is lower in Mexico than in similar models used in any other published study. Furthermore, the explanatory power of the model decreases rather than increases across time. As the economic consequences of NAFTA become more apparent over time, one would expect a model of self-interest to better explain attitudes toward the agreement. Instead, the model explains less of the variance in attitudes.

The results of this statistical analysis provide some support for the hypothesis that attitudes toward NAFTA are structured by economic self-interest (consistent with the human capital model). However, the weak explanatory power of the model suggests that attitudes toward NAFTA are only very loosely related to economic factors.

TABLE 1.A: Attitudes toward NAFTA in Mexico

	1991 Frequency	1996 Frequency
<i>Totally Oppose</i>	69	230
<i>Somewhat Oppose</i>	105	218
<i>Somewhat In Favor</i>	480	466
<i>Totally In Favor</i>	235	198
Total	889	1112
Mean	0.66	0.52
Standard Deviation	0.28	0.34

TABLE 1.B: Hypothesized Relationships between Attitudes Toward NAFTA in Mexico and Independent Variables for each Economic Theoretical Model

	Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson	Human Capital	Proximity, Trade Penetration, Farmer
<i>Income</i>	–	+	?
<i>Education</i>	–	+	?
<i>North</i>	?	?	?
<i>North*Income</i>	– / non-significant	+ / non-significant	Significant
<i>North*Education</i>	– / non-significant	+ / non-significant	Significant
<i>Trade Penetration</i>	?	?	?
<i>Trade*Income</i>	– / non-significant	+ / non-significant	?
<i>Trade*Education</i>	– / non-significant	+ / non-significant	?
<i>Farmer</i>	?	?	–
<i>Age</i>	?	–	?
<i>Female</i>	?	?	?

TABLE 1.C: Attitudes toward NAFTA in Mexico: A Test of Economic Considerations (OLS Regression Results for 1991 and 1996)

	1991		1996	
	$\hat{\alpha}$	Standard Error	\hat{A}	Standard Error
<i>Education</i>	0.07	(0.05)	-0.06	(0.05)
<i>Income</i>	0.19	(0.05)**	0.17	(0.06)**
<i>North</i>	0.12	(0.02)**	0.12	(0.03)**
<i>Trade Penetration</i>	-0.01	(0.00)*	-0.01	(0.00)
<i>Farmer</i>	-0.05	(0.03)	0.01	(0.04)
<i>North*Education</i>	0.07	(0.12)	0.09	(0.13)
<i>North*Income</i>	-0.06	(0.12)	-0.04	(0.15)
<i>Trade Penetration*Income</i>	0.04	(0.02) [†]	0.03	(0.03)
<i>Trade Penetration*Education</i>	-0.02	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)
<i>Age</i>	0.01	(0.01)	-0.10	(0.01)**
<i>Female</i>	0.00	(0.02)	-0.03	(0.02)
<i>Constant</i>	0.67	(0.08)**	0.58	(0.09)**
<i>N</i>		889		1112
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		0.06		0.03

[†] significant at the 10% level; * significant at 5% level; ** significant at 1% level

2. A Symbolic Politics Model of Attitudes toward NAFTA in Mexico

If Mexicans do not evaluate the policy in terms of economic self-interest, what other factors can account for the variation in attitudes toward NAFTA in Mexico? I now attempt to develop alternative ways that Mexicans may conceptualize the agreement. Rather than seeing NAFTA as a trade policy that distributes costs and benefits, Mexicans may view the agreement as primarily a policy agreement with the United States. The important role of the United States as an actor in the agreement evokes a strong affective reaction toward the United States and therefore toward NAFTA. As such, Mexicans' attitudes toward NAFTA may be structured by attitudes toward the United States.

The North American Free Trade Agreement was negotiated among the three North American nations: the United States, Mexico, and Canada. However, for Mexican citizens, the United States was clearly the important trading partner in the agreement. NAFTA began as a request from Salinas for a bilateral free trade agreement with the United States. While the Canadian market represented an important economic facet of the agreement, much of the political discussion about the agreement from such elites as Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas focused on the United States, in the same way that politicians like Rose Perot and Pat Buchanan focused on Mexico. In both countries these politicians found fertile ground for their message because citizens were familiar with symbols like "immigrants" and "gringos". Scholars like Stephen D. Morris (1999) and Soledad Loaeza (1994) argue that the United States has played an important role in the formation of the Mexican national identity. Drawing on works by authors such as Carlos Fuentes (1994), Paul Hollander (1992), and Octavio Paz (1979), Morris (1999) describes being Mexican as "not being *gringo*, and in certain contexts, affirming that distinction. It involves rooting the characteristics of the Mexican in his/her perception of the USA and *vice versa*." The authors point to a dualism in the Mexican identity. On the one hand, anti-American sentiment and xenophobia tend to characterize Mexican nationalism. On the other hand, Mexicans admire and imitate American culture.

The anti-American sentiment within the Mexican identity is linked to a history of border wars with the United States (eg. US-Mexican War (1846), and the Salt Wars (1877)), U.S. intervention in Mexican affairs (eg. Pershing Punitive Expedition (1916)), and U.S.-Mexican conflict in international affairs (eg. policies toward Cuba, Chile, and Nicaragua). The monuments to Mexican heroes of wars with the United as well as the salience of the issues such as protection of the nationalized petroleum industry (even in the 2000 elections) testify to the importance of conflict with the United States in Mexican national culture.

In Mexico, the United States is a strong symbol prosperity and modernization. However, these images are also interpreted negatively. American society is criticized for its lack of respect for tradition, its secularism, and crass materialism. The nature of the Mexican image of the United States is complex function of a history of border conflicts, U.S. intervention, Mexican nationalism, distrust between neighbors, and a desire by Mexico to be treated as an equal member of the international community. While the sources of Mexicans' attitudes toward the United States are varied, Mexican philosophers, writers, and historians have documented the pervasiveness of the United States as a symbol in Mexican culture.

Symbols have an important function in political life. Murray Edelman, in his book *Symbolic Uses of Politics* (1964), argues that

“(p)olitics is for most of us a passing parade of abstract symbols...Every symbol stands for something other than itself, and it also evokes an attitude, a set of impressions, or a pattern of events associated through time, through space, through logic, or through imagination with the symbol.”

Symbols serve as an important part of attitude formation and political behavior. Symbols such as “the flag”, “the government”, or groups like “blacks”, “immigrants”, and “feminists” connect memories and impressions to particular policies, candidates, individuals. Particular symbols, what Edelman refers to as condensation symbols, elicit emotional responses:

“Condensation symbols evoke the emotions associated with the situation. They condense into one symbolic event, sign, or act patriotic pride, anxieties, remembrances of past glories or humiliations, promises of future greatness: some one of these or all of them.”

Political and cultural symbols take on meanings for individuals that are based on experiences and memories associated with the symbol. Socialization at early ages gives meaning to and reinforces symbolic images. For example, deference and respect for the American flag as well as patriotism are taught to students through “The Pledge of Allegiance”. When candidates for political office stand in front of the American flag, they hope to evoke an emotional response from voters by connecting themselves to symbols of patriotism.

Those who work on American political behavior have investigated the link between symbols, their meanings, and political attitudes extensively in the context of racial attitudes. The literature on symbolic politics in the United States and specifically the literature dealing with racial attitudes provides an insightful framework for understanding the role of symbolic attitudes toward the United States in structuring attitudes toward NAFTA. The logic of the symbolic politics thesis is that symbols are given meaning and individuals taught to respond to these symbols through early socialization. When confronted with issues that are linked to a particular symbol, individuals respond affectively, or emotionally, toward these issues consistent with the underlying predispositions developed during the socialization process. So, for adults who, as children, were taught to feel pride and patriotism when viewing the American flag, issues like flag burning evoke an emotional response linked to the symbol of the flag. While the terms of debate can emphasize other symbols such as the Constitution or individuals can engage in deeper evaluation of the issue, for a considerable portion of citizens, the symbolic nature of the American flag has resonance and structures issues like flag burning.

In addition to arguing that attitudes toward some issues are affective responses to symbols, the research in symbolic politics has found that these symbolic attitudes are more powerful predictors of issue support than self-interest. That is, individuals’ responses to issues of like busing and welfare policy are connected more closely to attitudes about race than they are to self-interest. Powerful symbols evoke emotions that structure policy attitudes even when this runs counter to the logic of self-interest.

The symbolic politics model provides a rich theoretical framework in which to embed the hypothesis that attitudes toward the United States explain attitudes toward NAFTA. The symbolic politics model is described succinctly by Sears, Hensler, and Speer (1979):

“...people acquire in early life standing predispositions which influence their adult perceptions and attitudes. In adulthood, then, they respond in a highly affective way to symbols which resemble the attitude objects to which similar emotional responses were conditioned or associated in earlier life.”

For Mexicans, the United States serves as a powerful symbol. While for some, this symbol evokes positive affect and for others, negative affect, for all Mexicans, the symbol of the United States holds meaning that has been inculcated through socialization. When particular policies or events occur that are related to the United States, Mexicans respond with to those events and policies consistent with the manner in which they were socialized.

Within the symbolic politics framework, attitudes toward NAFTA are expected to be related to attitudes toward the United States. Because the United States serves as a symbol that functions in defining Mexican national identity, attitudes toward policies dealing with the United States should be linked to attitudes toward the United States. If NAFTA is closely related to the United States in the minds of Mexicans, NAFTA should evoke an affective response that is strongly related to attitudes toward the United States. The expectation is that Mexicans who have favorable attitudes toward the United States should support NAFTA, whereas those who have negative attitudes toward the United States should oppose the agreement. A significant, direct, relationship between attitudes toward the United States and attitudes toward NAFTA affirms both the hypothesis that NAFTA is linked to the United States and the hypothesis the symbol of the United States continues to play an important role in the minds of Mexicans. No relationship between attitudes toward NAFTA and the United States may be evidence of 1) a weakened role of the symbolic nature of the United States in Mexican culture, 2) that Mexicans do not strongly connect the United States with NAFTA, or 3) both.

The hypothesis that attitudes towards NAFTA are determined in part by attitudes toward the United States is not inconsistent with the economic self-interest hypotheses investigated in above. However, if the findings of the symbolic politics model in Mexico are similar to those in the United States, symbolic attitudes toward the United States should have a larger effect on attitudes toward NAFTA than considerations of self interest.

Testing the Symbolic Politics Model

The survey data used to analyze the hypothesis that attitudes toward the United States predict attitudes toward NAFTA are the same data used in the analyses in the economic model analyses. The surveys and the survey methodology are described in Appendix 1. To measure attitudes toward the United States, I use the responses from the following question asked in both the 1991 and 1996 surveys:

“What is your impression of the United States? Is it very good, good, bad or very bad?”

The responses to this question are coded on a four-point scale ranging from 0 to 1, where zero corresponds to “very bad” and one corresponds to “very good”. Responses of “don’t know”, and non-responses are treated as missing values for the purpose of this analysis. Table 2.A provides descriptive statistics for the variable describing attitudes toward the United States for each year.

The mean evaluation of the United States in 1991 was 0.62 and in 1996 was 0.57.⁶ These values correspond to slightly less than the “good” category (0.667) but considerably more than the “bad” category (0.333). A majority of respondents in both years indicated that their opinions of the United States were good. However, there is variation in attitudes toward the United States across the individuals in the survey. The contact hypothesis provides some explanation for this variation. In both 1991 and 1996, respondents were asked if they had ever visited the United States.⁷ In 1991, among those who had been to the United States, the average opinion of the United States was 0.65 compared to 0.60 for those who had not. In 1996, the mean opinion for those who had been to the United States was 0.60 compared to 0.56 for those who had not. In both years the differences are significantly different.⁸ Those who live in northern

Mexican states may have more contact with Americans and American culture and therefore have more positive attitudes toward the United States. In 1991, the average response was significantly greater among northerners (0.66) than among non-northerners (0.60).⁹ However, in 1996, the differences between northerners and non-northerners are not significant. These descriptive statistics provide a cursory analysis of the contact hypothesis. It appears that Mexicans that who have had contact with the United States are more positive in their opinions toward the country than those who have not had contact. However, the main focus of this analysis is to examine the influence of attitudes toward the United States on opinions of NAFTA.

To determine the influence of opinions of the United States on attitudes toward NAFTA, and to assess the strength of this association relative to the economic interest model, I estimate the economic model presented above with the addition of the variable for attitudes toward the United States. Equation 2 is estimated using Ordinary Least Squares Regression.

Equation 2

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Attitudes toward NAFTA} = & \\ & \alpha_1 + \beta_1 \text{ North} + \beta_2 \text{ Farmer} + \beta_3 \text{ Female} + \beta_4 \text{ Income} + \beta_5 \text{ Education} + \beta_6 \text{ Trade} \\ & \text{Penetration} + \beta_7 \text{ Income*North} + \beta_8 \text{ Education*North} + \beta_9 \text{ Income*Trade Penetration} \\ & + \beta_{10} \text{ Education*Trade Penetration} + \beta_{11} \text{ Age} + \beta_{12} \text{ US opinions} \end{aligned}$$

Based on the symbolic model of politics the coefficient for attitudes toward the United States is expected to be significant and positive.

In economic model, income, as a proxy for skill, was the only variable that had a significant influence on attitudes toward NAFTA, and was consistent with the economic self-interest theoretical framework. We can compare the self-interest hypothesis with the symbolic politics hypothesis by comparing the relative effects of the income and attitudes toward the United States on attitudes toward NAFTA.

The results displayed in table 2.B are consistent with the symbolic politics model. Attitudes toward the United States are a significant predictor of attitudes toward NAFTA. The coefficient is positive indicating that as affect toward the United States increases, support for NAFTA increases as well. In addition to the unstandardized OLS coefficients, table 2.B also provides the standardized coefficients. The standardized coefficients allow for a direct comparison of the influence predictors within samples. It is clear, in both years, that attitudes toward the United States have the greatest effect on attitudes toward NAFTA. In 1991 and 1996, opinions of the United States have a greater influence on NAFTA than any single predictor in the self-interest model

Not only do symbolic attitudes have greater effect on attitudes toward NAFTA, but also, by adding opinions of the United States to the self-interest model, the explanatory power of the model is greatly increased. In 1991, the adjusted R^2 increases from 0.0625 to 0.1411 with the inclusion of attitudes toward the United States. In 1996, the adjusted R^2 increases from 0.0275 to 0.0524. The results show that there is considerable evidence that attitudes toward the United States partly explain attitudes toward NAFTA. The overall fit of the model is greatly improved by the inclusion of the symbolic politics variable.

The results from the survey data analysis are buttressed by data from four focus groups conducted in Mexico City and Cuernavaca by members of the Duke University Globalization and Democratic Governance Research Cluster. Primary investigators for the project are John Aldrich, Claire Kramer, Peter Lange, Renan Levine, Jennifer Merolla, Laura Stephenson, Elizabeth Zechmeister. These focus groups investigated attitudes toward globalization and NAFTA in Mexico among unionized and non-unionized university workers, schoolteachers, and businessmen and women. Each group consisted of six to eight members. Participants were directed to discuss topics related to globalization and economic policy in Mexico.¹⁰

Across all of the focus groups, participants were acutely aware of the importance of the United States when discussing free trade. Many of the participants used the references *them* and

us when discussing the winners and losers of free trade. When asked to clarify these references, participants explained that these terms referred to the United States and Mexico. There appeared to be a general acceptance of the importance of economic integration for the Mexican economy, yet many of the participants expressed concern about Americanization of Mexico. Participants identified American businesses as having a positive effect on wages and prices, but they also expressed concern that these businesses would damage traditional Mexican businesses.

There appeared to be little difference across the focus groups in the consideration given to self-interest. Most participants discussed NAFTA and globalization in general terms, not specific to individual costs and benefits.

One of the most interesting aspects that came out of these groups was the general level of distrust toward the United States. While most participants believed that economic integration and free trade was necessary and good, they were more supportive of trade agreements with Japan and the European Union. Given that individual level benefits would most likely be the same across agreements negotiated with developed nations, attitudes toward the United States seem to be a critical aspect of attitudes toward free-trade and globalization generally. Furthermore, this seems to suggest that Mexicans are not generally isolationist or xenophobic, but that, specifically, the United States evokes an affective response among Mexicans.

The symbolic politics model provides an alternative hypothesis to the economic self-interest model. Those with higher skill levels (as measured by income) express stronger support for NAFTA than those with low skill levels. However, this model is incomplete. Economic self-interest is not the only factor that comes into play when Mexicans are forming opinions about the agreement. If this were the case, one would expect individuals in Mexico to feel similarly about all free trade agreements. As the focus groups indicate, Mexicans consider not only the economic effects of such agreements, but also the participants.

Mexico's relationship with the United States has influenced not only the national boundaries or political policies, but also the cultural identity of Mexicans. For Mexicans, the

United States serves as an important symbol that evokes strong positive and negative emotional responses. As these analyses show, affective responses toward the United States are transferred to policies that deal with this symbol.

The symbolic model of politics provides a framework in which to understand the way affective responses can influence policy opinions. The assumption made by this model is that policies like NAFTA have a symbolic content that influences individuals' attitudes. While Mexicans do consider economic interests, the potency of symbols in political life is demonstrated in these analyses. Attitudes toward the United States have a greater effect on attitudes toward NAFTA than do skill levels.

The finding that opinions of the United States influence policy opinions in Mexico has real political consequences. Passage of NAFTA in Mexico may have been aided by the relatively positive opinions of the United States. Individuals, who may otherwise have opposed the agreement on economic grounds, may have been more supportive of the agreement because they have high opinions of the United States. Of course, as the focus groups show, this may work against Mexican-U.S. relations as well. If Mexicans are generally disposed to economic integration and free trade, Mexico may find the public more supportive of trading partners who provoke a less emotional response, like other Latin American countries and the European Union. Beyond the policy domain of free trade, the symbolic politics model can be applied more generally to many types of policies that deal with the United States. This model may work very well to explain attitudes toward issue like immigration and drug trafficking.

TABLE 2.A Mexicans Attitudes toward the United States:
Descriptive Statistics

	1991	1996
	Frequency	Frequency
<i>Very Bad</i>	22	92
<i>Bad</i>	149	240
<i>Good</i>	592	560
<i>Very Good</i>	60	129
Total	815	1112
Mean	0.62	0.57
Standard Deviation	0.19	0.27

TABLE 2.B: Attitudes toward NAFTA in Mexico: A Test of Symbolic Attitudes and Economic Considerations (OLS Regression Results for 1991 and 1996)

	1991			1996		
	$\hat{\alpha}$	Standardized $\hat{\alpha}$	Standard Error	$\hat{\alpha}$	Standardized $\hat{\alpha}$	Standard Error
<i>Education</i>	0.07	0.06	(0.05)	-0.03	-0.02	(0.05)
<i>Income</i>	0.20	0.18	(0.05)**	0.13	0.09	(0.06)*
<i>North</i>	0.10	0.14	(0.02)**	0.12	0.13	(0.03)**
<i>Trade Penetration</i>	-0.01	-0.10	(0.00)**	-0.01	-0.03	(0.01)
<i>Farmer</i>	0.00	-0.00	(0.03)	0.02	0.01	(0.04)
<i>North*Education</i>	0.05	0.02	(0.11)	0.09	0.02	(0.13)
<i>North*Income</i>	-0.09	-0.03	(0.11)	-0.07	-0.02	(0.16)
<i>Trade Penetration*Income</i>	0.03	0.06	(0.02)	0.02	0.03	(0.03)
<i>Trade Penetration*Education</i>	0.00	-0.00	(0.02)	0.00	0.01	(0.02)
<i>Age</i>	0.01	0.02	(0.03)	-0.09	-0.09	(0.03)**
<i>Female</i>	0.01	0.01	(0.02)	-0.02	-0.03	(0.02)
<i>Opinions of the United States</i>	0.41	0.29	(0.05)**	0.21	0.16	(0.04)**
<i>Constant</i>	0.40		(0.04)**	0.46		(0.03)**
<i>N</i>		815			1021	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		0.14			0.05	

† significant at the 10% level; * significant at 5% level; ** significant at 1% level

3. Canadian Public Opinion and NAFTA

The previous section develops a strong case for the importance of symbolic attitudes in attitude formation toward free trade in Mexico. This section analyzes public opinion data from Canada to determine if symbolic attitudes are important in that country as well.

Canada serves as an interesting juxtaposition to the Mexican case. First, the economic model of evaluation may provide more explanatory power for Canadians. NAFTA was not the first free trade agreement with the United States. Rather, NAFTA replaced the already existing Canadian-United States Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA) that was signed in December of 1987. As a result, Canadians may have already had an opportunity to assess the effect of free trade with the United States on their personal welfare. NAFTA marked a difference in degree of trade liberalization between the two countries, but not a difference in kind. Second, there is reason to believe that Canadians may not use attitudes toward the United States to structure their opinions toward NAFTA. Unlike the US-Mexican case, there is considerably more economic parity between the US and Canada. And Canadians were more accustomed to trade with the US (by 1985 76% of Canadian exports were destined for US markets (Lusztig 1996)). Furthermore, differences between the Americans and Canadians are much less obvious than those between Americans and Mexicans. Linguistically, ethnically, and culturally, Canadians appear much more similar to their southern neighbors than Americans do to theirs. Although, Canadians are concerned about maintaining economic and cultural independence from the United States as this quote from Peter C. Newman of Maclean's Magazine (1993) indicates:

If under the original Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) we were limited to the influence of a mouse scratching the imperious hide of an elephant, under NAFTA we are about to assume the clout of a flea. The reason for this reduced status – and the comparison may not hold because determined fleas make even big guys squirm – is that the Mexican deal is only the first step in a set of alliances being planned by Washington to transform the hemisphere into its own giant day care centre, with the kidnations all dancing for the Yankee dollar.

The United States may not loom as large in the Canadian psyche as it does in the Mexican one. To assess the generalizability of the symbolic politics as a model that can explain attitudes toward trade and integration, I will analyze public opinion data from Canada in 1993 using similar models to the ones developed for Mexico. The survey information is provided in Appendix 1. The dependent variable for the analysis is taken from three questions asked of the survey respondents:

- 1) Canada and the United States have reached a NEW trade agreement which includes MEXICO. All things considered, do you support this agreement or do you oppose it?
- 2) How strongly do you support/oppose this agreement, would you say very strongly, somewhat strongly, or not very strongly?
- 3) (For those that volunteered *Neither Support Nor Oppose* in question 1) If you had to choose would you support or oppose this agreement? (some respondents volunteered *Neither Support Nor Oppose*)

The responses were coded on a nine-point scale ranging from 0 to 1, where zero corresponds to “very strongly oppose” and one corresponds to “very strongly support”. Response of “don’t know”, “unaware of the agreement”, and non-response are treated as missing values. Table 3.A provides descriptive statistics for the dependent variable. The average response was 0.33 which is between to “leaning toward oppose” and “somewhat oppose”. The modal category is “very strongly oppose” with slightly more than one-third of the respondents in that category.

To test the economic model, I use education and income as in the Mexico case, although the expectations from the Hecksher-Ohlin-Samuelson and human capital models are not distinct as they are in Mexico. I also include dummy variables for region. Ontario—the industrial heartland of Canada—is baseline category. Its residents are expected to be the least favorable the agreement. The Western provinces serve as a rough proxy for agricultural and mineral exporters. Because they are net exporters, they are expected to be the most favorable toward NAFTA. Trade penetration is not included in this model. Union membership is included in the model as an additional economic variable. Union members may be more likely to perceive costs and benefits of integration because membership organizations provide cues.

For the symbolic politics model, I include a variable to capture affective responses toward the United States derived from the following questions:

Should Canada's ties with the United States be much closer, somewhat closer, about the same as now, more distant, much more distant or haven't you thought much about this?

The descriptive statistics are shown in Table 3.B. The average response is 0.52, or "about the same as now", also the modal category. This proxy for attitudes toward the United States is not as clear as in the Mexico case since the question asks about ties, which may elicit thoughts about economic integration. However, since the question does not specifically mention free trade or economic factors, I argue that responses toward this question are likely to be affective in nature. The expected direction of the variables of both the economic and symbolic models are provided in Table 3.C.

Equation 3:

Attitudes toward NAFTA=

$$\alpha_1 + \beta_1 \text{ East} + \beta_2 \text{ Quebec} + \beta_3 \text{ West} + \beta_4 \text{ Income} + \beta_5 \text{ Education} + \beta_6 \text{ Gender} + \beta_7 \text{ Age} + \beta_8 \text{ Union} + \beta_9 \text{ US opinions}$$

The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 3.D. All variables are consistent with the hypotheses described above except for one of the regions. The attitudes toward NAFTA in the eastern provinces are no more positive than are the ones in Ontario. But the economic and the symbolic models both explain variance in attitudes toward NAFTA. Income and education are both positive and significant, indicating that those with greater human capital (or who a comparative advantage in the new market) are more supportive of the agreement. Likewise, attitudes toward the United States have a large effect on support for NAFTA. The addition of the symbolic attitude to the model more than doubles the explanatory power of the economic model (Adj R² changes from 0.075 to 0.16). Its coefficient is also the largest in the model.

The results show that affective responses toward the United States are powerful predictors of the public's attitudes toward NAFTA in Canada. Despite the differences between the Canadian/American and Mexican/American relationships, there is a strong similarity in the way that attitudes toward this common agreement are structured.

4. Discussion

The preceding analyses show importance of affective responses toward trading partners in structuring attitudes toward free trade, an effect that overwhelms the importance of economic considerations in the minds of the public. This finding has potentially important implications for future integration prospects depending on the level at which publics participate in the decision making processes. First, if public support is based on affective responses, this poses problems to democratic decision-making that often relies on compromise and bargaining in the political process. Negotiation over economic costs and benefits can garner political support for integration in an open political system by trading short-term losses for long-term gains, or phasing in and out certain aspects of agreements or otherwise altering the incentive structure for both economic and political actors. However, for those whose attitudes are structured by affective responses to particular countries, peoples, or cultures, there is considerably less space for compromise. Second, affective responses are enduring and stable attitudes making policy changes difficult where there is considerable opposition to deeper and wider integration. Symbolic attitudes, because they develop at an early age, have an enduring affect on adult life. Therefore, they are unlikely change rapidly. While anti-integration sentiment can be powerful, support that is a function of symbolic attitudes can also be a very useful for maintaining political support when integration efforts fail to produce immediate positive results. Such supportive attitudes allow policy makers time to weather poor economic performance. Finally, mobilization of these attitudes may be easy, enabling bursts of anti-integration fervor that will delay further integration

efforts. The use of common nationalist symbols may be a useful tool to mobilize such sentiment when there is elite leadership.

As publics experience further integration in North America it remains to be seen if anti-integration sentiment can be powerful. That is, can publics meaningfully constrain elites in choosing trade partners, or alter the terms of the agreements already made? Initial evidence from the European case indicates that despite growing opposition to integration (intensification of Euro-strikes, rise to power of Euro-skeptic parties) European integration continues largely unabated. Even in the case of NAFTA, considerable opposition was overcome. Therefore, we are still left to wonder what the role of publics will play in integration policy.

**TABLE 3.A Canadians' Attitudes toward NAFTA:
Descriptive Statistics**

	Frequency
<i>Strongly Oppose</i>	1155
<i>Somewhat Oppose</i>	887
<i>Weakly Oppose</i>	202
<i>Leaning Oppose</i>	26
<i>Neither Support Nor Oppose</i>	22
<i>Leaning Oppose</i>	21
<i>Weakly Support</i>	199
<i>Somewhat Support</i>	659
<i>Strongly Support</i>	171
Total	3342
Mean	0.33
Standard Deviation	0.38

TABLE 3.B Canadians' Attitudes toward ties with the United States:
Descriptive Statistics

	Frequency
<i>Much more Distant</i>	232
<i>More Distant</i>	713
<i>About the same</i>	1223
<i>Somewhat Closer</i>	634
<i>Much Closer</i>	446
Total	3248
Mean	0.53
Standard Deviation	0.28

TABLE 3.C: Hypothesized Relationships for the Economic and Symbolic Models in Canada

<i>Education</i>	+
<i>Income</i>	+
<i>East</i>	+
<i>West</i>	+
<i>Quebec</i>	+
<i>Union Membership</i>	-
<i>Age</i>	?
<i>Female</i>	?
<i>Opinions of the United States</i>	+

TABLE 3.D: Attitudes toward NAFTA in Mexico: A Test of Symbolic Attitudes and Economic Considerations (OLS Regression Results 1993)

	1993	
	\hat{a}	Standard Error
<i>Education</i>	0.27	(0.03)**
<i>Income</i>	0.10	(0.03)**
<i>East</i>	0.02	(0.03)
<i>West</i>	0.07	(0.02)**
<i>Quebec</i>	0.16	(0.03)**
<i>Union Membership</i>	-0.09	(0.02)**
<i>Age</i>	0.03	(0.03)
<i>Female</i>	-0.07	(0.02)**
<i>Opinions of the United States</i>	0.39	(0.04)
<i>Constant</i>	-0.07	(0.04) [†]
<i>N</i>		1564
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		0.16

[†] significant at the 10% level; * significant at 5% level; ** significant at 1% level

Notes

¹ Wording for all survey questions used in this analysis can be found in Appendix 2.

² Because the dependent variable scale contains only four values, it can be argued that this models should be estimated using ordered logit or ordered probit. Most studies using ordered scales of three or more points proceed with OLS estimation because of the ease of interpretation. This model was estimated as both an ordered logit and ordered probit in addition to the Ordinary Least Squares estimation. There was no substantive difference across these models.

³ Gujarati (1995) states that "...if the explanatory variable(s) are expressed in the deviation form (i.e., deviation from the mean value), multicollinearity is substantially reduced."

⁴ In the models examined in here, there appears to be multicollinearity in the interaction terms. For example, in 1996, the OLS estimates of the terms income, trade penetration, and income*trade penetration are insignificant, yet the test of the joint hypothesis that all of these variables are insignificant fails. The standard errors for the variables in interaction are highly variable depending on the specification of the model. When the variables are centered, the t-tests for individual effects are consistent with joint hypotheses F-tests. Furthermore, the relationships between the independent and dependent variables are robust across model specifications when the variables are centered.

⁵ The correlation coefficient between income and education for both years is less than .60, making it an unlikely candidate for multicollinearity. However, since both variables

Notes Continued

are attempting to measure the same concept, the fact that one variable is significant and the other is not, is not unusual. Income, both theoretically and statistically, appears to be the better measure of skill.

⁶ A two sample t-test indicates that the mean evaluation of the United States in 1991 is significantly greater than the mean evaluation in 1996 ($p=0.0000$).

⁷ Question wording and coding for all variables can be found in Appendix 2.

⁸ In 1991, in a one-tailed t-test, p is equal to 0.001. In 1996, in a one-tailed t-test, p is equal to 0.003)

⁹ p is equal to 0.001 in a one-tailed t-test.

¹⁰ Transcripts of these focus groups are available from the investigators.

Appendix 1

Description of Mexican Survey Data

The first survey is of 1546 adult Mexicans conducted in September and October of 1991. The second is a survey of 1500 adult Mexicans conducted in August of 1996. Questions were asked in a face-to-face format in respondents' homes. The polls were conducted in different municipios (county levels) located throughout the country. Municipios were chosen to reflect variation in population size. Locations for the surveys within municipios were chosen at random. These studies were funded by the Los Angeles Times, supervised by Belden & Russonello, Inc., and conducted by Prospectiva Estrategica, A.C. (a Mexican polling firm). Sampling error for percentages is estimated to be plus or minus three percent. These data are available through the Roper Center at the University of Connecticut.

Description of Canadian Data

The survey used is the Canadian Election Study, 1993 conducted by Richard Johnston, Andre Blais, Henry Brady, Elisabeth Gidengil, and Neil Nevitte just prior to and after the October 1993 election. Information about the study and data are available from ICPSR.

Appendix 2: Survey Question Wording and Coding

Mexico

Gender (Dummy)

0 Male
1 Female

Age (Scaled 0-1)

18-24
25-29
30-39
40-49
50+

Occupation Categories (Dummies)

What does the chief wage earner in your household do, that is, what activity does he/she do at work?
(Probe) What kind of place does he/she work?

1991

Not in work force
Public Sector
Professional
Merchant
Service Sector
Tradesman
Peasant/Farmer
Household Helper
Unemployed or looking for work

1996

Not in Work Force
Public Sector
Professional/Owner
Sales Person
Employee
Worker
Farmer/Peasant
Unemployed

Income (Scaled 0 - 1)

If you add up the monthly salary of everyone who lives in your house, what do they earn --everyone together-- in a month? (Approximate 1991 and 1996 US dollar equivalent s).

0-\$50
\$50-\$100
\$100-\$200
\$200-\$400
\$400-\$800
\$800-\$1400
\$1400+

Education (Scaled 0 - 1)

None (0 years of school)
Some Primary (1-6 years)
Some Junior High (7-9 years)
Some High School or Equivalent (10-12 years)
Some Professional (13-17 years)
Some Postgraduate (more than 17 years)

Support for NAFTA (scaled 0-1)

Are you in favor or opposed to the free trade agreement between Mexico and the United States, or have you not heard enough about the proposal to say? (ASK: Totally or Somewhat?)

Attitudes toward the United States (scaled 0-1)

What is your opinion of the United States? Is it very good, good, bad, very bad?

Canada

Gender (Dummy)

0 Male
1 Female

Age (Scaled 0-1)

18-24
25-29
30-39
40-49
50+

Income (Scaled 0 - 1)

Could you please tell me your total household income, be sure to include income FROM ALL SOURCES such as savings, pensions, rent, as well as wages, TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND DOLLARS, what was your TOTAL HOUSE HOLD INCOME before taxes and other deductions for 1992. (In Canadian Dollars).

Less than 19K
Between 20K and 29K
Between 30K and 39K
Between 40K and 49K
Between 50K and 59K
Between 60K and 69K
Between 70K and 79K
Between 80K and 89K
Between 90K and 100K
More than 100K

Education (Scaled 0 - 1)

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

No schooling
Some elementary
Completed elementary
Some high school
Completed high school
Some technical, community college, CEGEP, College Classique
Completed technical, community college, CEGEP, College Classique
Some university
Bachelor's Degree
Master's Degree
Professional Degree or doctorate

Support for NAFTA (scaled 0-1)

Canada and the United States have reached a NEW trade agreement which includes MEXICO. All things considered, do you support this agreement or do you oppose it?

Very strongly support
Somewhat strongly support
Not very strongly support
Support*
Neither support nor oppose*
Oppose*
Not very strongly oppose
Somewhat strongly oppose
Very strongly oppose

*Those who volunteered "neither support nor oppose" were asked if they would support or oppose *if they had to choose. Some continued to say "neither support nor oppose".

Attitudes toward the United States (scaled 0-1)

Should Canada's ties with the United States be MUCH CLOSER, SOMEWHAT CLOSER, ABOUT THE SAME AS NOW, MORE DISTANT, MUCH MORE DISTANT or haven't you thought much about this?

Regions (Dummies)

Quebec

Ontario

Western Provinces

British Columbia

Saskatchewan

Manitoba

Alberta

Eastern Provinces

Newfoundland

Prince Edward Island

Nova Scotia

New Brunswick

Appendix 3. Occupational Category in Mexico

1991	Income (Mean)	Income (Standard Deviation)	Education (Mean)	Education (Standard Deviation)
<i>Not in work force</i>	.39	.27	.41	.23
<i>Public Sector</i>	.57	.20	.59	.24
<i>Professional</i>	.75	.23	.68	.21
<i>Merchant</i>	.53	.23	.44	.24
<i>Service Sector</i>	.48	.18	.46	.22
<i>Tradesman</i>	.38	.16	.34	.21
<i>Peasant/Farmer</i>	.30	.14	.28	.19
<i>Household Helper</i>	.36	.16	.36	.24
<i>Unemployed or looking for work</i>	.30	.26	.40	.26

1996	Income (Mean)	Income (Standard Deviation)	Education (Mean)	Education (Standard Deviation)
<i>Not in Work Force</i>	.36	.18	.39	.25
<i>Public Sector</i>	.48	.20	.56	.24
<i>Professional/Owner</i>	.57	.21	.62	.23
<i>Sales Person</i>	.46	.23	.50	.23
<i>Employee</i>	.46	.19	.49	.23
<i>Worker</i>	.33	.18	.35	.20
<i>Farmer/Peasant</i>	.22	.20	.31	.18
<i>Unemployed</i>	.23	.20	.31	.23

The tables above provide summary statistics for education and income by occupational category. In addition to lack of specificity of the categories, the variation in income and education by category is not approaching zero. As a result, the Ricardo-Viner model would be difficult to test, because occupational category does not adequately reflect economic sectors. Furthermore, it appears that skill level (as measured by income and education) varies across occupational category.

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